

Syllabus

Positive Political Theory

GSIR, International University of Japan, Fall 2016

Fri. 10:30–12:00 and 13:00–14:30
Room: 103
Office Hours: Tuesday 14:00–16:00
(and by appointment)

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Overview and Class Goals

This course is an introduction to positive theory in the study of politics. In positive political theory, we use mathematical models to understand why and how people behave the way they do. The field of positive political theory has been referred to by a variety of names, including formal theory, rational choice, public choice, and collective choice, among others. Since this is a one-quarter course, we can only cover the surface of positive theory and its applications. However, we will survey a broad range of models that are essential for political science.

By completing this course, you will be able to

- read and appreciate current political science scholarship,
- logically analyze and criticize political problems, and
- construct simple models to explain political phenomena.

Prerequisites

There is no official prerequisites for this course. The course assumes students are not familiar with either mathematical (or formal) theorizing or rational choice theory. However, it does assume that all students are willing to learn mathematical, logical, and formal theoretical reasoning. A basic understanding of economics would be helpful.

Class Format

The course will be based primarily on lectures. To engage in class discussions, students are expected to complete all the required readings before each class.

Grade

Grades will be based on

- class participation (10% of final grade),
- 3 short papers (45% [15% each]),
- presentation (15%), and
- term paper (30%).

Final grade:

A	96–100
A–	90–95
B+	80–89
B	70–79
B–	66–69
C	60–65
F	Less than 60

Assignments

1. Readings

See the **Schedule** section below.

2. Three Short Papers

You have to submit three short papers between Week 2 and Week 9. What you have to do is the following.

- (a) Choose any three weeks between Week 2 and Week 9.
- (b) Choose one or more articles/chapters from the reading list for the week, and critically review them.
- (c) Write up your review in 3-4 pages.
- (d) Submit your short paper by sending a **Slack's Direct Message (see below about Slack) to the instructor by 7pm on the day before the lecture.** (E.g., the deadline for the Week 2's short paper is 7pm on October 13.)
Please submit your paper in PDF format. I do *not* accept MS Word files (.docx or .doc). If you submit more than three short papers (you are allowed to submit 8 short papers at most), the best three will be counted toward your final grade.

3. Presentation

Details about presentation will be provided in class after we know the number of students because the presentation format depends on the class size.

4. Term Paper

You have to write and submit a paper examining the evolution of the literature on a topic in positive political theory. You may choose any topic related to political science, political economy, public policy or public administration (or more broadly, social sciences).

You will do the following.

- (a) Choose a topic.
- (b) Find a positive-political-science (broadly defined) paper on the topic in “top” political-science journals (*American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, etc.) from each decade since 1970 (1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s).
- (c) Review and compare five papers of your choice and discuss how the literature has evolved since 1970s.
- (d) Submit your write-up (max. 20 pages) by sending a **Slack's Direct Message to the instructor by 9am on December 26, 2016.**
Please submit your paper in PDF format. I do *not* accept MS Word files (.docx or .doc).
No late submission will be accepted.

Course Materials

The course materials are available at:

iuj-home/IR materials/Yanai/PositivePoliticalTheory/

You are expected to check the folder on regular basis.

Slack

To facilitate communication outside class, we use [Slack](#). The Slack group of this class is

<https://iuj-ppt.slack.com/>.

Visit [Getting Started | Slack](#) to learn the basic usage of Slack.

You are expected to post questions regarding class to *an appropriate channel* in Slack; you may create a new channel if you cannot find one.

You should not only ask questions but also answer other students' questions if possible. Your answers do not have to be complete or perfect. If you find an answer to your own question after you post the question, please post the answer to share it with your colleagues. If nobody posts an answer to a question, the instructor will provide an answer or discuss the problem in the following class.

You can join the slack team by clicking the following link:

<https://iuj-ppt.slack.com/x-80803238434-80803257250/signup>

To sign up, **you need to use your IUJ email address ending with @iuj.ac.jp**. If you would like to use another email address, please send me an email with the subject "Slack for Positive Political Theory," and I will send you an invitation.

Required Books

None.

Optional Books

The following books are optional, but many of you should find them useful. You can find them at the library.

- Austen-Smith, David, and Jeffrey S. Banks. 1999. *Positive Political Theory I: Collective Preference*. University of Michigan Press.
- Austen-Smith, David, and Jeffrey S. Banks. 2005. *Positive Political Theory II: Strategy and Structure*. University of Michigan Press.
- Hindmoor, Andrew, and Brad Taylor. 2005. *Rational Choice*, Second Edition. Palgrave.
- Morton, Rebecca B. 1999. *Methods and Models: A Guide to the Empirical Analysis of Formal Models in Political Science*. Cambridge UP.
- Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. *Public Choice III*. Cambridge UP.
- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism Against Populism: A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Waveland Press.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*, Second Edition. W.W. Norton.

Schedule

The readings with **M** (Mandatory) should be completed prior to the lecture for which they are listed. You should at least skim readings with **R** (Recommended) as well either before or after the lecture. Readings with **O** (Optional) should enrich your understanding of the topics.

This schedule is subject to change.

Week 1 (Oct. 7) 1. Introduction and 2. Rationality and Rational Choice

M Hindmoor and Taylor 2005, chapter 1

M Shepsle 2010, chapters 1–2

R McCubbins, M. D., and M. F. Thies. 1996. “[Rationality and the Foundations of Positive Political Theory](#).”

R Morton 1999, chapters 2–4

O Elster, J. 2015. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, Revised Edition. Cambridge UP.

O Tversky, A., and D. Kahneman. 1981. “[The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice](#).” *Science* 211: 453–458.

Week 2 (Oct. 14) 3. Democratic Theory and 4. Individual Preference and Voting Rule

M Grofman, B., and S. L. Feld. 1988. “[Rousseau’s General Will: A Condorcetian Perspective](#).” *American Political Science Review* 82(2): 567–576.

M Shepsle 2010, chapters 3 and 7

R Austen-Smith and Banks 1999, chapter 1

O Surowiecki, J. 2005. *The Wisdom of Crowds*. Anchor.

O Taylor, A. D. 1995. *Mathematics and Politics: Strategy, Voting, Power, and Proof*. Springer, chapter 5

Week 3 (Oct. 21) 5. Collective Preference and Agenda Setting Power and 6. Arrow’s Theorem

M Hindmoor and Taylor 2005, chapter 5

M Riker 1982, chapters 1–5.

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 4

R Austen-Smith and Banks 1999, chapter 2

R Saari, D. G. 2001. *Decisions and Elections: Explaining the Unexpected*. Cambridge UP, chapters 1–3

O Arrow, K. 2012. *Social Choice and Individual Values*, Third Edition. Yale UP.

O Cox, G. 1997. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World’s Electoral Systems*. Cambridge UP.

O Craven, J. 1992. *Social Choice: A Framework for Collective Decisions and Individual Judgments*. Cambridge UP.

O Maskin, E., and A. Sen. 2014. *The Arrow Impossibility Theorem*. Columbia UP.

- O May, K. O. 1952. “[A Set of Independent Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Simple Majority Decision.](#)” *Econometrica* 20(4): 680–684.

Week 4 (Oct. 28) 7 & 8. Manipulation of Social Choice

M Riker 1982, chapters 6–10

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 6

- R Gibbard, A. 1973. “[Manipulation of Voting Schemes: A General Result.](#)” *Econometrica* 41(4): 587–601.

- R Satterthwaite, M. A. 1975. “[Strategy-proofness and Arrow’s Conditions: Existence and Correspondence Theorems for Voting Procedures and Social Welfare Functions.](#)” *Journal of Economic Theory* 10(2): 187–217.

O Austen-Smith and Banks 2005, chapters 2–3

O Riker, W. H. 1986. *The Art of Political Manipulation*. Yale UP.

O Taylor, A. D. 2005. *Social Choice and the Mathematics of Manipulation*. Cambridge UP.

Week 5 (Nov. 4) 9 & 10. Unidimensional Spatial Models

M Hinich, M. J., and M. C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge UP, chapters 1–2

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 5 (pp.90–99, 110–138)

M Hindmoor and Taylor 2005, chapter 3

- R Black, D. 1948. “[On the Rationale of Group Decision-making.](#)” *Journal of Political Economy* 56(1): 23–34.

O Black, D. 1958. *Theory of Committees and Elections*. Cambridge UP.

O Downs, A. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Addison-Wesley.

Week 6 (Nov. 11) 11 & 12. Multidimensional Spatial Models

M Hinich and Munger 1997, chapters 3–4

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 5 (pp.99–110, 138–155)

- R McKelvey, R. D. 1976. “[Intransitivities in Multidimensional Voting Models and Some Implications for Agenda Control.](#)” *Journal of Economic Theory* 12(3): 472–482.

- R McKelvey, R. D. 1979. “[General Conditions for Global Intransitivities in Formal Voting Models.](#)” *Econometrica* 47(5): 1085–1112.

- R Putnam, R. D. 1988. “[Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-level Games.](#)” *International Organization* 42(3): 427–460.

O Enelow, J. M., and M. J. Hinich. 1984. *The Spatial Theory of Voting*. Cambridge UP.

O Enelow, J. M., and M. J. Hinich, eds. 1990. *Advances in the Spatial Theory of Voting*. Cambridge UP.

Week 7 (Nov. 18) 13. Measuring Power and 14. Legislatures

M Shepsle 2010, chapters 11–12

- M Shepsle, K. A., and B. R. Weingast. 1994. “[Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions.](#)” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19(2): 149–179.
- R Gilligan, T. W., and K. Krehbiel. 1990. “[Organization of Informative Committees by a Rational Legislature.](#)” *American Journal of Political Science* 34(2): 531–564.
- R Shapley, L. S., and M. Shubik. 1954. “[A Method for Evaluating the Distribution of Power in a Committee System.](#)” *American Political Science Review* 48(3): 787–792.
- O Cox, G. W., and M. D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Cambridge UP.
- O Cox, G. W., and M. D. McCubbins. 2007. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*, Second Edition. Cambridge UP.

Week 8 (Nov. 25) 15 & 16. Principal-Agent Models

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 13–15

- M Strøm, K. 2000. “[Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracy.](#)” *European Journal of Political Research* 37: 261–289.
- M McCubbins, M. D., and T. Schwartz. 1984. “[Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms.](#)” *American Journal of Political Science* 28(1): 165–179.
- R Kiewiet, D. R., and M. D. McCubbins. 1991. *The Logic of Delegation: Congressional Parties and the Appropriations Process*. University of Chicago Press, chapter 2
- R Bawn, Kathleen. 1995. “[Political Control Versus Expertise: Congressional Choices about Administrative Procedures.](#)” *American Political Science Review* 89(1): 62–73.
- O Hawkins, D. G., D. A. Lake, D. L. Nielson, and M. J. Tierney, eds. 2006. *Delegation and Agency in International Organizations*. Cambridge UP, chapters 1 and 12
- O Huber, J. D., and C. R. Shipan. 2002. *Deliberate Discretion? The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. Cambridge UP.
- O Miller, G. J. 2005. “[The Political Evolution of Principal-Agent Models.](#)” *Annual Review of Political Science* 8: 203–225.
- O Ramseyer, J. M., and F. M. Rosenbluth. 1993. *Japan’s Political Marketplace*. Harvard UP.

Week 9 (Dec. 2) 17 & 18. Government and Its Failure

M Shepsle 2010, chapter 16

M Hindmoor and Taylor 2005, chapter 7

- R Besley, T. 2006. *Principled Agents? The Political Economy of Good Government*. Oxford UP.
- R Bueno de Mesquita, B., J. D. Morrow, R. M. Siverson, and A. Smith. 2001. “[Political Competition and Economic Growth.](#)” *Journal of Democracy* 12(1): 58–72.
- R Dal Bó, E. 2006. “[Regulatory Capture: A Review.](#)” *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 22(2): 203–225.
- O Schuck, P. H. 2014. *Why Government Fails So Often: And How It Can Do Better*. Princeton UP.

Week 10 (Dec. 9) 19 & 20. Student Presentations

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to act with civility, personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property; and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their own efforts. An environment of academic integrity is requisite to respect for self and others and a civil community.

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another persons' work as one's own, using internet sources without citation, taking or having another student take your exam, tampering with the work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc. Unfortunately, incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism, have been observed at IUJ. Plagiarism is the act, intentional or unintentional, of using other people's words or ideas as your own. The university, GSIR, and I expect you to write your own papers and to provide full and accurate citations for any specific ideas or language—words, phrases, sentences—that you take from outside sources, including the internet.

Refer to [GSIR's Policy Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating](#), [IUJ Professional Ethics Committee Guideline](#), and the Curriculum Handbook. Following the university's policy, any act of academic dishonesty in this class will be reported to the faculty meeting and the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) and may result receiving an F on the assignment, dismissal from class with a final grade of F, and even suspension or expulsion from the university, depending upon the severity of the violation.