

PSCI 421  
Spring 2017  
LWH 3031

M 7:05-9:45pm

William D. Adler  
Office: LWH 2068  
Hours: M 3:00-5:00pm, W 1:00-  
3:00pm  
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## **Congress and the Bureaucracy**

In this seminar, we will focus on subgovernments in the United States--that is, the administrative agencies, congressional committees, and interest groups associated with a particular policy area. In particular, we will examine the nature of the relationship between congress and regulatory agencies, what congress intended various agencies to do, and whether these agencies generally meet or fail to meet the expectations of congress. We will examine how a bill becomes a law, and then what happens to that law afterwards.

### **Required Texts**

There are three required texts for this course:

- Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capabilities, 1877-1920* (Cambridge University Press, 1982).
- Daniel P. Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks, and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928* (Princeton University Press, 2001).
- Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC* (Stanford University Press, 1999).

### **Course Learning Objectives**

This course is intended to give students deep insight into the relationship between Congress and the bureaucracy. Substantial reading and writing is required, as well as informed class discussions. Students are expected not only to learn the substantive material, but also to apply the theories they learn across multiple areas. By the end of the semester students should have an understanding of critical historical and contemporary perspectives on bureaucracy and how it is controlled (or not controlled) by Congress. Students are also expected to write a paper that demonstrates both their grasp of the material and their ability to generate informed opinions based on empirical research.

### **Course Requirements**

- 1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change. Bring the assigned readings with you to class.
- 2) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. In a graduate seminar full participation by all students is central to creating productive discussions, so this makes up a large

percentage of your grade. The base participation grade is a B which can rise or fall based on your contributions in class. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half of an absence. During week 6 of the semester I will update you as to your current participation grade, so that you will have an opportunity for improvement. Use of electronic devices such as phones or music players during class is prohibited. Laptops/tablets are permitted for note-taking only.

3) Keep up with the news. We will frequently discuss current events as they relate to the concepts we are discussing in class. This way, we will be able to connect what can be abstract ideas to real-world outcomes. Read a newspaper, visit [cnn.com](http://cnn.com), or do anything that helps makes you an informed citizen.

4) Take the final exam. It will be in take-home form.

5) Complete all required writing assignments. **Late papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late** (barring serious emergencies, which must be documented). For the purposes of this course, "late" is defined as submitted through D2L after the class starting time on the due date of the assignment. I will not accept submissions via email or in hard copy. Do not wait to the last moment to submit assignments.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized.

*Writing Assignment #1:* You will write 5 essays in response to the assigned class readings. Papers are due on the day of the assigned readings. You may not write more than one per class and you may not submit more than 5 in total. (Cite all your sources appropriately.) Each essay will proceed in the following order: First, briefly summarize the readings assigned for that day's class. Then answer the response questions listed below the readings on the syllabus.

Once you have received a grade on your paper, I will give you the option of revising it, if you wish. All revisions are due within one week of when you receive your grade.

*Writing Assignment #2:* You will write a research paper and make an in-class presentation of your findings. No later than **February 20<sup>th</sup>** you will submit a topic proposal for my approval. This proposal must include your research question, suggested sources for research (not necessarily ones you have already read), as well as potential findings. This assignment is graded Approved/Not Approved. Once your proposal is approved you may proceed with your paper. You may not submit a completed research paper until your proposal has been approved. I am open-minded as to potential topics but will be happy to make suggestions, if you wish.

Your paper must be at least 15 pages and include appropriate references (either footnotes or parenthetical style is acceptable) as well as a bibliography. Your paper must be submitted no later than **April 17<sup>th</sup>**. You will also have the opportunity, if you wish, to revise your paper after it is returned to you. If you choose to submit a revision you must do so no later than **May 1<sup>st</sup>**. Presentations will be scheduled for April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, *improvement counts*.

Attendance/Participation: 20%

Short essays: 20%

Research paper: 25%

Presentation: 10%

Final: 25%

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

**NOTE ON PLAGIARISM:** Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of **zero** for that assignment and an **F** for the course. You will also be reported to the University for violating the academic integrity policy. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: direct copying of material that is not your own, copying the material even while providing a citation, or copying ideas without proper attribution. **It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!**

## Accessibility

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services at (773) 442-4595, room D-104.

## Schedule of Classes and Exams

January 9<sup>th</sup>: Introduction

*January 16<sup>th</sup> – No classes, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

January 23<sup>rd</sup>: Rational Choice Theories of the Bureaucracy

Mathew D. McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz, "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms," *American Journal of Political Science* 28:1 (February 1984): 165-179. [D2L]

Matthew D. McCubbins, Roger G. Noll, and Barry R. Weingast, "Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control," *Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization* 3:2 (Autumn 1987): 243-277. [D2L]

Terry M. Moe, "An Assessment of the Positive Theory of 'Congressional Dominance,'" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 12: 4 (November 1987): 475-520. [D2L]

John Ferejohn and Charles Shipan, "Congressional Influence on Bureaucracy," *Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization* (April 1990): 1-20. [D2L]

**Response questions:**

1. Explain how the theories proposed by these authors differ from each other.
2. To what extent does this approach help us understand the complicated relationship between Congress and the bureaucracy?

January 30<sup>th</sup>: State Building as Patchwork

Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, chapters 1, 2, and 5

**Response questions:**

1. What was the “state of courts and parties,” according to Skowronek, and how did it limit the building of the national government’s capacities? Provide a specific example.

February 6<sup>th</sup>: State Building as Reconstitution

Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, pp. 165-176, chapter 8, and Epilogue

**Response questions:**

1. How did the reconstitution of the national state occur? What factors were behind the shift in governing authority?

*February 13<sup>th</sup> – No classes, Lincoln’s Birthday*

February 20<sup>th</sup>: Bureaucratic Autonomy, part I

Daniel P. Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*, Introduction and chapters 1 & 2

**Response questions:**

1. In what ways is Carpenter’s study of the bureaucracy different from that of Skowronek and other scholars?
2. Explain how Carpenter defines “bureaucratic autonomy” and describe the conditions under which he argues it can occur.

February 27<sup>th</sup>: Bureaucratic Autonomy, part II

Daniel P. Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*, chapters 3, 4, and 5

**Response questions:**

1. Discuss the evolution of the Post Office from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. To what extent does its development differ from the pattern of state building described by Skowronek in his work?

March 6<sup>th</sup>: Bureaucratic Autonomy, part III

Daniel P. Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*, chapters 6, 8, 9, and Conclusion

**Response questions:**

1. How did the Department of Agriculture create and cement its bureaucratic autonomy?
2. To what extent does Carpenter's view of bureaucratic development differ from the accounts that are based on a rational choice perspective? Where do they agree, and where do they differ?

March 13<sup>th</sup>: Responses to Carpenter

Colin D. Moore, "State Building Through Partnership: Delegation, Public-Private Partnerships, and the Political Development of American Imperialism, 1898-1916," *Studies in American Political Development* 25:1 (April 2011): 27-55. [D2L]

William D. Adler, "State Capacity and Bureaucratic Autonomy in the Early United States: The Case of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers," *Studies in American Political Development* 26:2 (October 2012): 107-124. [D2L]

Andrew S. Kelly, "The Political Development of Scientific Capacity in the United States," *Studies in American Political Development* 28:1 (April 2014): 1-25. [D2L]

**Response questions:**

1. According to these authors, is Carpenter's analysis of bureaucratic development correct or not?
2. Compare the accounts of Adler and Kelly. In what ways do these arguments differ?

*March 20<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> – Spring Break*

March 27<sup>th</sup>: National Security Bureaucracies, part I

Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, Introduction and chapters 1, 2, and 3

**Response questions:**

1. According to Zegart, in what ways do national security agencies differ from other bureaucracies, and how does that affect the course of their development?

April 3<sup>rd</sup>: National Security Bureaucracies, part II

Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, chapters 6, 7, and 8

**Response questions:**

1. How does the development of the CIA differ from that of the National Security Council?
2. Explain how Zegart's argument differs from rational choice perspectives.

*April 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> – No class*

April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>: Student presentations

**Final exam due: May 4<sup>th</sup>**