Pol 1: Final Review Exam Sheet
Fall 2017
INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS

This final exam review sheet is designed to provide a framework and road map for effective studying. The exam format will be multiple choice, short answer, an analytical question, and essay question. The analytical question will ask you to interpret a graph or table and discuss the implications of the data you analyzed. Thus, it is important to understand and accurate interpret the empirical evidence and how this evidence relates to course concepts. This can be found in the slide sets.

General comment: Think critically as to how each of the unit topics relate to one another and to the main conceptual theory discussed in the course. Pay close attention to the "big picture" general questions articulated under each section header of the syllabus.

3. Post-Election: How Institutions Function within the Framework

Meeting 12: Parties in the Electorate: Helping Citizens Make Political Decisions at a Trade-off (**Party Theory I**)

- Identify how parties solve collective action problems in the electoral arena.

- According to Levendusky, what are the benefits of elite polarization with respect to voter's garnering "more consistent" ideological preferences? What does this mean? Is this compatible with the Michigan Model positing the that partisanship influences ideological preferences?

- What does Levendusky argue is the main driver behind elite ideological polarization, particularly in the Congress?

- What sort of picture does Bafumi & Shapiro paint of the American voter in the 1950's & 1960's?

- Why do voters have weak partisan ties during the 1960's? How does this square with Levendusky's argument?

- Why are ideological preferences (i.e. identifying as a liberal, moderate, conservative) becoming more congruent with partisanship? How does this explain the declining probability of being a Democrat amongst white Southerners?

- How has partisan polarization and strengthening party brands increased "correct voting" amongst voters?

Meeting 13: Parties as Organizations: Implications of the American Party System & Procedural Cartel Theory (**Party Theory II**)

- Identify what collective action problems parties are meant to solve, both in the *organizational* & *legislative* (government) arenas.

- Identifies ways in which political parties solve these collective action problems in the legislature.

- What does Fiorina's Decline of Collective Responsibility (*DOCR*) Thesis posit? Why do party theorists posit that parties require "cohesion" to tackle "big problems?"

- Why do party theorists argue that "individual accountability", such as the accountability conceptualized in Madison's model of representation, present voters with a "blind spot?"

- How are parties collections of "long coalitions?" How do parties maintain their coalitions and what advantages are there for interests to remain within partisan coalitions by "smoothing over differences?"

- What's the fundamental problem of collective action in the legislature? What public good do all members want & how do parties help solve this problem?

- What is **legislative cycling** and how does this relate to the concept of party?

- Why are parties limited in their ability to solve collective action problems? Hint: consider the massive collective action problem faced by political parties when seeking legislative approval of their agenda.

- How do parties help individual politicians when re-election under party theory? How do parties provide politicians with "stable" coalitions?

- How does party theory work operationally work in Congress? Be able to explain the principal-agent relationship between party leaders and members of the party (pay special attention to agenda control)? What incentives do party members have to monitor that party leaders are controlling the agenda effectively (i.e. why are party leaders fired)?

- Why are congressional party leaders unable to secure complete loyalty amongst members of their party to pass their partisan legislative agenda? Why is this agenda critical to the party brand during a period of nationalized elections?

Meeting 14: Congressional Incentives & The Textbook Congress: Representation & Getting Re-Elected

- Why might legislators have individual self-interest that compete with collective self-interest of the party?

- How does the district-centered Congress (i.e. the "Textbook Congress") compatible with Madison's theory of representation?

- What is the paramount assumption Mayhew makes about members of Congress (**MCs**)? How do policy goals of legislators fit into this assumption?

- Why do MCs operate under conditions of uncertainty, according to Mayhew?

- What activities do MCs engage in to put themselves in the best position to be re-elected? Be able to cite examples of each of these three activities & know the difference between the three. Also, know under what conditions credit-claiming is *appropriate* for MCs.

- Norm of universalism & importance of pork (particularized policy) in the district-centered Congress

- How do congressional committees help MCs get re-elected under Mayhew's *Electoral Connection* model?

- Is Mayhew's conception of Congress district-centered rather than partisan-centered? How do you know?

- Why do members of Congress self-select into congressional committees? What does it mean to "specialize" in committees? How do committees change when you go from the **district-centered model of Congress** to the **Party Theory**model?

- What does it mean to be "out-of-step" with your district?

Meeting 15: Change in Representation: Are Citizens Represented in the System?

- Understand what **district-centered representation** looks like empirically (graph in slide 4) and how this relates to Madison's conception of representation

- Who determines district ideology under the **district-centered model of representation**? What incentive does this provide for candidates?

- Identify the difference between the *delegate vs. trustee* model of representation. Which model of representation does Madison adhere to?

- What does it mean for members of Congress to be "out-of-step" with their districts? Is there a cost? What are the implications of this for the *district-centered model*?

- What does *partisan-centered representation* look like with respect to congruence between constituent & member ideology?

- Why is the implication of the *partisan-centered model* leap-frog representation? What does this mean and how does this relate to the position of the median legislator?

- How does the partisan model relate to collective accountability?

- Does the partisan model provide for congruence between district & member ideology? In other words, are MCs more ideologically extreme than their constituents? Whats the implications for this with respect to Madisons Republic?

- What determines representative ideology under the district-centered model and partisan-centered model?

- What is the *hybrid model* of representation? Is there evidence that district ideology influences representative's party? Why does this model define the current state of Congress?

- Be able to reconcile the Figures in this section with the models discussed.

Meeting 16: The Presidency: At-Large Constituency & Presidential Representation

- Why does the president have limited constitutional ability to implement his agenda? How are presidents generally held accountable (i.e. individually or collectively, or both)?

- What is the *presidential paradox*?

- How does the paradox create an incentive for the *unilateral* presidency?

- What is the source of the presidential power not found in the constitution (i.e. informal powers)?

- What motives presidents to act unilaterally?

- How is the Congress position and not-positioned to check the unilateral presidency?

- Why does Congress suffer from a collective action problem with respect to the unilateral presidency?

- How are the courts able to check the unilateral presidency? Are they constrained with respect to their ability to check the unilateral presidency?

- How can the president get the Congress to act on behalf of his presidential agenda? What can the president claim that Congress cannot?

- Under what conditions does the President "go public" in pushing his policy agenda?

Meeting 17: Executive-Legislative Bargaining: Inherent Status-Quo Bias

- Be able to answer **all the worksheet questions** relating to Krehbiel's spatial model of policymaking, the *Pivotal Politics Model*, from the model of the simple legislature (House) to the **full model featuring the filibuster pivots and president, with special attention to how the presidential veto pivot changes during cases of partisan turnover (example: how does the veto pivot change from Obama to Trump)**. Understand why this model conceptualizes Madison's *status quo bias* and why passing policy in the United States is subject to high transaction costs. Know the assumptions of the model with respect to legislator ideological preferences and choice in roll call voting between the status quo and policy proposals. Understand how you can change the positions of the relevant pivotal players (median voter in the House, filibuster pivots in the Senate, president).