Pol 1: Final Review Exam Sheet
Summer Session 1
INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS

This midterm 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 9: Parties as Organizations: Implications of the American Party System

- 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

- What is Bawn et al.'s theory of political parties? In other words, what do they think political parties are comprised of?

- What assumptions do Bawn et al. have of voters with respect to voters? Why do voters have an electoral *blind spot*?

- What do parties do, according to Bawn et al.'s theory?

- 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?

- How do *strong* parties in government strengthen the partisan heuristic used by voters?

- Why are parties limited in their ability to solve collective action problems?

Meeting 12 & 13: Congressional Incentives: Representation & Getting Re-elected.

Note: I combine meetings 12 & 13 into one lecture. The following items on the study guide address both overlapping meetings.

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

- Why do parties have a strong incentive to come up with a *minimal winning coalition*?

- 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?

- How do Harbridge & Malhorta differ in their conception of Congress from Mayhew? What do partisan voters want from their MCs?

- Be sure to know Grimmer's argument of "home-style" and why MCs may engage in differing strategies (advertising, credit-claiming, position-taking) depending on what types of districts they represent.[1] Be sure to know why some members in marginal districts are "caught in the middle."

Meeting 14: 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?

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[1]Grimmer (2013) articulates that MCs that present themselves as "appropriators" engage in more advertising/credit-claiming while "position-takers" engage in more policy-based position taking representation.

- 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 15: 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 16: Executive-Legislative Bargaining: Inherent Status-Quo Bias

- Be able to answer **all the 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**. 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).

Meeting 17: Polarization: Implications for Policymaking & Accountability

- Be able to articulate what happens during presidential turnover according to the *Pivotal Politics Model*. Why are policies "released" and why does this contribute to the appearance of a presidential honeymoon?

- What does Binder find with respect to legislative gridlock? How do these findings provide support for the *Pivotal Politics Model*?

- Understand the criticisms of the *Pivotal Politics Model* and how the *Partisan Model of Policymaking* address these criticisms.

- Understand how the *Partisan Model of Policymaking* (i.e. the *Procedural Cartel Model*) works in detail (slide 15). Specifically, what do members get out of delegating power to party leaders? What do party leaders get with being agents of their party?

- Understand how parties prevent majority party rolls and the implication of this exercise of negative agenda control on the predictive power of the *Pivotal Politics Model*

- What are the implications of partisan polarization for policymaking under the *Pivotal Politics Model* and the *Partisan Model*, especially for transaction costs?

- How does partisan polarization effect collective accountability, according to Jones? How does Jones' argument fit into the partisan-centered and district-centered models of representation?

Meeting 18: How Democratic is the U.S.? Policy Responsiveness

- What two mechanisms do Stimson, MacKuen & Erikson argue provides for policy responsiveness?

- How does this lead to representation being *dynamic*?

- Be able to articulate the *Dynamic Theory of Responsiveness*. Specifically, how does this theory articulate politicians and the information they receive about public opinion?

- How are Stimson et al.'s findings optimistic for the notion that the median voter is being represented? (You don't need to know the specific variation in responsiveness between the President/Senate/Courts)

- How does Erikson dispute Stimson et al.'s findings? Why does he think politicians are more responsive to higher income citizens than lower-income citizens (i.e. the median voter)? What are the implications of this finding on policy responsiveness and Madison's model of representation?

- How does our political system exasperate the ability of upper-income voters & interest groups to slow down policy change potentially favored by lower-income Americans?

Meeting 19: Reform Needed? Potential Reforms from Comparative Systems

- What separates parliaments from Madison's theory of the republic, especially with respect to transaction costs?

- Why are American parties characterized as weak? How do parties in parliamentary systems ensure party discipline?

- How does representation differ between the American system and the comparative (parliamentary system) case?

- How are multiparty coalition governments (legislative majority made up of more than one party) more "representative" of public opinion found in electorate than single-party governments?