American Political Development

Political development is concerned with analyzing, explaining, and understanding key transformative sequences in American politics, tracing the implications of these transformations for later American politics, and considering alternative possible paths of development. It is an approach and subfield that emphasizes theoretical understandings of the interrelation of polity, society, and economy, while at the same time being concerned with concrete historical and comparative cases that examine key transformations and patterns in American politics. Many compelling movements in contemporary political science—statebuilding, the turn to history, legal constructions of the political and economic orders, institutions, political identity, alternative forms of representation, among others—have emerged from the renewed interest in political development or are visible within its scholarship. Historically-aware research is flourishing not only in political science but throughout the social sciences.

This course has three major objectives. The first is to introduce various methods to study American political development. Although many, perhaps most, of the individuals working in this area approach matters from a historical-institutional perspective, other approaches are also part of the intellectual mix. Comparing these alternative theoretical approaches will be a major focus of the course. The second major objective is to introduce major substantive debates that have occupied scholars in this field. Third, I hope you will find that exposure to this literature helps you ask better questions and forge stronger answers in your own research, whether that be on policy, institutions, political behavior, or within another discipline. Even if you do not “do APD,” the ability to “think APD” will help you craft richer understandings of American politics.

For departmental purposes, APD is also well-suited for preparation for the “general” portion of the American politics prelim as well as being helpful for several subfields themselves. In addition, some students, including those who have American as one of their prelim fields in political science, have built a minor in American political development. Students from other programs as well as other fields in political science have also crafted APD-related minors. There are additional courses one can take in this department, as well as others, to further pursue aspects of American political development, whether you are interested in an APD minor or not.

Requirements:

- Attendance, preparation, and participation are expected and will be taken into account in assigning final grades. Students not submitting a reaction paper for a given week must still read the course material carefully by the date indicated on the syllabus and be prepared to participate in class discussion. As you know, the success of seminars depends critically on members being prepared and participating. Come to class with some questions or topics that piqued your interest in the readings or reaction papers (below).
- You will write two reaction papers of about 3-4 pages in length. You need not cover each and every reading for the week in these papers. The point is to focus on and analyze what you see as
the important, interesting issues in the reading. The paper should be *analytical*, not a long summary. Because these papers are short, I do expect that they will be tightly focused, thoughtful, and well written. You will post your essay to the class email list (cut and paste it into the body of an email message) by 3:30pm on the day before class. *All seminar members must read these reactions prior to class.*

- You will write a research paper, a research design, or a 25-30 page literature review. The research paper or design should have some plausible connection to this course. The review would cover a topic of your choice on the syllabus or a related topic. In the literature review, you will assess the state of the field on this topic by reviewing existing literature and identifying promising areas and methods for future research. For any of these three options, you will submit a one-page progress report on October 25. If you have successfully completed your prelims and are working on a dissertation proposal, you may use your proposal as your paper, assuming it has some connection to the content of this course. Papers are due Monday, December 17.

**Books ordered:**


Copies of these books are on reserve at College Library. Other reading will be available at Learn@UW. A list of recommended reading for the syllabus topics will also be posted at Learn@UW.
**Schedule:**

1. **THE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH (9-13)**
   - Any one of the following:

2. **AMERICAN STATEBUILDING (9-20)**
   - Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, chs. 1, 2, and any parallel chapters (3 & 6, 4 & 7, or 5 & 8)
   - One of the following:
     - Colleen Dunlavy, “Political Structure, State Policy, and Industrial Change: Early Railroad Policy in the United States and Prussia,” in Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth, eds., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*
3. EXPLAINING AND EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE (9-27)
- Pierson, *Politics in Time*, chs. 4-5
- Valelly, *The Two Reconstructions*, ch. 10
- Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush* (1993), chs. 1-3 (you can read one of the profiles of presidents in chapters 4 through 7 if you want to see the framework applied to specific presidencies)
- Eric Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress*, chs. 1, 5
- Two of the following:

4. THE CHANGING REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS (10-4, will be rescheduled)
- Elisabeth Clemens, *The People’s Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925* (1997), chs. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8
- One of the following:

5. REVOLUTION, CONSTITUTION, AND POLITICAL CULTURE (10-11)
- The Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
- Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, ch. 1
- David Brian Robertson, *Federalism and the Making of America* (2012), ch. 2
6. CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION (10-18)
   - Richard F. Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (1990), ch. 2

7. CORPORATE ECONOMY, RADICAL MOMENT: THE LATE 19TH CENTURY (10-25, will be rescheduled)
   - Morton Horwitz, *The Transformation of American Law*, ch. 4
   - Gerald Berk, *Alternative Tracks*, pp. 13-15 and ch. 4
   - Valelly, *The Two Reconstructions*, ch. 6

8. PROGRESSIVISM IN ECONOMY, SOCIETY, AND POLITY (11-1)
   - Two of the following:
     - Mary Odem, “City Mothers and Delinquent Daughters: Female Juvenile Justice Reform in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles,” in Deverell and Sitton, eds., *California Progressivism Revisited*
     - Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, ch. 6
     - Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, ch. 6
9. THE NEW DEAL AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE AMERICAN STATE (11-8)

- Valeyly, *The Two Reconstructions*, ch. 7
- Two of the following:

10. LIBERAL ASCENDANCE, CONSERVATIVE ASCENDANCE (11-15)

- Valeyly, *The Two Reconstructions*, chs. 8-9
- Eric M. Patashnik, *Reforms at Risk: What Happens After Major Policy Changes are Enacted* (2008), chs. 2, 3, 5, 7 or 8, 9
- David Brian Robertson, *Federalism and the Making of America* (2012), ch. 9
- Two of the following:
11. SOCIAL POLICY AND THE WELFARE STATE (11-29)
- One of the following:
- Two of the following:

12. RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT (12-6)
- Frank Lambert, The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America, tba
- Samuel P. Huntington, American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony (1981), p. 64, chs. 5-6
- James A. Morone, Hellfire Nation: The Politics of Sin in American History (2003), Introduction, chs. 5, 14
  One of the following:
13. THINKING ABOUT THE PRESENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PAST (12-13)

- Three of the following: