

Ms. Golden
Bunche 3262
tel: 206-8166
office hrs: Th 11:00-2:30
and by appointment

PS259
Spring 2008
Tues 1:003:50
Bunche 2174

Distributive Politics

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/08S/polisci259-1/>

In this course, we study distributive politics, or the allocation of government resources to geographic localities. We frame distributive politics within the literature on political accountability. Distributive politics potentially distorts policy accountability. If politicians deliver goods to localities in order to secure votes, those trades between public officials and voters may lock voters in to supporting incumbents despite poor policy performance. We consider when patterns of distributive politics may reduce overall accountability in a democratic political regime.

If politicians target voters with allocations to secure votes, whose votes are they buying? What kinds of voters are targeted? Is it possible to identify when vote buying conflicts with economic efficiency? Why or when is vote buying politically effective? Why or when would voters exchange votes for allocations such as bridges and roads?

We study these questions with an eye to how regime and electoral institutions may shape the incentives of politicians and voters, and thereby shape their interaction regarding allocations.

Empirically, our focus is on countries other than the United States, although students wishing to focus their inquiry on the US are welcome in the course.

The first weeks of the course are theoretical, consisting of purely formal readings. We then read on how regime and electoral institutions shape allocations. The final part of the readings consists of empirical studies of the politics of allocations in various settings. The last two weeks of the quarter are reserved for student presentations of initial research into some aspect of distributive politics to localities in any single country.

Readings: All readings for the course will be available electronically.

Requirements: You have three obligations in this course. First, students are required to attend class having completed the assigned reading each week. Second, you will present research findings orally at the end of the quarter, and, third, you will submit a brief research report.

For your research, you will select a country to investigate in some detail. I will provide a lengthy bibliography of studies of distributive politics in a large number of countries to use as a starting point. Your oral presentation should begin with a summary of the literature on distributive politics for the country you choose. You may in addition select any specific class or category of goods (public jobs, block grants, electricity provision, infrastructure investments, etc.) to research in greater depth. You should read the pertinent country-specific literature that will

guide you in thinking about institutional incentives for distribution, formulate specific hypotheses, and collect as much of the data on your class of goods as possible. Your (10-15 page) written report will lay out some ideas (and possibly some preliminary data) about how you might test your hypotheses. You are not expected to be able to produce results at this stage of your work. Rather, your report should be thought of as a useful foundation for what might later become a field paper, a prospectus, or a dissertation chapter.

If you have alternate ideas about what would best serve your educational needs during the quarter, please see me to discuss them during the first week of the quarter.

Research reports are due by June 13 in order to receive a grade. Students submitting reports after this date will receive incompletes.

SYLLABUS

Week One: Introduction (April 1)

Week Two: Theory — Problems of Political Competition and Accountability (April 8)

Robert Barro, "The Control of Politicians: An Economic Model," *Public Choice* 14 (1973): 19-42.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/u526m437869287r3/>

John Ferejohn, "Incumbent Performance and Electoral Control," *Public Choice* 50 (1986): 5-25.

<http://springerlink.metapress.com/content/n766x82g36618240/>

Martin Osborne and A. Slivinski, "A Model of Political Competition with Citizen Candidates," *QJE* 111 (1996): 65-96.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0033-5533%28199602%29111%3A1%3C65%3AAMOPCW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B>

Week Three: Theory — The Swing versus Core Debate (April 15)

Gary Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, "Electoral Politics as a Redistributive Game," *JOP* (1986): 370-89.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-3816%28198605%2948%3A2%3C370%3AEPARG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>

Assar Lindbeck and Jörgen W. Weibull, "Balanced Budget Redistribution and the Outcome of Political Competition," *Public Choice* 52 (1987): 273-97.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/t0942tlq8v73u7h7/>

Avinash Dixit and John Londregan, "The Determinants of Success of Special Interests in Redistributive Politics," *JOP* 58 (Nov. 1996): 1132-55.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-3816%28199611%2958%3A4%3C1132%3ATDOSOS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-S>

Also read: Avinash Dixit and John Londregan, "Ideology, Tactics, and Efficiency in Redistributive Politics," *QJE* (May 1998): 497-529.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0033-5533%28199805%29113%3A2%3C497%3AITAEIR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-2>

Week Four: Empirical and Theoretical Limitations to the Swing versus Core Debate (April 22)

James M. Snyder, "Resource Allocation in Multiparty Elections," *AJPS* 34 (Feb. 1990): 59-73.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0092-5853%28199002%2934%3A1%3C59%3ARAIIME%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6>

Matz Dahlberg and Eva Johansson, "On the Vote-Purchasing Behavior of Incumbent Governments," *APSR* 96 (March 2002): 27-40.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-0554%28200203%2996%3A1%3C27%3AOTVBOI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-I>

Susan C. Stokes, "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina," *APSR* 99 (Aug. 2005): 315-25.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?aid=332864>

Skim: Gary Cox, "Swing Voters, Core Voters, and Distributive Politics," unpublished paper, University of California at San Diego, 2006.

http://www.cis.yale.edu/polisci/info/conferences/Elections_and_Distributions/papers/cox.pdf

Skim: Simeon Nichter, "Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot," *APSR* 102 (Feb. 2008): 19-31.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?aid=1720760>

Week Five: Empirics — Allocations across Regimes and Electoral Institutions (April 22)

Alessandro Lizzeri and Nicola Persico, "The Provision of Public Goods under Alternative Electoral Institutions," *AER* 92 (2001): 225-39.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8282%28200103%2991%3A1%3C225%3ATPOPGU%3E2.0.CO%3B2-D>

Gian Maria Milesi-Ferretti, Roberto Perotti, and Massimo Rostagno, "Electoral Systems and the Composition of Public Spending," *QJE* 117 (2002): 609-57.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0033-5533%28200205%29117%3A2%3C609%3AESAPS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-4>

David A. Lake and Matthew A. Baum, "The Invisible Hand of Democracy: Political Control and the Provision of Public Services," *CPS* 34 (Aug. 2001): 587-621.

<http://cps.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/34/6/587>

Martin S. Edwards and Frank C. Thames, "District Magnitude, Personal Votes, and Government Expenditures," *Electoral Studies* 26 (2007): 338-45.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/B6V9P-4KKFP19-1/2/500df1b3d56ee013341d4b942781c88b>

Week Six: Empirics — Infrastructure Allocations (May 6)

Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo, "The Economic Lives of the Poor," *JEP* 21 (2007): 141-67; section on infrastructure.

<http://econ-www.mit.edu/files/805>

James A. Robinson and Ragnar Torvik, "White Elephants," *Journal of Public Economics* 89 (2005): 197-210.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/B6V76-4CYN1X-1/2/29da46cf3870bc95463c97cda5c97920>

Brian Min, "Democracy and Light: Electoral Accountability and the Politics of Electrification," chapter from dissertation in progress, UCLA.
URL to be provided.

Miriam Golden and Lucio Picci, "Pork Barrel Politics in Postwar Italy, 1953-1994," *AJPS* (April 2008).
URL to be provided.

Antoni Castells and Albert Solé-Ollé, "The Regional Allocation of Infrastructure Investment: The Role of Equity, Efficiency and Political Factors," *European Economic Review* 49 (2005): 1165-1205.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/B6V64-4B5C0SF-2/2/002647b907da5e668741cf22723d5dde>

Week Seven: Empirics — The Mexican Case (May 13)

Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, Beatriz Magaloni, and Federico Estévez, *Strategies of Vote Buying: Social Transfers, Democracy and Welfare in Mexico* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).
<http://www.stanford.edu/~albertod/buyingvotes/StrategiesVoteBuying.pdf>

Week Eight: Instructor Out of Town (May 20)

Note: A make-up class may be scheduled during finals week. Use time for research and preparation of presentations.

Week Nine: Student Presentations of Allocations in Various Countries (May 27)

Week Ten: Student Presentations of Allocations in Various Countries (June 2)