I. Introduction
This course provides a theoretical and empirical introduction to some contemporary literature on bureaucratic politics. The first part of the semester deals with theoretical preliminaries, including spatial models of delegation, models of moral hazard, and adverse selection, and strategic redundancy. The second part deals with empirical applications, largely in the domestic context. The third part is empirical with subject matter drawn from the literature on comparative politics and development.

II. Contact and meeting Information
Professor Sanford Gordon
19 West 4th Street, Room 311
Phone: (212) 998-3708
E-mail: sanford.gordon@nyu.edu

III. Student Responsibilities and Course Grading

Participation: 20%
Participating in seminar is an essential component of satisfactory completion of the course.

Presentations: 10%
In addition to normal participatory duties, each student will spend several of our meetings providing a public good as “defender” of a particular text or perspective, which will include a 10-15 minute presentation at the beginning of the class.

Thought papers: 20%
Each student will write a paper no longer than one single-spaced page each week he/she is not presenting. The paper should be e-mailed by close of business (5pm) on the day before class so that we can incorporate its insights into class discussion. The paper may critically examine a particular feature of a single reading, or draw comparisons among multiple readings for that week. At the end of the semester, we will drop the lowest short paper score. (This has the practical effect of permitting you to miss writing one paper.)

Research paper: 50%
A final research paper will count for 50% of the grade. Details will be discussed in class. You should be thinking about your paper and discussing the topic with us by early to mid-October.
Note that if your research interest lies primarily in topics covered toward the end of the class, you should be prepared to read ahead.

IV. Weekly Schedule

Week 1. Introductions

Week 2. Overarching Considerations
- Dixit, Incentives and Organizations in the Public Sector: An Interpretive Review
- Acemoglu et. al., Incentives in Markets, Firms, and Governments

Week 3. Spatial Models
- Huber and Shipan, Deliberate Discretion, chs. 4,6,7
- Epstein and O’Halloran, “Administrative Procedures, Information, and Agency Discretion” (AJPS 1994)

Week 4. Topics in Moral Hazard
- Holmstrom and Milgrom 1991: Multitask Principal Agent Analyses.
- Prendergast, Limits of Bureaucratic Efficiency
- Heckman, Heinrich, and Smith, “Performance of Performance Standards”
- Leaver, “Bureaucratic Minimal Squawk Behavior”

Week 5. Topics in Adverse Selection and Bureauratic Preferences
- Gailmard, Sean, and John Patty. “Slackers and Zealots: Civil Service, Policy Discretion, and Bureaucratic Expertise.”
- Canice Prendergast, “Motivation and Bias of Bureaucrats.” AER 2007

Week 6. Redundancy and Multiple Agents

Week 7. Bureaucracy, Private Interests, and Rent-Seeking
- Gordon and Hafer, “Flexing Muscle: Corporate Political Expenditures as Signals to the Bureaucracy,” APSR 2005
- Carpenter, Daniel P. “Protection without Capture.” APSR 2004

Week 8. Discuss Term Paper Topics

Week 9. Spring Break

Week 10. Empirical Studies of Politicization
  • Lewis, David. Politics of Presidential Appointments

Week 11. Bureaucratic Capacity in Comparative Perspective
  • Bernard Silberman, Cages of Reason

Week 12. The Growth of Bureaucracy in Great Britain
  • John Brewer, Sinews of Power

Week 13. Centralization: The Ottoman Example
  • Karen Barkey, Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization

Week 14. Bureaucracy and Development
  • Rauch and Evans, “Bureaucratic Structure and Bureaucratic Performance in Less-Developed Countries.” JPubEcon 75: 49-71
  • Huber and McCarty, “Bureaucratic Capacity, Delegation, and Political Reform.” APSR 98: 481-494
  • Iyer and Mani, “Traveling Agents: Political Change and Bureaucratic Turnover in India.” Working paper.

Week 15. Discuss Term papers.