

Wirtschaftspolitisches Seminar "Political Decision-making: Understanding Decisions by and about Politicians", Wintersemester 2009/10

Registration

Students have to register via email with Benny Geys (geys@wzb.eu) giving their full name, immatriculation number and a short description (in either German or English) of their interest and motivation to take part in this seminar. The statement should include a preference list concerning the topics. Registration and statement of interest should be received no later than 9 October (17h). No specific background knowledge is required to participate. Applicants should, however, have finished their Bachelor (or Grundstudium).

Note that seminar participation will be limited to 20 students, with admission in case of excess registrations being based on motivation and academic interest in the field. Confirmation of participation will be sent to successful applicants on 12 October 2009.

An introductory session will be organized on 2 November 2009, with the aim of outlining the various topics addressed in the seminar and providing the possibility for students to ask questions.

Course Requirements

Each participant will independently write a seminar paper on one of the topics tackled in the seminar. The list of topics – with indication of relevant academic literature – can be found below. A draft version of roughly 10 pages (12pt, 1.5 lining) is to be submitted via email – in either Word or PDF format – before 21/12/2009 (17h). This will then be distributed shortly afterwards among all participants of the seminar, and is to be presented on the symposium held on 8-9/01/2010.

During the symposium, paper presentations should be no longer than 20min. Each student will also act as a discussant to a paper presented by one of his/her colleagues. This implies that (s)he will give a brief summary of the paper and critically address its main questions and results (5 min). This then opens the ground for a general conversation among all seminar participants (10 min). Students are thus required to carefully read all papers by their co-students and prepare a short summary of each paper in case they are selected to act as a discussant on the day of presentation.

The final version of the paper (max. 20p; 12pt, 1.5 lining) – reflecting feedback received during the symposium – is due via email, once again in either Word or PDF format, by 13 February 2010 (17h).

Grading will take into account 1) final version of the seminar paper, 2) oral presentations of one's own paper and discussion of a co-student's work and 3) participation in the general discussions.

Participation during the introductory session and both days of the symposium is compulsory. Questions about the seminar should be addressed to Benny Geys at geys@wzb.eu.

Schedule

9 October 2009: Deadline for registration. Registrations should be sent to geys@wzb.eu

2 November 2009: Introductory session, Garystr. 21, HS 108, 10:00 a.m.

21 December 2009: Deadline for first draft of seminar paper (ca. 10p)
(in Word or PDF format and via email to geys@wzb.eu)

8/9 January 2010: Symposium sessions, Garystr. 21, HS 107a

13 February 2010: Deadline final version of seminar paper (max 20p)
(in Word or PDF format and via email to geys@wzb.eu)

Literature-pointers

The literature indicated below represents an introduction to the various themes addressed in the seminar. It does not have to be employed, and should in any case be complemented by students' own research using the economics (and/or political science) library resources.

1) Voter turnout

a. 'Rational' theoretical perspectives

Dhillon, A. and Peralta, S. (2002) 'Economic Theories of Voter Turnout', *Economic Journal*, 112 (June), F332-F352.

Geys, B. (2006), 'Rational' Theories of Voter Turnout: a Review, *Political Studies Review*, 4(1), 16-35.

Dowding, K. (2005) 'Is it Rational to Vote? Five Types of Explanations and a Suggestion', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 7 (3), 442-459.

b. Empirical insights

Blais, A., 2000. *To Vote or Not to Vote?: The Merits and Limits Rational Choice Theory*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh.

Geys, B. (2006), Explaining Voter Turnout: a Review of Aggregate-Level Research, *Electoral Studies*, 25(4), 637-663.

Schlozman, K.L., 2002. Citizen participation in America: what do we know? Why do we care? In: Katznelson, I., Milner, H.V. (Eds.), *Political Science: the State of the Discipline*. W.W. Norton & Company, New York, pp. 433-461.

2) Ballot forms and vote decisions

a. Position effects

Darcy, R. and McAllister, I. (1990). Ballot position effects. *Electoral Studies* 9: 517.

Koppel J.G.S. and J.A. Steen (2004), The effects of ballot position on election outcomes, *Journal of Politics* 66, 267-281.

Faas, T. and H. Schoen (2006), The importance of being first: Effects of candidates' list positions in the 2003 Bavarian state election, *Electoral Studies*, 25(1), 91-102.

b. Design effects

Adams G. D. and C. Fastnow (2002), A Note on the Voting Irregularities in Palm Beach County, in B. Dobratz, T. Buzzell and L. K. Waldner (eds.), *Sociological Views on Political Participation in the 21st Century*, Elsevier Science Ltd, Amsterdam, 189-199.

Geys B. and B. Heyndels (2003), Information and "Cognitive Sophistication": Attenuating Influences on Ballot Layout Effects?, *Acta Politica*, 38(4), 295-311.

Wand, J.N., Shotts, K.W., Sekhon, J.S., Mebane Jr., W.R., Herron, M.C. and Brady, H.E. (2001). The butterfly did it: The aberrant vote for Buchanan in Palm Beach County, Florida. *American Political Science Review* 95: 793-810.

3) Economic voting

- Anderson, C.J. (2007). The end of economic voting? Contingency dilemmas and the limits of democratic accountability. *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 271-296.
- Lewis-Beck, M. and M. Stegmaier (2007). Economic Models of Voting. In R.J. Dalton and H-D. Klingemann (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, 518-537. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schmitt, H. and A. Wüst (2006). The extraordinary Bundestag election of 2005: The interplay of long-term trends and short-term factors. *German Politics and Society* 24 (1), 27-46.

4) Wars and government popularity

- Berinsky, A.J. 2007. Assuming the costs of war: Events, elites and the American public support for military conflict. *Journal of Politics*, 69(4): 975-997.
- Karol, D. and E. Miguel. 2007. Iraq war casualties and the 2004 US presidential election. *Journal of Politics* 69 (3): 633-648.
- Mueller, J.E. 1973. *War, presidents and public opinion*. New York: Wiley.

5) Rally around the flag

- Chapman, T.L. and D. Reiter. 2008. The United Nations Security Council and the rally round the flag effect. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48 (6): 886-909.
- Colaresi, M. 2007. The benefit of the doubt: Testing an informational theory of the rally effect. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61: 99-143.
- Hetherington, M.J. and M. Nelson. 2003. Anatomy of a rally effect: George W. Bush and the war on terrorism. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36 (1): 37-42.

6) Gender differences in public policies

- Aidt, T. and P.S. Jensen (2009). Tax Structure, Size of Government and the Extension of the Voting Franchise in Western Europe, 1860-1938. *International Tax and Public Finance* 16, 362-394.
- Chattopadhyay, R. and E. Duflo (2004), Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India, *Econometrica* 72(5): 1409-1443.
- Funk, P. and C. Gathmann (2008), Gender Gaps in Policy Making: Evidence from Direct Democracy in Switzerland, University of Pompeu Fabra, *mimeo*.
- Svaleryd, H. (2009), Women's Representation and Public Spending. *European Journal of Political Economy* 25 (2), 186-198.

7) Government fragmentation and decision-making

- Ashworth, J., B. Geys and B. Heyndels (2005), Government weakness and local public debt development in Flemish municipalities, *International Tax and Public Finance* 12 (4), 395-422.
- Roubini N. and J.D. Sachs (1989), Political and Economic Determinants of Budget Deficits in the Industrial Democracies, *European Economic Review* 33: 903-938.
- Kiss, A. 2009. Coalition politics and accountability, *Public Choice*, 139(3), 413-428.

8) Party ideology and decision-making

- Bräuninger, T. (2005) A partisan model of government expenditures, *Public Choice*, 125, pp.409–429.
- Hibbs, D. (1977). "Political Parties and Macro-Economic Policy," *American Political Science Review* 71, 1467–1487.
- Imbeau, L. M., F. Pétry and M. Lamari. (2001). "Left-Right Party Ideology and Government Policies: A Meta-Analysis," *European Journal of Political Research* 40, 1–29.

9) Spatial dimensions in public policies

a. Yardstick Competition

- Besley, T. and A. Case (1995), Incumbent Behavior: Vote Seeking, Tax Setting and Yardstick Competition, *American Economic Review* 85 (1): 25-45.
- Revelli, F., 2006. Performance rating and yardstick competition in social service provision. *Journal of Public Economics* 90, 459–475.
- Salmon, P.G., 1987. Decentralization as an incentive scheme. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 3 (2), 24–43.

b. Tax Competition

- Buettner, T. (2001), Local business taxation and competition for capital: The choice of the tax rate, *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 31 (2–3) 215–245.
- Wilson, J.D. (1999), Theories of Tax Competition, *National Tax Journal* 52(2): 269-304.

10) Moonlighting politicians

a. Determinants of politicians' outside earnings

- Becker, J., Peichl, A., and Rincke, J. (2009). Politicians' outside earnings and electoral competition. *Public Choice*. 140 (3-4), 379-394.
- Eggers, A., and Hainmueller, J. (2009). The Value of Political Power: Estimating Returns to Office in Post-War British Politics. Harvard University, *mimeo*.
- Parker, G.R. (1992). The distribution of honoraria income in the U.S. Congress: Who gets rents in legislatures and why? *Public Choice*, 73(2), 167–181.

b. Moonlighting and parliamentary performance

- Gagliarducci, S., Nannicini, T., and Naticchioni, P. (2008). Outside Income and Moral Hazard: The Elusive Quest for Good Politicians. *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 3295.
- Eggers, A., and Hainmueller, J. (2009). The Value of Political Power: Estimating Returns to Office in Post-War British Politics. Harvard University, *mimeo*.
- Rosenson, B.A. (2007). Explaining legislators' positions on outside income limits: Voting on honoraria ceilings in the U.S. Senate, 1981-1983. *Public Choice*, 133(1/2), 111–128.