

POLITICAL SCIENCE 7125:

FEDERALISM

Wednesday, 2 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Derby Hall 150

Spring 2016

Professor Vladimir Kogan

Office: Derby Hall 2004

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In 2012, a preliminary count by the Census Bureau recorded more than 89,000 government agencies active in the United States. These jurisdictions range from small and isolated — for example, a rural mosquito abatement district — to agencies that span huge geographic areas and provide vital public services to millions of constituents. In this course, we will study the impact of governmental decentralization and fragmentation on democratic representation and policy outcomes. In particular, we will consider how multi-level governance shapes the incentives of political elites and affects the ability of voters to hold their agents accountable. We will cover topics relevant to both American and comparative politics and examine substantive questions dealing with both political institutions and mass behaviors.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Participation (25% of Overall Grade)

Students must complete the assigned readings ahead of time and come to class ready to discuss the material. I have been very judicious in limiting the amount of reading — no more than three per week — so I expect each student to have done the reading carefully and to have thought about the material critically prior to class.

2. Response Papers (20% of Overall Grade)

Students will write three “referee report”-style papers during the course of the semester on assigned readings of their choice. Only one report will be accepted for credit during any given week. The response papers should be about three to four pages long (double-spaced); clearly identify and discuss the empirical, theoretical, or methodological contribution of the chosen reading; and identify and discuss any weaknesses or potential extensions that may provide fertile ground for future research.

3. Research Paper (20% of Overall Grade)

The ultimate objective of the class is for each student to end the semester with a draft research paper that, with further polishing and revision, can be submitted to a top-tier political science journal. Students are welcome to write papers on any topic — regardless

of whether it relates to the course. For those struggling with finding a topic, I suggest beginning with a replication of one of the papers we examine in class, and then building off that replication (e.g., testing the hypotheses using different data; using an improved research design, etc.)

4. Research Presentation (10% of Overall Grade)

Each student will need to complete a draft of their research paper prior to the end of the semester and to formally present it to the entire class. The presentation should be approximately 25 minutes long and should be done in the style of a traditional “job talk.”

5. Referee Reports and Discussant Presentation (15% of Overall Grade)

Students will be paired up and asked to read and review a draft of the research paper written by a colleague. In addition to providing written comments, in the style of a blind referee review, each student will also share their thoughts with the full class following each respective paper presentation.

6. Referee Response Memo (10% of Overall Grade)

When submitting their final drafts, students will also need to include a letter outlining the revisions they made in response to the comments received from their discussant.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, January 11: **Introduction to Federalism**

Required Readings:

- Riker, William H. 1964. *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*. Boston: Little, Brown. Excerpts.
- Nyhan, Brendan. 2015. “A Checklist Manifesto for Peer Review.” *The Political Methodologist* 23(1): pp. 4-6.
- Pepinsky, Thomas. 2015. “What is Peer Review For? Why Referees are not the Disciplinary Police.” *The Political Methodologist* 23(1): pp. 15-18.
- Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin. 2015. “An Editor’s Thoughts on the Peer Review Process.” *The Political Methodologist* 23(1): pp. 18-21.

Skill: Referee Reports

Wednesday, January 18: Fiscal Federalism — Theory and Practice

Required Readings:

- Malesky, Edmund J., Coung Viet Nguyen, and Anh Tran. 2014. “The Impact of Recentralization on Public Services: A Difference-in-Differences Analysis of the Abolition of Elected Councils in Vietnam.” *American Political Science Review* 108(1): pp. 144-168.
- Rodden, Jonathan. 2002. “The Dilemma of Fiscal Federalism: Grants and Fiscal Performance Around the World.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 670-687.
- Berry, Christopher. 2008. “Piling On: Multilevel Government and the Fiscal Common-Pool.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(4): 802-820.

Skill: Introduction

Wednesday, January 25: Horizontal Spillovers

Required Readings:

- Peterson, Paul E., and Mark Rom. 1989. “Federalism, Welfare Policy, and Residential Choices.” *American Political Science Review* 89(3): 711-728.
- Monogan, James E. III, David M. Knoisky, and Neal D. Woods. Forthcoming. “Gone with the Wind: Federalism and the Strategic Location of Air Polluters.” *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Volden, Craig, Michael M. Ting, and Daniel P. Carpenter. 2008. “A Formal Model of Learning and Policy Diffusion.” *American Political Science Review* 102(3): 319-332.

Skill: Literature Reviews

Wednesday, February 1: Retrospective Voting

Required Readings:

- Volden, Craig. 2005. “Intergovernmental Political Competition in American Federalism.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 327-342.
- Rogers, Steven. 2013. “Accountability in State Legislatures: How Parties Perform in Office and State Legislative Elections.” Working paper.
- Brown, Adam R. 2010. “Are Governors Responsible for the State Economy? Partisanship, Blame, and Divided Federalism.” *Journal of Politics* 72(3): 605-615.

Skill: Conclusions

Wednesday, February 8: Democratic Downsides

Required Readings:

- Cai, Hongbin, and Daniel Treisman. 2004. "State Corroding Federalism." *Journal of Public Economics* 88 (3-4): pp. 819-843.
- Brancati, Dawn. 2006. "Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism?" *International Organization* 60(3): pp. 651-685.
- Kogan, Vladimir, Stéphane Lavertu, and Zachary Peskowitz. 2016. "Performance Federalism and Local Democracy: Theory and Evidence from School Tax Referenda." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(2): pp. 418-435.

Skill: Referee Response Memos

Wednesday, February 15: Incentives and Representation

Required Readings:

- Myerson, Roger B. 2006. "Federalism and the Incentives for Success of Democracy." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 1(1): pp. 3-23.
- Chen, Jowei. 2010. "The Effect of Electoral Geography on Pork Barreling in Bicameral Legislatures." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 301-322.
- Chhibber, Pradeep, and Ken Kollman. 1998. "Party Aggregation and the Number of Parties in India and the United States." *American Political Science Review* 92(2): 329-342.

Skill: Identification Strategies

Wednesday, February 22: Federalism as an Equilibrium

Required Readings:

- Ziblatt, Daniel. 2004. "Rethinking the Origins of Federalism: Puzzle, Theory, and Evidence from Nineteenth-Century Europe." *World Politics* 57(1): pp. 70-98.
- Grossman, Guy, and Janet I. Lewis. 2014. "Administrative Unit Proliferation." *American Political Science Review* 108(1): pp. 196-217.
- Alesina, Alberto, Reza Baqir, and Caroline Hoxby. 2004. "Political Jurisdictions in Heterogeneous Communities." *Journal of Political Economy* 112(2): 348-396.

Skill: Replication

Wednesday, March 1: **Social Welfare and Public Goods Provision**

Required Readings:

- Hoxby, Caroline M. 2000. “Does Competition among Public Schools Benefit Students and Taxpayers.” *American Economic Review* 90(5): pp. 1209-1238.
- Hatfield, John William, and Katrina Kosec. 2013. “Federal Competition and Economic Growth.” *Journal of Public Economics* 97: pp. 144-159.
- Grossman, Guy, Jan H. Pierskalla, and Emma Boswell Dean. Forthcoming. “Government Fragmentation and Public Goods Provision.” *Journal of Politics*.

Skill: Conference Presentation

Wednesday, March 8: **Subnational Institutions**

Required Readings:

- Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips. 2012. “The Democratic Deficit in the States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 56(1): pp. 148-166.
- Hinnerich, Björn Tyrefors and Per Pettersson-Lidbom. 2014. “Democracy, Redistribution, and Political Participation: Evidence from Sweden, 1919-1938.” *Econometrica* 82(3): pp. 961-993.
- Kogan, Vladimir, Stéphane Lavertu, and Zachary Peskowitz. 2016. “The Consequence of Election Timing.” Working paper.

Skill: Conference Discussants

Wednesday, March 15: **Spring Break**

Wednesday, March 22: **Writing Session**

Wednesday, March 29 – **Student Presentations**

Wednesday, April 5 – **No Class**

Wednesday, April 12: **Student Presentations**

Wednesday, April 19: **Student Presentations**