REQUIRED BOOKS:

COURSE OVERVIEW:
In this course, we will explore broadly the study of political institutions. While many of our topics will focus on examples from American politics, we will see that most of the course material will be generalizable across subfields. In fact, a fundamental point of the course is that the study of political institutions cannot be limited to a particular subfield within the discipline.

GRADING
Participation & Presentations – 40%
Research Paper – 40%
Short Papers 20%

You will be required to lead the class discussion one week this semester. You may request up to three weeks that you would like to lead by January 16th. As the discussion leader, you will set the agenda for our class that week. This involves preparing broad discussion points for the class. You will be evaluated on your weekly participation. A research paper for the course is also required. You must clear your topic with me by March 29th. Depending on the project, I am willing to accept research proposals for the final paper. The final paper is due May 4th. Finally, you are required to write 5 4-5 page summaries. You may not do a short paper the week you are the discussion leader, and you must do at least 2 short papers prior to Spring Break. Other than these two conditions, you are free to choose which weeks to do the summaries. The short papers
should critically summarize a theme for the readings that week. The summaries are due at 10 a.m. the day of class.

Course Schedule

January 11
Intro

January 18
Approaches to the Study of Institutions


Koremenos, Barbara, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal. 2001. The Rational Design of International Institutions. *International Organization*: 761-800. [note this entire issue of IO is a special issue on the design of institutions]


January 25
Institutional Stability and Change


February 1
Institutional Stability and Change/Agenda Setting, cont.


February 8  
Legislative Institutions – Parties  


February 15  
Legislative Institutions – Organization  


February 22
Executive Institutions


March 1
Bureaucratic Institutions


March 8
Institutional Interactions – Congress-Bureaucracy


March 15 – No Class

March 22

Electoral Institutions


March 29
Preference Measurement


Epstein, Lee, Andrew Martin, Jeffrey Segal, and Chad Westerland. Forthcoming. The Judicial Common Space. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*

April 5
Legal Institutions


April 12 – No Class

April 19
Legal Institutions – Judicial Review


April 26

Legal Institutions – Judicial Review, cont.


