

# **BUSH 689: Policymaking and Accountability in Developing Countries**

**Fall 2015**

**Time: Tuesday 4:35-7:20 PM**

**Location: Allen 1108**

Instructor: YuJung (Julia) Lee

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This course examines the conditions of political accountability as a means to achieving policy outcomes with a focus on public service delivery in developing countries. It introduces theories and concepts for analyzing the political environment in which policies are formulated and implemented with a particular emphasis on how those concepts affect accountability. The analytical tools that students learn in this course will help evaluate public policies with consideration of factors that influence the decision making process, recognize different actors in the policy formation process, and identify patterns of policy outcomes and causes of those patterns. These concepts and skills are aimed to ultimately help form effective strategies for policy design.

The course is organized into four parts. The first part focuses on defining key concepts, identifying the main actors in the political environment, and understanding different channels of achieving accountability in public service delivery. The second part focuses on obstacles that make it difficult to achieve political accountability. In the third part, we read about recent studies on common policy issue areas in developing countries such as health and education. And lastly, we consider what accountability means in non-democracies and consider whether it can be achieved.

The readings in course will help you use the scientific method through readings, lectures, case studies, and discussions. In order to do so, I will introduce some data in class. A background in political science is not required, but I encourage you to bring any prior expertise to discussions. While some of the theoretical concepts may come from the U.S. context, most of the examples we read will be about developing countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course students will be able to: 1) identify and explain why it is hard to achieve accountability in government policies and the factors that influence it, 2) apply theoretical views, including the political agency framework, to new issues, 3) demonstrate knowledge of the roles of political actors and institutions on government effectiveness in implementing policies in issue areas including health and education, 4) demonstrate critical thinking, social scientific inquiry, and writing skills related to policymaking and political accountability.

## **Course Structure and Expectations**

### **1. Participation in Seminar Discussions (10%)**

This is a seminar-style course with a mix of lecture and class discussions. In order to be able to actively participate in class discussions at all times, you will be expected to have completed all the required readings before class. The readings for this course are challenging. During discussion time, I invite you to ask your own questions, critique the author's argument in the readings, and constructively debate your peers.

## **2. Assignments**

### **2.1 Short Response Papers (30%)**

You will write three response papers that engage in the topics of the course. The purpose of the paper is to critically evaluate the argument of a reading by examining how well its own objectives are reached, and derive additional research that should follow or other policy implications from it. You may critically examine the author's theoretical framework, arguments, methodological approach, evidence, or conclusions. Each paper should be no more than 3 pages, 1.5 spaced. You should choose one or two readings to evaluate and you should state clearly which articles you are writing about. If you are writing about two readings, you need to make comparisons or links between the two readings. You may also situate your discussion in the larger context of class lectures or discussions. You should include a discussion of possible future research topics or policy implications that may follow from the results of the paper. You will receive a letter grade on your paper, which will be converted into a numerical grade when calculating your final grade. Each paper is 10% of your final grade.

### **2.2. Presentations of Cases (30%)**

The purpose of the group presentation is to inform each other of current topics or cases of public policy implementation in a developing country. Each person needs to present twice during the semester. If you work as a group, ideally it should be 2 people. As a group or an individual, you should identify a current case of public service delivery in a developing country, provide background information about the public policy and its political context, and discuss issues or obstacles regarding accountability that is relevant to the case. You should use some numerical data in your presentation. You will sign up for one of the weeks to make your presentation. You will present your case in a 20 minute presentation in class. You should submit a file of your presentation materials (i.e. powerpoint slides or handouts), but you do not need to write up a separate report. Each presentation will be 15% of your grade. If you work as a group, you will receive one letter grade as a group. I will explain further details early in the semester.

### **2.3 Final Paper (30%)**

The purpose of the final paper is to analyse what conditions have made achieving accountability in a public policy successful or not. You may choose your own topic or choose a case/topic from any of the presentations. Each student must have their own individual final paper. In the final paper, you should raise an interesting question related to the topics in this course, explain the case you have chosen, apply the concepts and skills you have learned from this class in a comprehensive manner to answer that question, identify key actors in the decision making process, analyse what conditions contributed to the degree of accountability achieved in the

implementation of the public policy in your case, and recommend some policy suggestions that follow from your analysis. If you wish, you may write on a different case than what was presented, but I recommend that you discuss your paper topic and research question with me in advance if you decide to do so. In order to help you develop your paper I will ask for your (1) preliminary topic (1 page), and (2) outline (not rough drafts! 1-2 pages) and bibliography during the course. I will, however, *not* read rough drafts of your paper. You do not need to use statistical analysis in your paper, but you will need to do some research on your own. The final paper will demonstrate the student's ability to synthesize course material, apply appropriate concepts, make logical arguments, and constructively critique the situation.

### **Administrative Notes**

**Attendance:** Class attendance is mandatory. An absence may be considered excused according to the university's policy under Student Rule 7 (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>). However, you are responsible for providing prior notification and appropriate documentation as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence. If an absence is excused, the instructor will either provide the opportunity to make up any assignments or exams or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor.

On rare occasions, the instructor may have to miss a class due to academic responsibilities out of town. If so, the instructor will properly announce it beforehand. The instructor reserves the right to reschedule class at a time when the vast majority of students are available for a make-up class.

**Course website:** All readings will be posted on the course website or online (links provided below).

**Grading:** You will be given a letter grade (with + and -) on all of your assignments (I will show the numeric to letter conversion chart in class). Any late assignments will result in a downgrade of half a letter grade per day (i.e. A to A- or B+ to B per day.) Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60.

**Office hours:** You are welcome to come to my office hours for any questions, comments, or concerns you may have. I highly encourage you to come in and talk about your final paper topic as well. I will not be reading any first drafts of the assignments during office hours.

**Honor Code:** Every student is expected to adhere to the Aggie Honor Code. "An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do." Violation of the Code can result in disciplinary action. If you have any questions about Honor Council Rules and Procedures, please ask the professor. You may find more information at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be

guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Disability Services in Cain Hall, call 845-1637, or email [disability@tamu.edu](mailto:disability@tamu.edu).

## Course Schedule

### **Part I**

Political Settings for Policymaking:  
What is political accountability and why is it hard to achieve?

#### Week 1 (Sept. 1): Introduction: Governance and Accountability

Keywords: overview, definition of concepts, political regimes, institutions in democracies, delegation, concepts of representation

- Manin, Bernard, Adam Przeworski, and Susan Stokes, eds. 1999. *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1.
- Kiewiet, D. Roderick and Matthew McCubbins. 1991. *The Logic of Delegation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch 2.

#### Week 2 (Sept. 8): Government Institutions and Quality

Keywords: political agency framework, principals, agents, weak institutions

- Review readings from Week 1.
- Besley, Timothy. 2006. *Principled Agents: The Political Economy of Good Government*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chs. 1 and 3.
- Adsera, Alicia, Carles Boix, and M. Payne. 2003. "Are You Being Served? Political Accountability and Quality of Government." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*. 19(2): 445-490.

Recommended Readings:

- Barro, Robert. 1973. "The Control of Politicians: An Economic Model," *Public Choice* 14: 19-42. <http://www.springerlink.com/content/u526m437869287r3/>
- Ferejohn, John. 1986. "Incumbent Performance and Electoral Control," *Public Choice* 50 (1986): 5-25. <http://springerlink.metapress.com/content/n766x82g36618240/>

#### Week 3 (Sept. 15): Voting

Keywords: electoral accountability, retrospective voting, electoral rules, forms of government

- Fearon, James. 1999. "Electoral Accountability and the Control of Politicians: Selecting Good Types versus Sanctioning Poor Performance." in Bernard Manin, Adam Przeworski, and Susan Stokes, eds., *Democracy, Accountability and Representation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2.
- Ashworth, Scott. 2012. "Electoral Accountability: Recent Theoretical and Empirical Work." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 183-201.

Recommended:

- Persson, T. and G. Tabellini 1999. "The Size and Scope of Government: Comparative Politics with Rational Politicians, 1998 Alfred Marshall Lecture." *European Economic Review* 43: 699-735.  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0014292198001317>
- Lizzeri, A., Persico, N., 2001. "The Provision of Public Goods under Alternative Electoral Incentives." *The American Economic Review*. Vol. 91. No. 1.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2677906>

#### Week 4 (Sept. 22): Distributive Politics

Keywords: special interest groups, limitations of electoral control, clientelism, machine politics

- **Assignment due:** Response paper #1 due at the beginning of the class on Sept. 22.
- Gene M. Grossman and Elhanan Helpman. 2001. *Special Interest Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press. Chapters 4 and 5.
- Dixit, Avinash and John Londregan. 1996 "The Determinants of Success of Special Interests in Redistributive Politics" *The Journal of Politics*. Vol 58 (4): 1132-1155.
- Golden, Miriam and Brian Min. 2013. "Distributive Politics Around the World." *Annual Review of Political Science*.
- Stokes, Susan. 2005. "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina." *American Political Science Review*, 3: 315-25.

Recommended:

- Simeon Nichter. 2008. "Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot," *The American Political Science Review*. 102 : 19-31.  
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?aid=1720760>

### **Part II**

Problems of Policymaking and Accountability:

What are some obstacles in achieving accountability in developing countries?

#### Week 5 (Sept. 29): Local-level Governance

- **Assignment due:** Case presentations start this week!
- Treisman, Daniel. 2002. "Decentralization and the Quality of Government." <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/treisman/Papers/DecandGovt.pdf>
- Faguet, Jean-Paul. 2004. "Does Decentralization Increase Government Responsiveness to Local Needs?: Evidence from Bolivia." *Journal of Public Economics*. Vol. 88, Issues 3-4: 867-893.
- Callen, Michael, Saad Bulzar, Ali Hasanain, Yasir Khan. 2014. "The Political Economy of Public Employee Absence: Experimental Evidence from Pakistan."
- Reinikka, Ritva and Jakob Svensson. 2004. "Local Capture: Evidence from a Central Government Transfer Program in Uganda." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*. 679-705.

#### Week 6 (Oct. 6): The Role of Information I - Mass Media

- **Assignment due:** Paper topic(s) due at the beginning of the class.
- **Note:** One of the weeks in Oct. will be rescheduled. I will let you know as soon as possible about which week it is and schedule a make-up class.
- Besley, Timothy and Robin Burgess. 2002. "The Political Economy of Government Responsiveness: Theory and Evidence from India." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117(4): 1415-1451.
- Stromberg, David. 2004. "Mass Media Competition, Political Competition, and Public Policy." *The Review of Economic Studies* 71(1): 265-284.

#### Recommended:

- Snyder, James and David Stromberg. 2010. "Press Coverage and Political Accountability." *Journal of Political Economy*. Vol. 118, issue 2: 355-408.

#### Week 7 (Oct. 13): The Role of Information II - Information Campaigns

- Khemani, Stuti. 2007. "Can Information Campaigns Overcome Political Obstacles to Serving the Poor?" in Shantayanan Devarajan and Ingrid Widlund, eds. *The Politics of Service Delivery in Democracies: Better Access for the Poor*. Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein. 2012. "Policing Politicians: Citizen Empowerment and Political Accountability in Uganda."

#### Week 8 (Oct. 20 ): Corruption

- **Assignment due:** Response paper #2 due at the beginning of the class on Oct. 20.
- Olken, Benjamin. 2007. "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from Field Experiment in Indonesia." *Journal of Political Economy* 115 (April): 200-49.

- Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. 2011. "Electoral Accountability and Corruption: Evidence from the Audits of Local Governments." *American Economic Review*, 101(4): 1274-1311.
- Di Tella, Rafael and Ernesto Schargrotsky. 2003. The Role of Wages and Auditing During a Crackdown on Corruption in the City of Buenos Aires. 46(1): April.

#### Week 9 (Oct. 27): Monitoring

- Bjorkman, Martina, and Jakob Svensson. 2009. "Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment on Community-Based Monitoring in Uganda." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124(2): 735-769.
- Barr, Abigail, Frederick Mugisha, Peiter Serneels, and Andrew Zeitlin. 2012. "Information and Collective Action in Community-based Monitoring of Schools: Field and Lab Experimental Evidence from Uganda."

### **Part III**

#### Some Policy Areas in Developing Countries

#### Week 10 (Nov. 3): Disadvantaged Groups

- **Assignment due:** Final paper outline (1-2 pages) with bibliography due at the beginning of the class.
- Khemani 2013. "Buying Votes vs. Supplying Public Services: Political Incentives to under-invest in Pro-Poor Policies."
- Bardhan, Pranab and Dilip Mookherjee. 2006. "Pro-poor targeting and Accountability of Local Governments in West Bengal." *Journal of Development Economics*. 79(2), April: 303-327.
- Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra and Esther Duflo. 2004. "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India." *Econometrica* 72, 5 (Sept.): 1409-443.

#### Week 11 (Nov. 10): Education

- **Assignment due:** Response paper #3 due at the beginning of the class on Nov.10.
- World Bank. 2003. "Basic Education Services." World Development Report 2004: *Making Services Work for Poor People*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Ch. 7.
- Reinikka Ritva and Jakob Svensson. 2005. "Fighting Corruption to Improve Schooling: Evidence from a Newspaper Campaign in Uganda." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 3 (2-3)" 259-67

- Keefer, Philip, and Stuti Khemani, 2011. "Mass Media and Public Services: The Effects of Radio Access on Public Education in Benin." World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 5559.

#### Week 12 (Nov. 17): Health

- World Bank. 2003. "Health and Nutrition Services." World Development Report 2004: *Making Services Work for Poor People*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Ch. 8.
- Bjorkman-Nyqvist, Martina, Damien de Walque, and Jakob Svensson. 2013. "Information is Power: Experimental Evidence of the Long Run Impact of Community Based-Monitoring."

### **Part IV**

#### Accountability in Non-Democracies

#### Week 13 (Nov. 24): Regime Type and Policymaking

- Lake, David and Matthew Baum. 2001. "The Invisible Hand of Democracy." *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (6): 587-621
- Gandhi, Jennifer, and Ellen Lust-Okar. "Elections under Authoritarianism." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 403-422.

#### Week 14 (Dec. 1): Accountability in Authoritarian Regimes

- **Note:** Some review and wrap-up!
- Tsai, Lily L. "Solidary groups, informal accountability, and local public goods provision in rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101.02 (2007): 355-372.
- Malesky, Edmund, Paul Schuler and Anh Tran. 2012. "The Adverse Effects of Sunshine: A Field Experiment on Legislative Transparency in an Authoritarian Assembly." *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 106, Issue 04: 762-786.

#### Week 15 : Finals

- Final Paper due on **Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 4:35 pm**. You must submit a hardcopy of your paper!