This seminar has three purposes and related sets of requirements:

First, it conducts a critical audit of the “American Political Development” (APD) literature by considering scholarship within and across the subfield. Participants are thus expected to come to class prepared to fully participate in the discussion of the readings. [This seminar is emphatically not a lecture class.] Additionally, participants will help introduce and direct each discussion on a rotating basis. Leaders will additionally help guide that week’s seminar discussion. Full details to be discussed, however, if there is a book length manuscript included in the week’s readings, the week’s leader will find and post two scholarly reviews of the book. All other seminar participants will come to seminar with a two page “reflection” document that demonstrates engagement with the material. They will be turned-in at the end of the seminar and returned the next week. Each non group leading participant can opt out of this requirement once during the semester without penalty. Reflection documents are not individually graded, per se, but they form an integral part of each student’s course portfolio, which will influence the participation grade.

Second, it attends to issues of method, especially in regards to the ways in which social scientific research is written and engages the study of ideas, institutions, and cycles in APD. Participants are thus expected to complete two short, take-home, essays (length TBD).

Third, the course provides a forum for the development of research. Participants are thus expected to either fashion an APD oriented / affiliated research proposal joined to a literature review) or write an APD paper that could be submitted to a conference or journal. Other options may be possible to fulfill this requirement. Let’s talk. For example, I may encourage some students to write a 12-15 comparative book review of:


Grades for the seminar will be calculated as follows: leadership of assigned discussions 5% each (x 2); participation in class discussion and portfolio of reflection documents 10%; analytic essays 15% each (x 2); final long project 50%.

100 – 92.5 % = A; 92.4 – 90.0 = A-; 89.9 – 88.0 = B+; 87.9 – 80.0 = B; 79.9 – 70.0 = C; 69.9 – 60.0 = D; 59.9 – 0.00 = F.

Attendance Policy: I expect that everyone will come to every class, be on time, actively participate in course discussions, and demonstrate that he/she has completed and reflected upon the assigned readings.
**Honor Code:** Students in this course will abide by the Baylor Honor Code. This includes, but is not limited to, the requirement for academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, and any other form of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and, at a minimum, constitute grounds for failure of the course.

**Email:** e-mail is a courtesy and not a substitute for attending the course or for a discussion during office hours. However I will, from time to time, need to send the class announcements via email. You are responsible for getting my e-mails, so set up your accounts properly. If you have questions or issues you need to discuss, I am reasonably available via e-mail.

Books you may want to buy, borrow, or otherwise get your hands on are underlined.

**Schedule, Readings, and Due Dates:**

Jan 15 **Introduction:** Let’s Talk About the American Politics Sub-Field and APD

Jan 22 **APD: Overview.**


Jan 29 **APD: Culture / Ideas, Cycles, and Institutions**


Feb 5 **1. Culture and Ideas in APD.**

**A. Liberal consensus vs Multi-traditions:**


Recommended:


Feb 12 **B. Lost Alternatives part I**


Short analytic essay assigned.

Feb 19 C. Lost Alternatives part II


Feb 26 Tentative Talk Week (date TBD) – Daniel DiSalvo


Short analytic essay due.

Mar 5 II. Cycles in American Political Development

D. Conceptions of Time as an ‘Ordering Mechanism’


Recommended:


Mar12 Spring Break – NO CLASS

Mar 19 II. Cycles in American Political Development

A. Mood Cycles (Ideas as Mechanisms of Change)


Mar 26 B. The Political Time Cycle


April 2  III. Institutions and Statebuilding

A. The Origins of Political Parties


Short analytic essay assigned.

April 9 Talk Week ~ Stephen Skowronek on Friday the 11th (prep meeting on the 9th)


April 16 B. Institutions and Agency


Short analytic essay due.

April 23 Tentative Talk Week (date TBD) ~ Jeff Tulis: reading TBD.

April 30 Writing Week

May XX Final Project Due