

GOV1521
Bureaucratic Politics:
Government, Military,
Social and Economic Organizations

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Electronic and Contact Information

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Bureaucracy

- All around us, despite (because of?) the electronic age
- Government agencies (military and civilian): Homeland Security, FEMA, Army, FDA
- Where there is contracting out or privatization, still bureaucratic: e.g., Halliburton.
- Schools, Universities
- Economic Corporations: Microsoft, Ford/Toyota,
- Bureaucratic orgs not necessarily "BIG": 30-member law firm can be bureaucratic.

Bureaucracy:
The Organization as Desk, or Library

- **Bureau** [OED]: ‘A chest of drawers with a writing-board’ (1.); a writing-desk with drawers for papers
- Samuel Foote, *The Patron* (1764): “I suppose..my memory or mind to be a chest of drawers, a kind of bureau” (*Patron* II. i).
- Max Weber: systematic record-keeping central to concept of bureaucracy.
- This is why electronic age (Internet, B2B) can advance bureaucracy instead of lessening it.

Aims of This Class

Partial Intro to Organization Theory

- Behavioral org theory (Simon, March, bounded rationality): FOCUS ON COGNITION
- Transaction-cost org theory (Williamson, North): FOCUS ON CONTRACTS (implicit and explicit)
- Reputation and status-based theories theory: FOCUS ON PURSUIT OF STATUS, ESTEEM
- Cultural and symbolic theories (legitimacy): FOCUS ON PURSUIT OF LEGITIMACY, EMULATION
- Others

Aims of This Class

Study of Bureaucratic Organizations in Modern Life (mainly U.S.)

- Military/security
- Government agencies
- Economic corporations and firms
- Schools and universities
- Touch on others: churches, hospitals, clinics, law firms, labor unions...

Aims of This Class

- Let the Theory and the Cases Talk to Each Other
- Theory can guide us in reading and interpreting narratives and cases
- Cases can be used to test the theory.
- Cases/narratives also shed light on what the theories inevitably miss, the complications that defy simplicity, and make lucid what theories must assume.

Readings: Books

- Gormley, William T., and Steven Balla. 2006. *Bureaucracy and Democracy* (Washington: Brookings).
- Coffman, Edward M. *The Regulars: The U. S. Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
- Jones and Baumgartner, *The Politics of Attention: How Government Prioritizes Problems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
- Halperin, Morton. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, Second Edition (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2006).

Readings: Books

- Skowronek, Stephen. *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
- Kaufman, Herbert. *The Forest Ranger* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future).
- Chandler, Alfred. *The Visible Hand*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Keller, Morton. *Making Harvard Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Requirements

- Lectures and Readings
- Three Course Papers (5-7 pp), plus Final Paper (7-10 pp)
- Possibility of Research Paper for Final Paper, for Extra Credit (we can discuss)

- Let's walk through syllabus, talk about cases that and Qs that interest you
