

Political Science 10: Introduction to American Politics

Week 9

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November 30, 2017

Plan for the Day

- Reading Quiz
- Go over learning outcomes
- Announcements
- Answer questions from lecture this week and/or the reading
- Review Pivotal Politics, discussing Woon (2012) throughout

Reading Quiz

- Clearly write your name at the top of the quiz
- Turn your quiz over when you are finished
- Good luck!

Learning Outcomes

By the end of section today, you should be able to:

- Draw a diagram of a spatial model of voting in the House and the Senate
- Identify and label the following key players in models of voting in the House and the Senate
 - Median voter
 - Filibuster pivot
 - Status quo
 - Feasible Area
 - Gridlock Interval
- Explain how this model helps us make predictions about when policy change will occur

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 - Always available over email! Submit questions online too!
- Pick up midterms, review your multiple choice responses, review section reading quizzes in office hours

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- Course review in Week 10

Participation Extra Credit Opportunity!

- Purpose: Help prepare for the final exam
- Task 1: Write two [or more if you want] multiple choice questions based on content covered in POLI 10.
 - Imagine that you were writing the final exam, what would you ask?
 - Include the question, 4 answer choices, and the correct answer
 - Email to me by 5pm on Wednesday, December 6th
 - 1 percentage point added to participation grade
- Task 2: Participate in a final exam review study group.
 - Email me the names of the group members, 1 thing you taught someone, and 1 thing someone taught you
 - Email me this information by 12/13 at 5pm
 - 1 percentage point added to participation grade

Questions??

What questions do you have from lecture or from the reading this week?

Pivotal Politics

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 - Agenda power
 - Cloture
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 - Filibuster
 - Policymaking process
 - Gridlock
 - Polarization
 - Representation
 - Median Voter Theorem
 - Spatial model of voting
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- As you study for the final, try explaining how each of the above concepts (and others you think of) connects to pivotal politics

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- Choices: status quo or alternative policy

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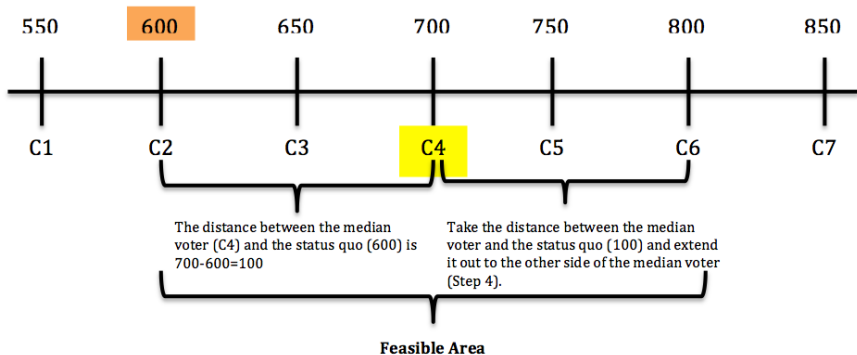
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- Why is this the **feasible area**?

Finding the Feasible Area in the House (Open Legislature)



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- Why?

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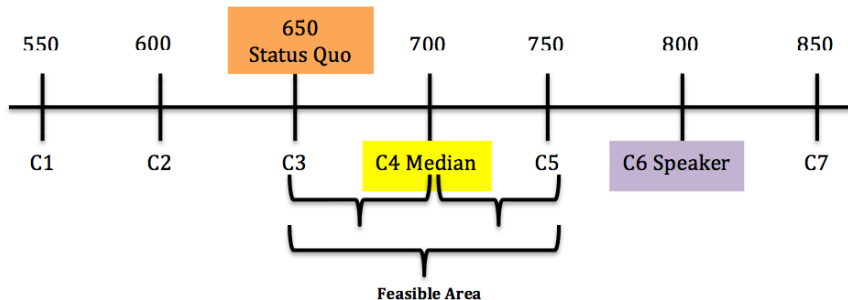
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- Will the median voter's preference win out?
- Why doesn't the Speaker only allow bills that propose his/her exact preference onto the floor for a vote?

Spatial Voting in the House—Agenda Control



Spatial Voting in the House—Huge Changes in Status Quo

(If time!)

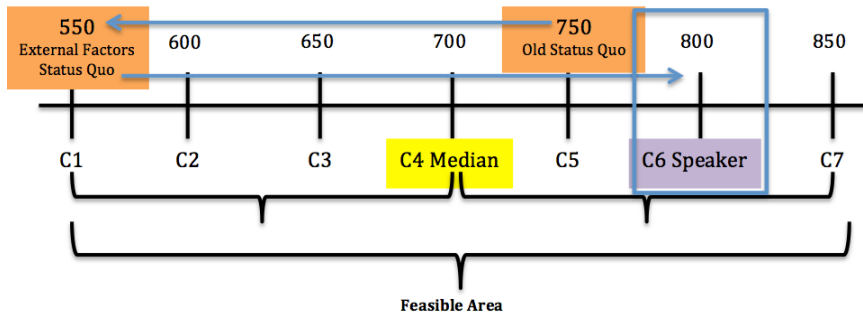
- What if the status quo changes due to external factors beyond the legislature?
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- Is the Speaker happy? Why?

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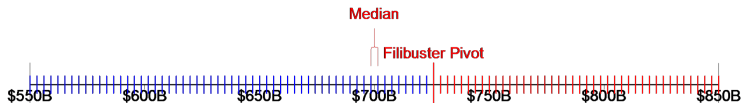
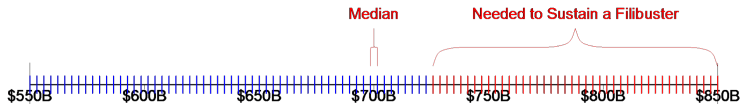
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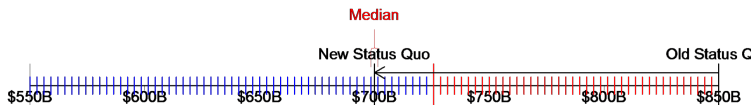
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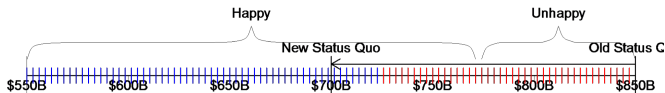
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 - ① Find the point halfway between the new status quo and the old status quo
 - ② Senators between this midpoint and the old status quo are *unhappy* with the policy change/new status quo
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 - 4 Is the filibuster pivot in the “happy” range?
 - 5 Is the new status quo in the “happy” range?

Spatial Voting in the Senate—A More Realistic Version

(If time!)

- What about when there are no Senators in the middle of the policy space? Can the median Senator do better than the status quo?
 - 1 Draw the feasible area around the *filibuster pivot* instead of around the median voter. Why?



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 - ① Draw the feasible area around the *filibuster pivot* instead of around the median voter. Why?
 - ② Is the median voter in the feasible area?
 - YES → median voter can do better than the status quo
 - NO → median voter is better off with the status quo

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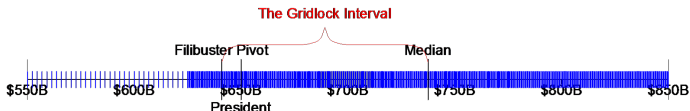
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- We can put all of our relevant actors (median voter in the House, filibuster pivot in the Senate, and the president) on the same policy space
- We can use this to identify a gridlock interval

Spatial Voting in the Policymaking Process

How can we identify where the Gridlock Interval is?

- 1 Identify the location of the median voter in the House, filibuster pivot in the Senate, and the President
- 2 The space between the farthest left and farthest right pivots forms the gridlock interval



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- Remind me: When can we expect the gridlock interval to change?
- What do you think the gridlock interval would look like for 2016?
Let's draw it!
 - Senate has 2 more Democrats (46 total), 2 fewer Republicans (52 total), and 2 Independents
 - House has 6 more Democrats (193 total), 9 fewer Republicans (237 total), and 5 vacancies
 - President is a Republican

Questions to Ponder

- How do institutional rules related to policymaking, such as the number of votes required to end a filibuster or override a veto, impact the government's ability to pass laws? Which rules do you think slow the process the most? What do you think would make the process faster?
- Do you think that these rules that can slow the policymaking process help the government better serve the people? Do you think we have more or less agency loss with these rules? How do they impact a legislator's ability to represent his/her constituents?
- What strategies do you think legislators might use to try to fight gridlock? What about informal strategies? What might the president try to do?