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
Announcements

• Reminder: Office Hours are Wednesdays 8-9:30am, 11-11:45am in SSB 341, or by appointment (tncarlson@ucsd.edu).

Take-home essays due this week
Hard copy due in section today
Electronic copy submitted to Turnitin via TritonEd on Friday, December 1 at 11:59pm

Extra office hours in advance of the final exam (Friday, Dec. 15th 8am):
Tuesday, 12/5, 9am-12pm
Thursday, 12/7, 9am-12pm
Always available over email! Submit questions online too!

Pick up midterms, review your multiple choice responses, review section reading quizzes in office hours

Please complete your evaluations for POLI 10! We sincerely value your feedback!

Course review in Week 10
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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
What questions do you have from lecture or from the reading this week?
Why is this model useful? What does it help us understand?

What key course concepts does the model involve?

Checks and balances
Separation of powers
Agenda power
Cloture
Veto power
Filibuster
Policymaking process
Gridlock
Polarization
Representation
Median Voter Theorem
Spatial model of voting

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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Pivotal Politics

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Unidimensional policy space (a single line along which we can align legislators in some order)
The Basics

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  - House: median voter, Speaker
  - Senate: median voter, filibuster pivot
  - President
The Basics

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- Players/Actors:
  - House: median voter, Speaker
  - Senate: median voter, filibuster pivot
  - President
- Choices: status quo or alternative policy
What range of bills could beat the status quo?
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1. Identify the pivotal voter (median voter!—Why?)
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2. Identify the status quo (usually given to you)
What range of bills could beat the status quo?

1. Identify the pivotal voter (median voter!—Why?)
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3. Find out how far away the pivotal voter is from the status quo
Spatial Voting in the House—Open Legislature

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4. Add that distance (Step 3) from the median voter to the other side, opposite the status quo
Spatial Voting in the House—Open Legislature

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- Why is this the feasible area?
Finding the Feasible Area in the House (Open Legislature)

The distance between the median voter (C4) and the status quo (600) is 700-600=100

Take the distance between the median voter and the status quo (100) and extend it out to the other side of the median voter (Step 4).

Feasible Area
How can we tell which policy proposal in the feasible area wins?
Spatial Voting in the House—Open Legislature

- How can we tell which policy proposal in the feasible area wins?
- In an open legislature, the median voter’s policy wins
How can we tell which policy proposal in the feasible area wins?
In an open legislature, the median voter's policy wins
Why?
What policies will survive if the Speaker of the House has agenda control?
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1. Identify the status quo, the median voter, and the Speaker.
Spatial Voting in the House—Agenda Control

- What policies will survive if the Speaker of the House has agenda control?
  1. Identify the status quo, the median voter, and the Speaker
  2. Find the feasible area using the same process as before
What policies will survive if the Speaker of the House has agenda control?

1. Identify the status quo, the median voter, and the Speaker.
2. Find the feasible area using the same process as before.
3. Knowing that the Speaker has agenda control, the policy in the feasible area that is closest to the Speaker’s preference will become the new status quo.
Spatial Voting in the House—Agenda Control

- What policies will survive if the Speaker of the House has agenda control?
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  2. Find the feasible area using the same process as before
  3. Knowing that the Speaker has agenda control, the policy in the feasible area that is closest to the Speaker’s preference will become the new status quo

- 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

- 650 Status Quo
- C4 Median
- Feasible Area
- C6 Speaker

C1  C2  C3  C4 Median  C5  C6 Speaker  C7
(If time!)

- What if the status quo changes due to external factors beyond the legislature?
  1. Identify the location of the status quo, median voter, and the Speaker
  2. Draw the feasible area using the same steps as before
(If time!)

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  1. Identify the location of the status quo, median voter, and the Speaker
  2. Draw the feasible area using the same steps as before

- Is the Speaker happy? Why?
Spatial Voting in the House—Huge Changes in Status Quo

550
External Factors
Status Quo

600
650
700
750
Old Status Quo

800

C1 C2 C3 C4 Median C5 C6 Speaker C7

Feasible Area
Remind me: What rules do we need to know about how the Senate passes laws?
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- How can we tell if a bill will pass the senate?
Spatial Voting in the Senate

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2. Move the status quo to the proposed policy location
3. Find the range of Senators who are happy and unhappy with the proposed policy (new status quo)
   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
   3. Senators between the midpoint and the end of the spectrum are happy 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?
(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?
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?
  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
Spatial Voting in the Policymaking Process

Remind me: Generally speaking, what is the policymaking process in the US?

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.
Remind me: Generally speaking, what is the policymaking process in the US?
Spatial Voting in the Policymaking Process

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We can use this to identify a gridlock interval.
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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What is the key finding?

Remind me: When can we expect the gridlock interval to change?
Pivotal Politics in the 113th Congress

- Woon (2012) applies this model to make predictions about how productive the 113th Congress would be
- What is the key finding?
- 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?