Special Research Course: Direct Democracy
POLS G9010

Spring 2011
Time: TBA
Location: IAB 733

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This course is designed as an overview of the major debates in the study of direct democracy institutions. The readings are organized around nine topics, and are drawn largely from the U.S. and Swiss cases. The primary goals of the course are to familiarize students with the principal questions being asked by scholars in this subfield, the methodological approaches employed, and the avenues available for future research. Students will be asked to critically evaluate the existing literature and to complete an original research paper.

TOPICS

The Origins of Direct Democracy in the United States

(1) Goebel, Thomas. 2002. *A Government by the People: Direct Democracy in America, 1890-1940*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

(2) Mowry, George. 1951. *The California Progressives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

(3) Smith, Daniel A. and Dustin Fridkin. 2008. "Delegating Direct Democracy: Interparty Legislative Competition and the Adoption of the Initiative in the American States," *American Political Science Review* 102: 333-350.

The Question of Voter Competence

(1) Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections," *American Political Science Review* 88:63-76.

(2) Gerber, Elisabeth and Justin H. Phillips. 2003. "Development Ballot Measures, Interest Group Endorsements, and the Political Geography of Growth Preferences," *American Journal of Political Science* 47:625-39.

(3) Christin, Thomas, Simon Hug and Pascal Sciarini. 2002. "Interests and Information in Referendums: An Analysis of Swiss Voters." *European Journal of Political Research* 41:759-776.

(4) Selb, Peter. 2008. "Supersized Votes: Ballot Length, Uncertainty, and Choice in Direct Legislation Elections," *Public Choice* 135: 319–336.

Does Direct Democracy Increase Government Responsiveness?

(1) Gerber, Elisabeth R. 1996 "Legislative Response to the Threat of Popular Initiatives." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(1):99-128.

(2) Lascher , Edward L. Jr., Michael G. Hagen and Steven A. Rochlin. 1996. "Gun Behind the Door? Ballot Initiatives, State Policies and Public Opinion," *The Journal of Politics* 58(3):760-775.

(3) Matsusaka, John G. 2001. "Problems with a Methodology Used to Evaluate the Voter Initiative," *The Journal of Politics* 63(4):1250-1256.

(4) Besley, Timothy, and Stephen Coate. 2008. "Issue Unbundling via Citizens' Initiatives," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 3:379-397.

(5) Hug, Simon. 2004. "Occurrence and Policy Consequences of Referendums," *Journal of Theoretical* Politics 16(3):321-356.

Interest Groups

(1) Gerber, Elisabeth R. 1999. *The Populist Paradox: Interest Group Influence and the Promise of Direct Legislation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

(2) Boehmke, Frederick J. 2002. "The Effect of Direct Democracy on the Size and Diversity of State Interest Group Populations." *The Journal of Politics* 64(3): 827–844.

(3) Boehmke, Frederick J. and Daniel C. Bowen. 2010. "Direct Democracy and Individual Interest Group Membership." *The Journal of Politics* 72(3): 659-671.

(4) Matsusaka, John G. 2009. "Direct Democracy and Public Employees." *American Economic Review*. 99(5): 2227–46.

Initiative Campaigns

(1) Stratmann, Thomas. 2006. “Is Spending More Potent For or Against a Proposition? Evidence from Ballot Measures,” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 788-801.

(2) de Figueiredo, John M., Chang Ho Ji, and Thad Kousser. 2010. Financing Direct Democracy: Revisiting the Research on Campaign Spending and Citizen Initiatives. NBER Working Paper No. 16356.

(3) Meredith, Marc. 2009. “The Strategic Timing of Direct Democracy,” *Economics and Politics* 21(1):159-77.

(4) Nicholson, Stephen P. 2005. *Voting the Agenda: Candidates, Elections, and Ballot Propositions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Does Direct Democracy Undermine Minority Rights?

(1) Gamble, Barbara. 1997. “Putting Civil Rights to a Popular Vote,” *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 245-69.

(2) Frey, Bruno S., and Lorenz Goette. 1998. "Does the Popular Vote Destroy Civil Rights?" *American Journal of Political Science* 42(4):1343-48.

(3) Donovan, Todd, and Shaun Bowler. 1998. "Direct Democracy and Minority Rights: An Extension," *American Journal of Political* Science 45(3):1020-1024.

(4) Hajnal, Zoltan L., Elisabeth R. Gerber, and Hugh Louch. 2002. “Minorities and Direct Legislation: Evidence from California Ballot Proposition Elections,” *Journal of Politics* 64(1):154-77.

(5) Haider-Markel, Donald P., Alana Querze, and Kara Lindaman. 2007. “Lose, Win or Draw? A Reexamination of Direct Democracy and Minority Rights," *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (2):304-314.

How Does Direct Democracy Shape Fiscal Policy?

(1) Romer, Thomas and Howard Rosenthal. 1979. “Bureaucrats Versus Voters: On the Political Economy of Resource Allocation by Direct Democracy,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 93(4):563-587.

(2) Smith, Daniel A. 1998. *Tax Crusaders and the Politics of Direct Democracy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

(3) Matsusaka, John. 2004. *For the Many or the Few: The Initiative, Public Policy, and American Democracy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

(4) Feld, Lars P., and John G. Matsusaka. 2003. "Budget Referendums and Government Spending: Evidence from Swiss Cantons," *Journal of Public Economics* 87:2703-24.

Other Direct Democracy Effects

(1) Smith, Daniel A. and Caroline J. Tolbert. 2004. *Educated by Initiative: The Effects of Direct Democracy on Citizens and Political Organizations in the American States*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

(2) Frey, Bruno S and Alois Stutzer. 2000. "Happiness, Economy and Institutions," *The Economic Journal* 110:918-38.

(3) Mendelsohn, Matthew and Fred Cutler. 2000. "The Effect of Referendums on Democratic Citizens: Information, Politicization, Efficacy, and Tolerance," *British Journal of Political Science* 30:669–98.

(4) Donovan, Todd , Caroline J. Tolbert and Daniel A. Smith. 2008. "Priming Presidential Votes by Direct Democracy," *The Journal of Politics* 70: 1217-1231.

The Implementation Problem

(1) Gerber, Elisabeth R., Arthur Lupia, Mathew D. McCubbins. 2004. "When Does Government Limit the Impact of Voter Initiatives? The Politics of Implementation and Enforcement," *The Journal of Politics* 66:43-68.

(2) Miller, Kenneth P. 2010. *Direct Democracy and the Courts*. Cambridge University Press.

(3) Schacter, Jane S. 1995. "The Pursuit of 'Popular Intent': Interpretive Dilemmas in Direct Democracy," *Yale Law Review* 105(1):107-76.

Wrapping up

(1) Lupia, Arthur, and John G. Matsusaka (2004): "Direct Democracy: New Approaches to Old Questions", *Annual Review of Political Science* 7:463-482

(2) Matsusaka, John G. 2005. "Direct Democracy Works," Journal of Economic Perspectives 19(2): 185-206.