

ECON 437: Political Economy
Bilkent University
Spring 2024

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Lectures: Tuesday 15:30-17:20 (A-230), Friday 11:30-12:20 (A-230)
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Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to recent research on political economy. It is designed to bring students up-to-date with the theoretical and empirical studies in the political economy literature.

We will gain theoretical insights into collective decision-making, electoral politics, voter behavior, politician behavior, and policy-making processes. Along each step, the implications of these theoretical insights will be discussed, and empirical tests of these implications will be covered. We will have opportunities to discuss theoretical modeling techniques as well as econometric identification and estimation methods. If time allows, topics of special interest such as media, collective action, and culture and institutions will be covered.

Prerequisites

This course is designed as an *advanced undergraduate/graduate* course, and will be covered in a manner that resembles a graduate-level course. To be able to follow the material, knowledge of game theory (Econ 204 or Econ 207) and basic econometrics (Econ 301 or IE 452) is required.

Logistics

We will be utilizing Moodle very thoroughly throughout the semester: the resources/readings will be posted there and all communications will be handled through Moodle. Please join the Moodle page and make sure you can receive the announcements: <https://moodle.bilkent.edu.tr/2023-2024-spring/course/view.php?id=1157>

Resources

The main textbook of this course is:

- Persson, Torsten, and Guido Tabellini. *Political Economics: Explaining Economic Policy*. MIT Press, 2002.

The textbook is not required, but note that this is a canonical resource for any scholar who works on political economy. The following resources are also extremely useful:

- Osborne, Martin J. *Models in Political Economy*. Available at: <https://www.economics.utoronto.ca/osborne/mpe/>
- Gehlbach, Scott. *Formal Models of Domestic Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Austen-Smith, David, and Jeffrey S. Banks. *Positive Political Theory I: Collective Preference*. University of Michigan Press, 2000.

- Austen-Smith, David, and Jeffrey S. Banks. *Positive Political Theory II: Strategy and Structure*. University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Besley, Timothy. *Principled Agents?: The Political Economy of Good Government*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Daron Acemoglu, *Political Economy Lecture Notes*. Available at: <https://economics.mit.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/Lecture%20Notes.pdf>

Grading

Participation: I will not be taking attendance, but I expect everyone to participate in the lectures. Participation is an essential part of this course, and it is crucial to have a satisfying learning experience. Also, a reminder that *participation* is not the same thing as *attendance*: I expect you to show up in class *and* answer questions, ask questions, make comments.

Problem Sets: Throughout the semester, you will be assigned 4 or 5 problem sets. The problem sets will contain some rigorous exercises, some open-ended questions, and they may take the form of reading and commenting on some recent papers. You are allowed (even encouraged) to work in groups, but you need to write up your own solutions. We do not expect to see identical answers from different students.

Midterm: We will have an in-class midterm mid-semester. The midterm will be open book, and open notes (internet connection will not be allowed).

Final Essay: At the end of the semester, you will be asked to submit a research essay on a topic of your choice. Here are some general instructions on the research essay:

- The general purpose of the research essay is showing that you have read and understood at least 20 papers on a topic you select. The word “understood” is doing the heavy lifting here. It means you should not only skim through 20 papers, but rather you should illustrate that you understood these papers, by comparing them, synthesizing them, categorizing them, and criticizing them. It is not acceptable to submit a reading list with brief summaries; you should submit a *literature review*.
- You should look for a write-up of *5 to 10 pages*. Do not worry about the page formatting etc. – you are better off exerting effort on reading another paper rather than playing around with page margins.
- Once you conducted your literature review, you will probably realize that there are certain gaps in the literature that can be addressed. You can use this opportunity to prepare a *research proposal*. To this end, you can add a section that discusses “here is something that could be done, with the following research techniques, and here is how I conjecture the results to look like, here are some early results...”

If you are a graduate student taking this course, such a proposal is expected. If you are an undergraduate, the proposal is optional; it is better if you have it, but you do not have to and you can decide how far you want to go with it. Think of it as an investment into the future.

- Throughout the semester, we will have two meetings to discuss your progress. Please submit your final essays by the end of final exams at the very latest. If you submit it earlier, I will have more time to read them and will be able to evaluate them in a more healthy manner.

Your overall grade of the course will be determined by:

Participation:	10%
Problem Sets:	20%
Midterm:	30%
Final Essay:	40%

Presentations: If you are a graduate student, we will also assign a recent working paper for you to present in the classroom. We will do our best to choose a paper that aligns with your research interests; please let us know if you have some suggestions of your own. You should aim for a presentation length of ~30 minutes. We expect you to read and distill the paper, and then discuss with us what you think about it. You do not need to cover every detail in the paper or go through every step in the proof; indeed, it is better if you walk us through some toy example. What we need is some core idea on the contribution of the paper to kickstart the discussion, and a sense of what the paper's contribution is.

Outline

Collective Decision-Making

- Arrow's Impossibility Theorem
 - Austen-Smith and Banks I, Chapter 2.1, 2.2
 - Osborne, Chapter 1
 - Acemoglu Lecture Notes, Chapter 4.1
 - Arrow, Kenneth J. *Social Choice and Individual Values*, Yale University Press, 1951.
 - Maskin, Eric S. "Arrow's Theorem, May's Axioms, and Borda's Rule", Working Paper, 2022.
- Gibbard-Satterthwaite Theorem
 - Austin-Smith and Banks II, Chapter 2.1, 2.2
 - Osborne, Chapter 2
 - Gibbard, Allan. "Manipulation of voting schemes: a general result." *Econometrica* (1973): 587-601.
 - Satterthwaite, Mark Allen. "Strategy-proofness and Arrow's conditions: Existence and correspondence theorems for voting procedures and social welfare functions." *Journal of Economic Theory* 10, no. 2 (1975): 187-217.
 - Reny, Philip J. "Arrow's theorem and the Gibbard-Satterthwaite theorem: a unified approach." *Economics Letters* 70, no. 1 (2001): 99-105.
- Single-peaked preferences and median voter theorem
 - Austen-Smith and Banks I, Chapter 4.1, 4.6
 - Persson and Tabellini, Chapter 2.2.1
 - Osborne, Chapter 1.5
 - Acemoglu Lecture Notes, Chapter 4.3
 - Black, Duncan. *The theory of committees and elections*, Cambridge University Press, 1958.
 - Roberts, Kevin W. S. "Voting over income tax schedules." *Journal of Public Economics* 8, no. 3 (1977): 329-340.
 - Gans, Joshua S., and Michael Smart. "Majority voting with single-crossing preferences." *Journal of Public Economics* 59, no. 2 (1996): 219-237.

Electoral Politics

- Downsian competition
 - Osborne, Chapter 8.2
 - Persson and Tabellini, Chapter 3.2, 3.3

- Acemoglu Lecture Notes, Chapter 4.4, 4.6
 - Gehlbach, Chapter 1
 - Hotelling, Harold. “Stability in Competition.” *Economic Journal* 39, no.153 (1929): 41-57.
 - Downs, Anthony. “An economic theory of political action in a democracy.” *Journal of Political Economy* 65, no. 2 (1957): 135-150.
 - Wittman, Donald. “Candidates with policy preferences: A dynamic model.” *Journal of Economic Theory* 14, no. 1 (1977): 180-189.
- Empirical tests of Downsian competition
 - Naidu, Suresh. “Suffrage, schooling, and sorting in the post-bellum US South.” Working Paper, 2012.
 - Cascio, Elizabeth U., and Ebonya Washington. “Valuing the vote: The redistribution of voting rights and state funds following the voting rights act of 1965.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129, no. 1 (2014): 379-433.
 - Miller, Grant. “Women’s suffrage, political responsiveness, and child survival in American history.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, no. 3 (2008): 1287-1327.
 - Kose, Esra, Elira Kuka, and Na’ama Shenhav. “Women’s suffrage and children’s education.” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 13, no. 3 (2021): 374-405.
 - Fujiwara, Thomas. “Voting technology, political responsiveness, and infant health: Evidence from Brazil.” *Econometrica* 83, no. 2 (2015): 423-464.
- Citizen-candidate models
 - Persson and Tabellini, Chapter 5.1, 5.2, 5.3
 - Osborne, Chapter 10.4
 - Osborne, Martin J., and Al Slivinski. “A model of political competition with citizen-candidates.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 111, no. 1 (1996): 65-96.
 - Besley, Timothy, and Stephen Coate. “An economic model of representative democracy.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, no. 1 (1997): 85-114.
 - Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra, and Esther Duflo. “Women as policy makers: Evidence from a randomized policy experiment in India.” *Econometrica* 72, no. 5 (2004): 1409-1443.
 - Pande, Rohini. “Can mandated political representation increase policy influence for disadvantaged minorities? Theory and evidence from India.” *American Economic Review* 93, no. 4 (2003): 1132-1151.
- Affect versus elect
 - Levitt, Steven D. “How do senators vote? Disentangling the role of voter preferences, party affiliation, and senator ideology.” *American Economic Review* (1996): 425-441.
 - Lee, David S., Enrico Moretti, and Matthew J. Butler. “Do voters affect or elect policies? Evidence from the US House.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119, no. 3 (2004): 807-859.
 - Pettersson-Lidbom, Per. “Do parties matter for economic outcomes? A regression-discontinuity approach.” *Journal of the European Economic Association* 6, no. 5 (2008): 1037-1056.
 - Mian, Atif, Amir Sufi, and Francesco Trebbi. “The political economy of the US mortgage default crisis.” *American Economic Review* 100, no. 5 (2010): 1967-1998.
- Multidimensional voting

- Alesina, Alberto, Reza Baqir, and William Easterly. “Public goods and ethnic divisions.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 114, no. 4 (1999): 1243-1284.
 - Levy, Gilat. “The politics of public provision of education.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 120, no. 4 (2005): 1507-1534.
 - Myerson, Roger B. “Effectiveness of electoral systems for reducing government corruption: a game-theoretic analysis.” *Games and Economic Behavior* 5, no. 1 (1993): 118-132.
- Information aggregation in elections
 - Krishna, Vijay, and John Morgan. “Voluntary voting: Costs and benefits.” *Journal of Economic Theory* 147, no. 6 (2012): 2083-2123.
 - Feddersen, Timothy and Wolfgang Pesendorfer. “Convicting the Innocent: The Inferiority of Unanimous Jury Verdicts under Strategic Voting”, *American Political Science Review* 92, no. 1 (1998): 23-35.
 - Feddersen, Timothy and Wolfgang Pesendorfer. “The Swing Voter’s Curse”, *American Economic Review* 86, no.3 (1996): 408-424.
 - Battaglini, Marco, Rebecca B. Morton and Thomas R. Palfrey. “Information Aggregation and Strategic Abstention in Large Laboratory Elections”, *American Economic Review* 98, vol. 2 (2008): 194-200.
 - Battaglini, Marco, Rebecca B. Morton and Thomas R. Palfrey. “The Swing Voter’s Curse in the Laboratory”, *Review of Economic Studies* 77, no. 1 (2010): 61-89.

Voter Preferences and Behavior

- How do voters vote?: Strategic voting
 - Fujiwara, Thomas. “A regression discontinuity test of strategic voting and Duverger’s Law.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6, no. 3–4 (2011): 197-233.
 - Spenkuch, Jörg L. “Expressive vs. strategic voters: An empirical assessment.” *Journal of Public Economics* 165 (2018): 73-81.
 - Anagol, Santosh, and Thomas Fujiwara. “The runner-up effect.” *Journal of Political Economy* 124, no. 4 (2016): 927-991.
- Why do voters vote?: Theories of voter turnout
 - Palfrey, Thomas R., and Howard Rosenthal. “Voter participation and strategic uncertainty.” *American Political Science Review* 79, no. 1 (1985): 62-78.
 - Feddersen, Timothy J. “Rational choice theory and the paradox of not voting.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (2004): 99-112.
 - Cantoni, Enrico. “A precinct too far: Turnout and voting costs.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 12, no. 1 (2020): 61-85.
 - Coate, Stephen, Michael Conlin, and Andrea Moro. “The performance of pivotal-voter models in small-scale elections: Evidence from Texas liquor referenda.” *Journal of Public Economics* 92, no. 3-4 (2008): 582-596.
 - Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. “The effects of canvassing, telephone calls, and direct mail on voter turnout: A field experiment.” *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 3 (2000): 653-663.
 - Baysan, Ceren. “Persistent polarizing effects of persuasion: Experimental evidence from Turkey.” *American Economic Review* 112, no. 11 (2022): 3528-3546.
 - Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Ron Shachar. “Voting may be habit-forming: evidence from a randomized field experiment.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 3 (2003): 540-550.

- Fujiwara, Thomas, Kyle Meng, and Tom Vogl. “Habit formation in voting: Evidence from rainy elections.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 8, no. 4 (2016): 160-188.
 - Nickerson, David W. “Is voting contagious? Evidence from two field experiments.” *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (2008): 49-57.
 - Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. “Social pressure and voter turnout: Evidence from a large-scale field experiment.” *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (2008): 33-48.
 - DellaVigna, Stefano, John A. List, Ulrike Malmendier, and Gautam Rao. “Voting to tell others.” *Review of Economic Studies* 84, no. 1 (2016): 143-181.
 - Washington, Ebonya. “How black candidates affect voter turnout.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 121, no. 3 (2006): 973-998.
- What do voters prefer?: Forming political preferences
 - Beaman, Lori, Raghavendra Chattopadhyay, Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande, and Petia Topalova. “Powerful women: does exposure reduce bias?” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, no. 4 (2009): 1497-1540.
 - Alesina, Alberto, and Nicola Fuchs-Schündeln. “Good-bye Lenin (or not?): The effect of communism on people’s preferences.” *American Economic Review* 97, no. 4 (2007): 1507-1528.
 - Cantoni, Enrico, and Vincent Pons. “Does context outweigh individual characteristics in driving voting behavior? Evidence from Relocations within the United States.” *American Economic Review* 112, no. 4 (2022): 1226-72.
- What do voters prefer?: Preferences on redistribution
 - Benabou, Roland, and Efe A. Ok. “Social mobility and the demand for redistribution: the POUM hypothesis.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116, no. 2 (2001): 447-487.
 - Balboni, Clare, Oriana Bandiera, Robin Burgess, Maitreesh Ghatak, and Anton Heil. “Why do people stay poor?” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 137, no. 2 (2022): 785-844.
 - Alesina, Alberto, and Eliana La Ferrara. “Preferences for redistribution in the land of opportunities.” *Journal of Public Economics* 89, no. 5-6 (2005): 897-931.
 - Piketty, Thomas. “Social mobility and redistributive politics.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 110, no. 3 (1995): 551-584.
 - Alesina, Alberto, and George-Marios Angeletos. “Fairness and redistribution.” *American Economic Review* 95, no. 4 (2005): 960-980.
- Electoral politics gone wrong: Clientelism, patronage, and vote-buying
 - Dekel, Eddie, Matthew O. Jackson, and Asher Wolinsky. “Vote buying: General elections.” *Journal of Political Economy* 116, no. 2 (2008): 351-380.
 - Lizzeri, Alessandro, and Nicola Persico. “The provision of public goods under alternative electoral incentives.” *American Economic Review* 91, no. 1 (2001): 225-239.
 - Wantchekon, Leonard. “Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin.” *World Politics* 55, no. 3 (2003): 399-422.
 - Fujiwara, Thomas, and Leonard Wantchekon. “Can informed public deliberation overcome clientelism? Experimental evidence from Benin.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 5, no. 4 (2013): 241-255.
 - Cruz, Cesi, Philip Keefer, and Julien Labonne. “Buying informed voters: New effects of information on voters and candidates.” *The Economic Journal* 131, no. 635 (2021): 1105-1134.

- Bobonis, Gustavo J., Paul J. Gertler, Marco Gonzalez-Navarro, and Simeon Nichter. “Vulnerability and clientelism.” *American Economic Review* 112, no. 11 (2022): 3627-59.
 - Bobonis, Gustavo J., Paul Gertler, Marco Gonzalez-Navarro, and Simeon Nichter. “Does Combating Corruption Reduce Clientelism?” Working Paper, 2023.
 - Folke, Olle, Shigeo Hirano, and James M. Snyder. “Patronage and elections in US states.” *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 3 (2011): 567-585.
 - Anderson, Siwan, Patrick Francois, and Ashok Kotwal. “Clientelism in Indian villages.” *American Economic Review* 105, no. 6 (2015): 1780-1816.
 - Baland, Jean-Marie, and James A. Robinson. “Land and power: Theory and evidence from Chile.” *American Economic Review* 98, no. 5 (2008): 1737-1765.
 - Baland, Jean-Marie, and James A. Robinson. “The political value of land: Political reform and land prices in Chile.” *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 3 (2012): 601-619.
 - Stokes, Susan C. “Perverse accountability: A formal model of machine politics with evidence from Argentina.” *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3 (2005): 315-325.
 - Nichter, Simeon. “Vote buying or turnout buying? Machine politics and the secret ballot.” *American political science review* 102, no. 1 (2008): 19-31.
 - Gans-Morse, Jordan, Sebastian Mazzuca, and Simeon Nichter. “Varieties of clientelism: Machine politics during elections.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 2 (2014): 415-432.
 - Finan, Frederico, and Laura Schechter. “Vote-buying and reciprocity.” *Econometrica* 80, no. 2 (2012): 863-881.
 - Schechter, Laura, and Srinivasan Vasudevan. “Persuading voters to punish corrupt vote-buying candidates: Experimental evidence from a large-scale radio campaign in India.” *Journal of Development Economics* 160 (2023): 102976.
 - Cruz, Cesi, Philip Keefer, and Julien Labonne. “Buying informed voters: New effects of information on voters and candidates.” *The Economic Journal* 131, no. 635 (2021): 1105-1134.
- Electoral politics gone wrong: Populism
 - Guriev, Sergei, and Elias Papaioannou. “The political economy of populism.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 60, no. 3 (2022): 753-832.
 - Acemoglu, Daron, Georgy Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin. “A political theory of populism.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128, no. 2 (2013): 771-805.
 - Bonomi, Giampaolo, Nicola Gennaioli, and Guido Tabellini. “Identity, beliefs, and political conflict.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 136, no.4 (2021): 2371-2411.
 - Madestam, Andreas, Daniel Shoag, Stan Veuger, and David Yanagizawa-Drott. “Do political protests matter? Evidence from the tea party movement.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128, no. 4 (2013): 1633-1685.
 - Danieli, Oren, Noam Gidron, Shinnosuke Kikuchi, and Ro’ee Levy. “Decomposing the Rise of the Populist Radical Right.” Working Paper, 2022.
 - Guiso, Luigi, Massimo Morelli, Tommaso Sonno, and Helios Herrera. “The financial drivers of populism in europe.” Working Paper, 2022.
 - Sartre, Emilie, and Gianmarco Daniele. “Toxic loans and the rise of populist candidates.” Working Paper, 2022.
 - Gratton, Gabriele, and Barton E. Lee. “Drain the Swamp: A Theory of Anti-Elite Populism.” Working Paper, 2023.

Politicians and Policy-Making

- Accountability: Political agency
 - Besley, Chapter 3
 - Persson and Tabellini, Chapter 4
 - Gehlbach, Chapter 7.1
 - Barro, Robert J. “The control of politicians: an economic model.” *Public Choice* (1973): 19-42.
 - Ferejohn, John. “Incumbent performance and electoral control.” *Public Choice* (1986): 5-25.
 - Acharya, Avidit, Elliot Lipnowski, and João Ramos. “Political accountability under moral hazard.” *American Journal of Political Science* (2024).
 - Besley, Timothy, and Anne Case. “Does electoral accountability affect economic policy choices? Evidence from gubernatorial term limits.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 110, no. 3 (1995): 769-798.
 - Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. “Electoral accountability and corruption: Evidence from the audits of local governments.” *American Economic Review* 101, no. 4 (2011): 1274-1311.
 - Dal Bó, Ernesto, and Martín A. Rossi. “Term length and the effort of politicians.” *Review of Economic Studies* 78, no. 4 (2011): 1237-1263.
- Accountability: Do voters know what they need to know?
 - Snyder Jr, James M., and David Strömberg. “Press coverage and political accountability.” *Journal of Political Economy* 118, no. 2 (2010): 355-408.
 - Besley, Timothy, and Robin Burgess. “The political economy of government responsiveness: Theory and evidence from India.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117, no. 4 (2002): 1415-1451.
 - Campante, Filipe R., and Quoc-Anh Do. “Isolated capital cities, accountability, and corruption: Evidence from US states.” *American Economic Review* 104, no. 8 (2014): 2456-2481.
 - Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. “Exposing corrupt politicians: the effects of Brazil’s publicly released audits on electoral outcomes.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, no. 2 (2008): 703-745.
 - Banerjee, Abhijit, Selvan Kumar, Rohini Pande, and Felix Su. “Do Informed Voters Make Better Choices? Experimental Evidence from Urban India.” Working Paper, 2011.
 - Cruz, Cesi, Philip Keefer, Julien Labonne, and Francesco Trebbi. “Making policies matter: Voter responses to campaign promises.” Working Paper, 2022.
 - Garbiras-Díaz, Natalia, and Mateo Montenegro. “All eyes on them: A field experiment on citizen oversight and electoral integrity.” *American Economic Review* 112, no. 8 (2022): 2631-2668.
- Legislative bargaining
 - Persson and Tabellini, Chapter 7.2
 - Austen-Smith and Banks II, Chapter 6
 - Gehlbach, Chapter 6
 - Baron, David P., and John A. Ferejohn. “Bargaining in legislatures.” *American Political Science Review* 83, no. 4 (1989): 1181-1206.
 - Ali, S. Nageeb, B. Douglas Bernheim, and Xiaochen Fan. “Predictability and power in legislative bargaining.” *Review of Economic Studies* 86, no. 2 (2019): 500-525.

- Ali, S. Nageeb, B. Douglas Bernheim, Alexander W. Bloedel, and Silvia Console Battilana. “Who Controls the Agenda Controls the Legislature.” *American Economic Review* 113, no. 11 (2023): 3090-3128.
- Executive constraints
 - Persson, Torsten, Gerard Roland, and Guido Tabellini. “Separation of powers and political accountability.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, no. 4 (1997): 1163-1202.
 - Aghion, Philippe, Alberto Alesina, and Francesco Trebbi. “Endogenous political institutions.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119, no. 2 (2004): 565-611.
 - Gitmez, A. Arda, James A. Robinson, and Mehdi Shadmehr. “Missing Discussions: Institutional Constraints in the Islamic Political Tradition.” Working Paper, 2022.

Institutions and Culture

- Do institutions matter?
 - Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. “The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation.” *American Economic Review* 91, no. 5 (2001): 1369-1401.
 - Dell, Melissa. “The persistent effects of Peru’s mining mita.” *Econometrica* 78, no. 6 (2010): 1863-1903.
 - Michalopoulos, Stelios, and Elias Papaioannou. “Pre-colonial ethnic institutions and contemporary African development.” *Econometrica* 81, no. 1 (2013): 113-152.
- Institutional change, state building and democratization
 - Acemoglu Lecture Notes, Chapter 18
 - North, Douglass C., and Barry R. Weingast. “Constitutions and commitment: the evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century England.” *Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989): 803-832.
 - Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. “Why did the West extend the franchise? Democracy, inequality, and growth in historical perspective.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115, no. 4 (2000): 1167-1199.
 - Besley, Timothy, and Torsten Persson. “The origins of state capacity: Property rights, taxation, and politics.” *American Economic Review* 99, no. 4 (2009): 1218-1244.
 - Osafo-Kwaako, Philip, and James A. Robinson. “Political centralization in pre-colonial Africa.” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 41, no. 1 (2013): 6-21.
 - Sánchez De La Sierra, Raúl. “On the origins of the state: Stationary bandits and taxation in Eastern Congo.” *Journal of Political Economy* 128, no. 1 (2020): 000-000.
 - Callen, Michael, Jonathan L. Weigel, and Noam Yuchtman. “Experiments about Institutions.” Working Paper, 2023.
- Culture, values and cooperation
 - Greif, Avner. “Cultural beliefs and the organization of society: A historical and theoretical reflection on collectivist and individualist societies.” *Journal of Political Economy* 102, no. 5 (1994): 912-950.
 - Bisin, Alberto, and Thierry Verdier. “The economics of cultural transmission and the dynamics of preferences.” *Journal of Economic Theory* 97, no. 2 (2001): 298-319.
 - Guiso, Luigi, Paola Sapienza, and Luigi Zingales. “Does culture affect economic outcomes?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20, no. 2 (2006): 23-48.
 - Alesina, Alberto, and Paola Giuliano. “Culture and institutions.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 53, no. 4 (2015): 898-944.

Media

- Media bias
 - Gentzkow, Matthew, Jesse M. Shapiro, and Daniel F. Stone. “Media bias in the marketplace: Theory.” In *Handbook of Media Economics*, vol. 1, pp. 623-645. North-Holland, 2015.
 - Puglisi, Riccardo, and James M. Snyder Jr. “Empirical studies of media bias.” In *Handbook of Media Economics*, vol. 1, pp. 647-667. North-Holland, 2015.
- Media capture
 - Prat, Andrea. “Media capture and media power.” In *Handbook of Media Economics*, vol. 1, pp. 669-686. North-Holland, 2015.
 - Enikolopov, Ruben, and Maria Petrova. “Media capture: empirical evidence.” In *Handbook of Media Economics*, vol. 1, pp. 687-700. North-Holland, 2015.

Collective Action

- Collective action and group size
 - Olson, Mancur Jr. *The Logic of Collective Action*. Harvard University Press, 1971.
 - Esteban, Joan, and Debraj Ray. “Collective action and the group size paradox.” *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3 (2001): 663-672.
 - Banerjee, Abhijit, Lakshmi Iyer, and Rohini Somanathan. “Public action for public goods.” In *Handbook of Development Economics* 4 (2007): 3117-3154.
 - Palfrey, Thomas R., and Howard Rosenthal. “Participation and the provision of discrete public goods: a strategic analysis.” *Journal of Public Economics* 24.2 (1984): 171-193.
 - Dziuda, Wioletta, A. Arda Gitmez, and Mehdi Shadmehr. “The difficulty of easy projects.” *American Economic Review: Insights* 3.3 (2021): 285-302.
- Social capital and collective action
 - Putnam, Robert D. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, 1994.
 - Olken, Benjamin A. “Do television and radio destroy social capital? Evidence from Indonesian villages.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1, no. 4 (2009): 1-33.
- Collective action and regime change
 - Gehlbach, Chapter 8
 - Shadmehr, Mehdi. “Multiplicity and uniqueness in regime change games.” *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 1 (2019): 303-308.
 - Morris, Stephen, and Mehdi Shadmehr. “Inspiring regime change.” *Journal of the European Economic Association* 21, no.6 (2023): 2635–2681.