Political Determinants of Policy Outcomes
Review

Key Concerns:
Morally “right” v political expedience, always a trade off: how does this problem balance competing issues; shouldn’t propose the morally right answer

1. **Ownership** - who announces the change, the new policy, the program. Be bold. Leaders do better when clearly explain what they are trying to do and declare that they are responsible for the country’s fate than those who try to deflect political responsibility.

2. **Stakeholders** - Who wins and who loses? Whom do you need to care about? If you can’t please everybody, whom do you please first? Balance of conflicting interests
   1. How will the policy affect them?
   2. How much will this group care?
   3. How much power/planning do they have to do anything about it?
   4. Which players do I prioritize pleasing, usually can’t please all?
   5. *Carrots and sticks*: how can we create incentives to make people support the policy (carrots) v we’re going to push this through?
   6. *Strategy*: how can I affect the responses of the stakeholders? (Appease anger of unions? More stringent labor controls) How can I change their views? How can I move coalitions, interest groups?

3. **Implementation** - What do you do first, second, third, not at all?

4. **Political system** - unique political system (parliamentary system, first past post; minority/majority party), timing (e.g. election)

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**Week 1. Ethics**

*Why is it important?*

- Whomever assumes ethical high ground has upper hand in policy debates.
- Policy outcomes based on utilitarian arguments argue a greater good for greater number of people, i.e. a Pareto improvement. Is invalidated assuming a rights-based approach to policy outcomes

*Rights-based versus utilitarian approach?*

*Rights based*=> all humans are ends in and of themselves, cannot compare outcomes between rights of individuals, and individual projects/approaches matter. (Ex – American with Disabilities Act)
Problems: 1) No degree of import on what rights are more important than others  
2) Different perspectives on what is right  
3) Disadvantages of right-based arise from advantages

Utilitarianism => greatest good for greatest number, values individuals equally, cost-benefit analysis.

Problems: may not be able to calculate utility meaningfully (can create moral problems in and of itself), can impose costs on already disadvantaged groups.

Ex: President Mbeke in SA. No $ for AZT, no administrative capacity to dispense, and far greater return to other policies such as universal neonatal care.

But int’l response is strong and disproportionate burden among poor blacks render emotional appeal compelling.

Lessons:

1) Utilitarianism is way or resolving collective choice problem, favored by diffuse majority. Rights-based favored by smaller groups whose preferences may be blocked by #s based approach
2) Utilitarianism avoids moral/ethical implications of cost-based approach. Can one be created within utilitarianism?
3) Resolving conflicts centers around compensation, i.e. project is efficient and desirable if losers are compensated and there are residual gains. But some individual beliefs do not fit into the market system.
4) If winners and losers are not clearly identified and willing to conform to system, trouble arises
5) Imp to remember that whatever framework is adopted gives out the moral high ground.
6) Coming to a consensus necessarily involves a deliberative process. The delib process is equally important to the outcome, because the losers have to be convinced. Deliberation more likely to lead to compromise.

Week 2. Leadership

How to build and maintain constituency?

Two problems:

1) Collective action: individual incentives not large enough to assist leader in his/her goal
2) Time inconsistency: difficult to reward leader during time that he is in power

Three leaders 1) Traditional (Queen) 2) Legal (INS leader) 3) Charismatic leader (Jackson)

Leaders cannot change type, can also rule only one way.
All leaders have a vision for future, one key element of any successful leader. How to keep vision is challenge.

Bottom line is relationship to constituency. More analysts need to pay attention to inter-group conflict.

**Binding Followers to Leaders accomplished through:**

1) Economic rewards  
2) Institutional/political identity  
3) Group identity  
4) Coercion  
(Most use combo)

The more extreme the position, the greater the need for coalition building.

Differences in goals and process of achieving goals. Different orgs have different methods of achieving.

Good leaders should pick out ideas that can win. What is realistically achievable?? This will be impt in the policy simulation.

**Lessons:**

1) Ultimate goal is to cater to constituency. Can you forsake some of your constituency for achieving goals? At what cost?  
2) Leadership is not always associated with charisma.

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**Week 3. State Capacity and Reform**

What is the state –what should/can it do? Why is the state important? Impt for int’l inst., who want to see an effective state.

Weak states also don’t provide public goods well, suffer from illegitimacy, Weber said *state is a “set of institutions which claim a monopoly on the legit use of force within a given community.”*

**States consists of:**

1) Centralized institutions  
2) Physically identifiable  
3) Leadership is not always associated with charisma.

State is different from country, society or economy.
States should provide pub goods, regulate mkt, enforce contracts, balance economy, maintain order, and negotiate disputes.

State capacity => some more able than others. Need to ensure that population consents and complies. Certain regimes favor coercion more than others. Infrastructural power=> format of government which people abide by

**Capability depends on:**
1) Institutions within it (Fed, Dept of State, etc)
2) Tech and admin => ability to identify beneficial goals and implement
3) Political viability of state

Threats to State can be external (wars) and internal (interest groups), kleptocrats.

**How can states build capacity?**
1) Direct representation. Viewed as legit, so people willing to comply
2) Plurality
3) Independent bureaucracy. Ensures some isolation, steady hand steering government
4) Rule of law, as opposed to rule of personality. Ex of World Bank
5) Opposition? How to cope with it, anticipate, not antagonize, co-opt it has a great deal to do with how much capacity you have. Difficult to do, naturally, especially anticipate. Watchdog agencies, for ex, may help or hinder

**Lessons:**
1) State should provide public goods, stability, help economy, they basically have a role
2) Make sure that citizens comply, see state as legitimate
3) Distinction between strong and weak state is impt.

**Week 4. Bureaucracy**

Lots of cross-country variation.

Bureaucracy is a significant actor within state

Two big problems: moral hazard (principal-agent problem=> once an agent, has interests other than that of the principal she represents) and adverse selection (Information about actors is not known). More attention in policymaking to former than latter but perhaps wrongly so–best way to prevent problems is to focus on selecting people well, rather than trying to control agents later.

Resources and tech available to other actors affect how powerful of players they are, how much they can challenge bureaucracy.

**Lessons:**
1) Preferences of subordinate bureaucrats are most impt determinant of outcomes. Ability to change preferences is most impt factor in success.

2) Many outputs of bureaucracy not measurable.

3) Culture of bureaucracy is impt (peer monitoring)

**Week 5. Implementation**

Principal-agent problems

How can analyst narrow the gap between policy formulation and implementation??

Different approaches => Reverse mapping (bottom up) versus hierarchical (top-down)

*Lessons:*

1) Despite intentions, much can go wrong. From ideas to implementation on ground (case of Russia) For example, entrenched elites
2) Best practices are a good example of bottom up implementation.
3) Avoid over-complexifying problem - Social forces and complexity can affect implementation
4) Beware of what can go wrong, aware of advantages and disadvantages of top-down and bottom-up approaches

**Week 6. Electoral Incentives**

Electoral systems affect how parties form, number of parties, etc.

*FPTP/majoritarian systems* => fewer parties, less social safety nets, higher barriers to entry, centrist, more accountability, also more pork barrel favoring powerful minorities

*Presidential v. parliamentary* => presidential founded on opposition btw powers and branches. Pres often has to fight congress, balance of powers. With parliamentary, always same power – aligned politically. But also more constraints on what can be done.

Representation more effective under parliamentary, also better for women, redistribution Accountability better under majoritarian.

**Week 7. Interest/Advocacy Groups**

Interest Groups => usually associated with specific economic interests
Advocacy Groups=> assoc with social issues or broad economic concerns (mixture exists of course)
Interest Groups
1) formed because of gains and losses associated with change from existing policy to new policy - if the perceived benefits of organizing to resolve collection action problems exceed costs (pluralist theory).
2) Have changing coalitions (often marriage of convenience), often not considered zero-sum.
3) Increase Flow of Information – inform members about politicians actions and vice versa. What policies are in constituent interests? Ability to mobilize is what is used to influence the political process

Interest Group formation likely when:
1) Smaller groups
2) Key actors have much at stake
3) Sense of efficacy
4) Limited alternatives to achieve results
5) Availability of selective incentives (raising benefits relative to costs -AARP)

Problems: IG brings out free rider problem (Olson). Unclear how to resolve, specific to problem.

Advocacy Groups have shared goals of: 1) membership 2) respect 3) group autonomy 4) change in moral or religious practice of society

The goals are not material, divisible or substitutable (negotiation hard, high emotional content, drive towards purity)

Collective Action problems resolved by committed volunteers, encouraging ideological purity (but also internal conflicts). Difficult to make individuals accountable

Tactics involve publicity, drama, some interest group tactics like information, lobbying

Lessons:
1) AG less likely to succeed but occasionally do have large influences (abolition)
2) Many groups have mixture: Tension exists between no compensation/ideological purity v, realism/comp/movement towards goals
3) Effectiveness of IG/AG both depend on A) ability to mobilize constituents B) geographic dist of membership

Parliament=> policy developed via cabinet consensus, interest group less visible to public scrutiny but frequently incorporated into formal policymaking structure (especially in corporatist systems).

Presidential => policy development is shared between branches. IG influence through lobbying different branches.
Future Questions:

What is special interest group? Can be source of corruption as well as source for policing
Transnational role of interest groups, how is this changing??

Week 8: States and Markets

Two approaches for role of state:

1) Minimal role, ensure private property solely (neoliberal)
2) More active government role to take care of bads (pollution, inequality)

Also concern for efficiency:
Gov can use its power to deal with distribution and externality issues. But free-riders.

Politically significant groups tend to have better resources

Week 9: Coercion

Wars today tend to be civil wars.

Traditional poli sci => int’l stability, balance of powers

Today=> domestic stability more the issue

Reason for change; demise of cold wars, new int’l norms, decreasing price of land (east Asian countries succeeded despite land constraint) Nat’l resources can even distort economies, lead to infighting (Africa)

In int’l conflicts, people did not have to give up armies. In domestic, have to give up armies and trust other side w/ life for resolution. Civil actors do not trust negotiations enough to protect lives. And negotiators must be able to maintain their legitimacy to their constituencies.

What are preference orderings (menu options) for all actors?

Shift since Cold war changed locus of conflict from ideological to ethnic/religious, and also US/Russia withdrew financial support

Tech of fighting has actually decreased, withdrawal of support and primitive weapons.
No more funding, advent of child soldiering, more religious/tensions.

Exogenous changes cause hierarchies to flip.

Big turning pt => Somalia. Peacekeepers have to convince combatants that they no longer are in prisoner’s dilemma.
Professional armies => no mission creep, clear exit strategy and objectives

In modern world, peacekeepers intervene and play by the rules of the weak.

Lessons:

1) Local combatants do not trust peacekeepers with survival.
2) Game of chicken is the dominant framework: combat tries to convince the other that they fight till end; peacekeepers try to pull combatants out of game
3) Only when you understand the game and the payout can you begin to come to solution, trick is to convince combatants that justice and peace will be compatible.
4) Asymmetry of war and peace (easier to start war than to end it)

Week 10. International Organization and Cooperation

Is globalization too far removed from people??

How does power on ground translate into int’l agreements?

*Prisoner’s dilemma* => cooperate or defect? *Who will enforce rules between countries?*

Trust built up through face-to-face communications, negotiations, conferences, etc.

Negotiations fall apart when countries promise more than they can give, especially when domestic governments

NGOs real actors, can become real pushers in economy. Is this good??

Lessons:

1) More int’l cooperation than in Cold War
2) But agreements are hard to enforce
3) NGOs are increasingly playing role, but also no clear accountability
4) States and elites wield sovereignty and only cooperate if it increases sovereignty. Paradox of sovereignty is that nations have to give up some to achieve greater cooperation.
5) Western countries have a different interest than small countries in signing treaty/attending conference. Large powers need something out of it, small powers are happy to be invited/participate