

Elections and Economics

University of São Paulo
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General: This course is designed to provide an introduction to the major theoretical and methodological issues in the economic voting. This is a fairly broad subfield of the discipline that focuses on the relationships between economic performances and election outcomes.

Talking points: Before each class meeting except the meetings, each student will be required to submit two theoretically-focused talking points on the assigned readings. These are due to me by email by 9am the day before the relevant class meeting. These “talking points” will help to shape the seminar discussions, so they should discuss the most interesting theoretical questions or arguments that the student has identified based on the readings. Students should submit each talking point as one or more paragraphs outlining the question or argument. Additional guidelines are:

- Each talking point should refer to one or more specific sections of the weekly readings (with appropriate page references) and each talking point should be focused on a different chapter or article from the weekly readings.
- Each talking point should contain no more than 160 words.
- Talking points can be submitted as a TeX file or as plain text.
- Each talking point should be preceded by your name and the number of the talking point (for instance, if your name is Edgar Davids, your first talking point would be preceded by “Edgar Davids 1:”).

A couple of things to keep in mind as you attempt to maximize the quality of your talking points:

1. Criticism is often the starting point of thoughts about readings. This is fine, but criticisms without constructive suggestions for improvements are of little value.
2. Asking questions is also a reasonable place to start, but you should try to suggest answers.

(Talking points will be evaluated for 35% of the course grade)

Papers. Students will produce an economic voting research paper in which they will develop and empirically test an original theory. There will be four components of this part of the course (all in double-spaced pdf format):

1. A one page proposal that is due by email by 9AM the day before the third class meeting. (This is will be evaluated for 5% of the course grade)

2. A draft of the paper distributed to the professors and the other students in the course by 9AM on the the day before the sixth and twelfth class meetings. (These will be evaluated for 5% of the course grade each)
3. Participation as both a presenter and discussant in a mini-conferences on drafts of student papers. (This is will be evaluated for 5% of the course grade each)
4. A revised final version of the research paper emailed to the professors. (This is will be evaluated for 40% of the course grade)

Lab Sessions. Each class meeting except for the sixth and twelfth meetings will include a lab session in which students will work with data from the field. For most of the work in these lab sessions, we will use Stata.

Helpful books. We will not have any required books for this course, but there are a number of very helpful books that are relevant to the course materials.

- Black, John, Nigar Hashimzade, and Gareth Myles. 2012. *A Dictionary of Economics*. Oxford. Comment: a useful reference to have for decoding terms that you come across as you read the literature.
- Kennedy, Peter E. 2010. *Macroeconomic Essentials: Understanding Economics in the News, 3rd edition*. MIT. Comment: this book, written for MBA students, provides excellent coverage of the basic nuts and bolts of macroeconomics and theories about macroeconomics.
- McCloskey, Diedre N. 1998. *The Rhetoric of Economics, 2nd edition*. Wisconsin. Comment: This is an excellent book on writing and argument style in economics. It provides a very helpful framework for thinking about how to interpret arguments made by other scholars and how to structure your own arguments. Although most of the examples are from classic works in economics, the lessons of this book apply very well to political science in general and work on political economy in particular.
- Asteriou, Dimitrios, and Stephen G. Hall. *Applied econometrics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Kellstedt, Paul, and Guy Whitten. *The fundamentals of political science research*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Class Schedule: I expect that you will have read all of the assigned readings **before** the class period for which they are assigned, and I will announce additional required readings as needed.

Meeting 1–Background and Classics

Readings:

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Mary Stegmaier. “Economic models of voting.” (2007): 518-537.
- Downs, Anthony. “An economic theory of political action in a democracy.” *The journal of political economy* (1957): 135-150.
- Stokes, Donald E. “Spatial models of party competition.” *American Political Science Review* 57.02 (1963): 368-377.
- Kramer, Gerald H. “The ecological fallacy revisited: Aggregate-versus individual-level findings on economics and elections, and sociotropic voting.” *American Political Science Review* 77.01 (1983): 92-111.
- Markus, Gregory B. “The impact of personal and national economic conditions on the presidential vote: A pooled cross-sectional analysis.” *American Journal of Political Science* (1988): 137-154.

Meeting 2–Economic voting goes comparative

Readings:

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S. *Economics and elections: The major Western democracies*. University of Michigan Press, 1990., selected chapters
- Paldam, Martin. “How robust is the vote function? A study of seventeen nations over four decades.” *Economics and politics: the calculus of support* (1991): 9-31.
- Powell Jr, G. Bingham, and Guy D. Whitten. “A cross-national analysis of economic voting: taking account of the political context.” *American Journal of Political Science* (1993): 391-414.
- Palmer, Harvey D., and Guy D. Whitten. “The electoral impact of unexpected inflation and economic growth.” *British Journal of Political Science* 29.04 (1999): 623-639.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael Steven, and Richard Nadeau. “Economic voting theory: Testing new dimensions.” *Electoral Studies* 30.2 (2011): 288-294.
- Duch, Raymond M., and Randy Stevenson. “Assessing the magnitude of the economic vote over time and across nations.” *Electoral Studies* 25.3 (2006): 528-547.

Meeting 3–Popularity functions

Readings:

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Mary Stegmaier. “The VP-function revisited: a survey of the literature on vote and popularity functions after over 40 years.” *Public Choice* 157.3-4 (2013): 367-385.
- Hibbs, Douglas A. “On the Demand for Economic Outcomes: Macroeconomic Performance and Mass Political Support in the United States, Great Britain, and Germany with the Assistance of R. Douglas Rivers and Nicholas Vasilatos.” *The Journal of Politics* 44.02 (1982): 426-462.
- Clarke, Harold D., William Mishler, and Paul Whiteley. “Recapturing the Falklands: models of Conservative popularity, 1979-83.” *British Journal of Political Science* 20.01 (1990): 63-81.
- Philips, Rutherford, Whitten forthcoming *AJPS*

Meeting 4—Economic voting in less developed settings

Readings:

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Mary Stegmaier. “The economic vote in transitional democracies.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 18.3 (2008): 303-323.
- Hellwig, Timothy, and David Samuels. “Electoral accountability and the variety of democratic regimes.” *British Journal of Political Science* 38.01 (2008): 65-90.
- Gélinau, François. “Electoral accountability in the developing world.” *Electoral Studies* 32.3 (2013): 418-424.
- Barberia and Whitten working paper

Meeting 5—Spatial models of economic voting

Readings:

- Neumayer, Eric, and Thomas Plümp. “Making spatial analysis operational: Commands for generating spatial-effect variables in monadic and dyadic data.” *The Stata Journal* 10.4 (2010): 585-605.
- Franzese, Robert J., and Jude C. Hays. “Interdependence in Comparative Politics Substance, Theory, Empirics, Substance.” *Comparative Political Studies* 41.4-5 (2008): 742-780.
- Beck, Nathaniel, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Kyle Beardsley. “Space is more than geography: Using spatial econometrics in the study of political economy.” *International Studies Quarterly* 50.1 (2006): 27-44.
- Williams, Laron K., and Guy D. Whitten. Forthcoming. “Don’t Stand So Close to Me: Spatial Contagion Effects and Party Competition.” *American Journal of Political Science*.

- Kayser, Mark Andreas, and Michael Peress. “Benchmarking across borders: Electoral accountability and the necessity of comparison.” *American Political Science Review* 106.03 (2012): 661-684.
- Philips and Whitten Brazilian spillover paper

Meeting 6—Mini-conference on initial drafts of student papers

Meeting 7—Popularity Functions and Time Series Dynamics

Readings:

- Mueller, John E. 1970. “Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson.” *The American Political Science Review* 64 (1):18-34.
- Kernell, Samuel. 1978. “Explaining Presidential Popularity. How Ad Hoc Theorizing, Misplaced Emphasis, and Insufficient Care in Measuring One’s Variables Refuted Common Sense and Led Conventional Wisdom Down the Path of Anomalies.” *The American Political Science Review* 72 (2):506-22.
- Stimson, James A. 1976. “Public Support for American Presidents: A Cyclical Model.” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 40 (1):1-21.
- Beck, Nathaniel. 1991. “Comparing Dynamic Specifications: The Case of Presidential Approval.” *Political Analysis* 3:51-87.
- Gronke, Paul, and John Brehm. 2002. “History, heterogeneity, and presidential approval: a modified ARCH approach.” *Electoral Studies* 21 (3):425-52.

Meeting 8—Retrospective and Prospective Voting Models

Readings:

- Fiorina, Morris. 1978. “Economic Retrospective Voting in American National Elections: A Micro-Analysis.” *American Journal of Political Science* 22: 426-443.
- MacKuen, Michael B., Robert S. Erikson, and James A. Stimson. 1992. “Peasants or Bankers? The American Electorate and the U.S. Economy.” *American Political Science Review* 86 (3):597-611.
- Chappell, Henry W and William R. Keech. 1985. “A New View of Political Accountability for Economic Performance.” *American Political Science Review* 79:10-27.
- Alvarez, R. Michael. 1997. “Information and Elections.” Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. [Select chapters]

Meeting 9—Economic Voting and Globalization

Readings:

- Hellwig, Timothy T. 2001. “Interdependence, Government Constraints, and Economic Voting.” *Journal of Politics* 63(4): 1141-1162.
- Duch, Ray, and Randy Stevenson. 2010. “The Global Economy, Competency and the Economic Vote.” *Journal of Politics* 72: 105-123.
- Alcañiz, I., and Hellwig, T. (2011). “Who’s to Blame? The Distribution of Responsibility in Developing Democracies.” *British Journal of Political Science*, 41(02), 389-411.

Meeting 10—Partisanship

Readings:

- Gerber, Alan S., and Gregory A. Huber. 2009. “Partisanship and Economic Behavior: Do Partisan Differences in Economic Forecasts Predict Real Economic Behavior?” *American Political Science Review* 103 (3): 407-426.
- Stokes, S. C. (2005). “Perverse accountability: A formal model of machine politics with evidence from Argentina.” *American Political Science Review*, 99(3), 315.
- Hellwig, T. 2011. “Constructing Accountability: Party Position Taking and Economic Voting.” *Comparative Political Studies* 45(1): 91-118.

Meeting 11—Latin America

Readings:

- Remmer, Karen L. 1991. “The Political Impact of Economic Crisis in Latin America in the 1980s.” *The American Political Science Review* 85 (3):777-800.
- Pacek, Alexander, and Benjamin Radcliff. 1995. “The Political Economy of Competitive Elections in the Developing World.” *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (3):745-.
- Elordi, Carlos, and Fabian Echegaray. 2001. “Public opinion, presidential popularity and economic reform in Argentina 1989-1996.” In *Public Support for Market Reforms in New Democracies*, ed. S. Stokes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Singer, Matthew M. 2013. “Economic Voting in an Era of Non-Crisis: The Changing Electoral Agenda in Latin America, 1982-2010.” *Comparative Politics* 45 (2):169-85.

Meeting 12—Mini-conference on 2nd drafts of student papers