

## Explaining Public Service Outcomes

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Office Hours: Please send me an email if you would like to meet individually.

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### Course Outline

Government performance in the provision of public services is often assumed to be the basis of modern state legitimacy (McCullough et al., 2020). Governments which are responsive to the very human needs of their citizens are more easily justified than their less responsive counterparts. Much of the literature tends to stress electoral accountability and the role of Media in the political economy of state responsiveness. The underlying assumption here is that authoritarian or corrupt states cannot or cannot similarly provide public services to their citizens. And yet, China, an authoritarian state, has had comparatively more success than India, a partially democratic state, in improving overall population health and in managing the COVID-19 pandemic (Dummer and Cook, 2008; Freedom House, 2021; Our World in Data, 2022). Turkey, a definitionally corrupt state, has less than half the percentage of people living in extreme poverty – considered to be those below the International Poverty Line of \$2.15 per day – that Spain, a definitionally incorrupt state, has (Transparency, 2021; Our World in Data, 2022). In short, the rise in bureaucratic professionalism means that the type of government or perceived corruption within said government and the provision of public services are not as negatively linked as they once were. Disparities in public services may, therefore, be more closely aligned with an individual bureaucrat's *willingness* or structural *capacity* to provide positive externalities (Bozcaga, 2022). In attempting to explain asymmetric public service outcomes, this course covers evolving conceptualisations of state legitimacy, traditional models of government responsiveness, the advent of bureaucratic professionalism, service delivery in authoritarian states, and variables that ultimately affect local governance.

### Course Requirements

The course has the following two requirements:

1. A final paper (75%) that analyses a country-specific public service and its outcome. I will provide a few potential paper ideas and we will discuss in-class the methods for best analysing these.
2. A final paper presentation (25%) to be given at the final in-person class. It should be noted that there is a 'wobble week' built into this syllabus, meaning that if the instructor is ill or cannot otherwise make it to class, we aren't left behind.

Points correspond with the following grades:

Points	Grade
100-96	1.0
95-91	1.3
90-86	1.7
85-81	2.0
80-76	2.3
75-71	2.7
70-66	3.0
65-61	3.3
60-56	3.7
55-51	4.0
50-0	5.0

Unexcused late submissions of final papers will equate to a 15% deduction for every day they are late. If you require an extension, please email me in a timely manner. An extra credit assignment will be made available and will be discussed in class.

### **Introduction**

**Week 1 (October 11, 2023):** Course Introduction

### **Part One: Traditional Models of Government Responsiveness**

**Week 2 (October 18, 2023):** The Democratic Model of Public Service Provision

Lake, David A., Baum, Matthew A. (2001). 'The Invisible Hand of Democracy: Political Control and the Provision of Public Services.' *Comparative Political Studies* 34:6, pp. 587-621.

*Directed Reading Question(s):* Do you find Lake and Baum's (2001) account – that democratic states predominantly provide public services in exchange for rent – compelling? Do you believe this account could be applied to autocratic states? Why or why not?

**Week 3 (October 25, 2023):** The Impact of Political Competition on Government Responsiveness

Binzer Hobolt, Sarah and Klemmensen, Robert (2008). 'Government Responsiveness and Political Competition in Comparative Perspective.' *Comparative Political Studies* 41:3, pp. 309-337.

Ferraz, Claudio and Finan, Federico (2011). 'Electoral Accountability and Corruption: Evidence from the Audits of Local Governments.' *American Economic Review* 101:4, pp. 1274-1311.

*Directed Reading Question(s)*: Binzer Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) suggest that greater electoral uncertainty and constraints on executive discretion lead to higher levels of government responsiveness. Ferraz and Finan (2011) corroborate that by suggestion that the prospect of re-election lessens the likelihood of corrupt behaviour in office. Given what you now know about the American, British, and Danish systems from the Binzer Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) article, what would you assume about public service provision in each state? Please rank them in order from best to worst public service provision and consider the sectors of education, health, and social welfare.

**There will be no class for November 1st, 2023 as it's All Saints Day and I believe that is a holiday recognised by the state of North Rhine Westphalia.**

**Week 4 (November 8, 2023):** The Impact of the Media on Government Responsiveness

Besley, Timothy and Burgess, Robin (2002). 'The Political Economy of Government Responsiveness: Theory and Evidence from India.' *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117:4, pp. 1415-1451.

Erich, Aaron, Berliner, Daniel, Palmer-Rubin, Brian and Bagozzi, Benjamin E. (2021). 'Media Attention and Bureaucratic Responsiveness.' *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 31:4, pp. 687-703.

*Directed Reading Question(s)*: Having read both Besley and Burgess (2002) and Erlich et. al's (2021) articles, do you find the idea that the Media is able to hold the government to account compelling? Can you think of any recent instances in which that was not the case?

**Week 5 (November 15, 2023):** Alternate Forms of Citizen Sanctioning

Cleary, Matthew R. (2007). 'Electoral Competition, Participation, and Government Responsiveness in Mexico.' *American Journal of Political Science* 51:2, pp. 283-299.

Selormey, Ernestina Edem (2013). 'Citizen Voice and Bureaucratic Responsiveness: FM-Radio Phone-Ins and the Delivery of Municipal and Local Government Services in Accra, Ghana'. University of Sussex, Ph.D. Thesis.\*

Nyqvist, Martina Bjorkman and Svensson, Jakob (2016). 'Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomised Field Experiment of a Community-Based Monitoring Project in Uganda.' World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 4268.

*Directed Reading Question(s):* The articles above introduce non-electoral political participation and radio phone-ins as alternate forms of sanctioning the government. Can you think of any other creative ways in which people have coaxed a response from government?

## **Part Two: The Rise of Bureaucratic Professionalism**

**Week 6 (November 22, 2023):** The Rise of Bureaucratic Professionalism

Teodoro, Manuel P. (2020). 'Contingent Professionalism: Bureaucratic Mobility and the Adoption of Water Conservation Rates.' *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 20:2, pp. 437-459.

*Directed Reading Question(s):* N/A.

## **Part Three: Public Service Delivery in Low Capacity States**

**Week 7 (November 29, 2023):** The Capacity-Based Account of Public Service Provision

Kyle, Jordan and Resnick, Danielle (2018). 'Delivering More with Less: Subnational Service Provision in Low Capacity States.' *Studies in Comparative International Development* 54, pp. 133-163.

**Week 8 (December 6, 2023):** Social Fragmentation and Proximity in Public Service Provision

Halimatusa'Diya, Iim (2022). 'State Capacity and Public Provision in a Socially Fragmented Nation: A Subnational Analysis of Maternal Mortality Disparities in Indonesia.' *Sociology of Development* 8:1, pp. 38-62.

Bozcaga, Tugba (2022). 'The Social Bureaucrat: How Social Proximity Among Bureaucrats Affect Local Governance.' *Program on Governance and Local Development Working Paper No.* 35.

**Week 9 (December 13, 2023):** The Impact of External Partners of Public Services

Barma, Naazeen H., Levy, Naomi, and Piombo, Jessica (2020). 'The Impact of Aid Dynamics on State Effectiveness and Legitimacy.' *Studies in Comparative International Development* 55, pp. 184-203.

## **Part Four: Willingness-based Accounts of Public Service Provision**

**Week 10 (December 20, 2023):** Co-ethnicity and Familial Structure in Service Provision

Literature to be assigned.

**Week 11 (January 10, 2023):** Partisanship and Ideology in Service Provision

Danielle Pullan is to present her working paper on how ideology affects the provision of abortions in Italy. I will also circulate my own working paper about partisanship and police response. Given that they are both working papers, I will circulate the papers over break, but students are NOT allowed to send them on. Please be mindful of that.

**Part Five: Evolving Conceptualisations of State Legitimacy and Public Services**

**Week 12 (January 17, 2023):** Conceptualisations of State Legitimacy

Gilley, Bruce (2006). 'The Meaning and Measure of State Legitimacy: Results for 72 Countries.' European Journal of Political Research 45:3, pp. 369-525.

*Directed Reading Question(s):* Which definition of state legitimacy did you find most compelling? Can you think of any more measures of state legitimacy that aren't discussed in Gilley's (2006) article?

**Week 13 (January 24, 2023):** Public Services: By-Product or Foundation of State Legitimacy?

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) (2008). 'Political Economy Analysis with a Legitimacy Twist: What Is It and Why Does It Matter? Oslo: Norwegian Agency for Development.

McCullough, Aoife, Lacroix, Antoine, and Hennessey, Gemma (2020). 'Reconstructing Our Understanding of the Link Between Services and State Legitimacy.' Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, Working Paper 87.

*Directed Reading Question(s):* In 2008, NORAD guidance suggested that state legitimacy was earned through the provision of public services. Prior to this point, it was broadly assumed that public services were delivered exclusively by 'legitimate' states, i.e. capacity in some way belied legitimacy. McCullough, Lacroix and Hennessey (2020), by contrast, suggest that state legitimacy is co-constructed through the iterative processes of public service delivery. Which argument do you find most compelling? Are public services a by-product or foundation of state legitimacy, or, are they both?

**Week 14 (January 31, 2023):** Paper Idea Presentations

**End of Lectures: 02.02.2024**

**Paper Deadline: 29.02.2024**