Lectures: Tuesday & Thursday 12:00-1:20 (McNeil 410).

Instructor: Deniz Selman (denizs@econ.upenn.edu)
Office Hours: Wednesday 3:30-4:30 and by appointment (PCPE 541).

TA: Collum Freedman (collumf@sas.upenn.edu)
Office Hours: Monday 4:00-6:00 (PCPE 208).

Description: This course examines the effects of strategic behavior on political outcomes and government policies. Topics and applications may include voting behavior, candidate competition, voting systems, social choice and welfare, and policy divergence.

Prerequisites: Econ 1 and 2 (or Econ 10). Credit cannot be received for both Econ 32 and Econ 232.

Readings: Mandatory readings will be assigned throughout the semester. They will include both academic papers and recent news articles which are relevant to the topics we will be discussing in lecture.

Lectures: I will primarily teach by writing on the blackboard. Please make arrangements to borrow a friend’s notes if you miss a lecture. In order to discourage classroom distractions, the use of laptops and other electronic devices is not permitted during lectures. If you have a special condition which makes this a difficulty for you, please let me know.

Homework: There will be four homework assignments collected for grading during the semester. Homework assignments will be posted on Canvas one week before the due date and due at the beginning of lecture (no later than 12:05 pm) either as a hard copy or electronically, on the following due dates:
(1) Thu 31 January, (2) Tue 26 February, (3) Tue 26 March, (4) Thu 18 April.
No late homework assignments will be accepted. You are free to discuss homework assignments with others. However, each student must submit a personal copy for grading.

Quizzes: There will be four in-class quizzes held on the following dates:
(1) Tue 5 February, (2) Thu 28 February, (3) Thu 28 March, (4) Tue 23 April.
NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES: You will receive a zero for any quiz that you miss for any reason. To accommodate students who must miss a quiz, your lowest quiz grade will be dropped and the average of the other three quizzes will constitute the quiz portion of your grade.

Exams:
Exam 1: Thursday 14 February (in class, beginning at 12:05 pm sharp).
Exam 2: Tuesday 2 April (in class, beginning at 12:05 pm sharp).
Exam 3: Tuesday 30 April (in class, beginning at 12:05 pm sharp).
MAKE-UP POLICY FOR EXAMS: Only students who contact me before an exam and provide a written excuse will be eligible to take a make-up exam. Students who miss an exam and are not eligible to take a make-up exam will receive a grade of zero on that exam.
RE-GRADING POLICY: Students have one week from the day in which examinations and problem sets are returned to report errors in grading and/or to request that problems be re-graded. All such requests must be made in writing. If a student submits his/her exam for re-grading, then the student’s entire exam will be re-graded with no guarantee of a higher total score.
OTHER POLICIES & PROCEDURES: Apart from these stated specifics regarding quizzes and exams above, this course complies with all departmental policies as posted on the departmental website at: http://economics.sas.upenn.edu/undergraduate-program/course-information/guidelines/policies.

Grading: Homework Assignments (16%), Best Three Quizzes (15%), Three Exams (23% each).
Course Outline

0) Some basic game theoretical tools…
   (tentative)
   Strategic Behavior
   Nash Equilibrium

1) Voting Behavior: Downsian Model and Theories of Participation in Elections
   Individual Rationality and the Pivotal Voter Model
   Rule Utilitarianism and the Ethical Voter Model

2) Strategic Voting
   Voting in Multicandidate Elections: Sincere vs. Strategic Voting
   Voting with Incomplete Information: The Swing Voter’s Curse
   Herd Behavior and Information Cascades
   Application: Voting in Sequential Elections such as the U.S. Presidential Primaries

3) Electoral Competition
   Downsian Model
   Median Voter Theorem
   Condorcet Paradox
   Theories of Policy Divergence

4) Electoral Rules
   Systems of Voting
   Social Choice and Social Welfare Theory: Gibbard-Satterthwaite Impossibility Theorem