Course Objectives and Outline:

This research seminar presents several themes on the topic of political representation and democratic accountability in both advanced industrial societies and developing democracies. The goals for this seminar are twofold. First, we will seek to understand the differences and connections between procedural and substantive representations by political parties, individual legislatures, and governments by focusing on both the American and comparative studies on representation. Second, we will evaluate democratic accountability both in the established and developing democracies.

Although this course is explicitly comparative, some of the class materials directly address issues in American politics. One of the central focuses of the course is the contrast between the "American model" of representation, with its focus on the link between individual legislators and their geographically-based constituencies, and the responsible party model which dominates the study of representation in Western Europe. We will also spend one or two weeks discussing representation and accountability in less developed democracies of post-Communist Europe and Latin America.

Requirements:

Class participation 20%
Class participation is an essential part of this seminar. The course will require a substantial amount of reading, which must be completed prior to the class period so that you participate actively. Your performance during the Q&A section of class presentations will also affect your participation grade.

Critical short essays and discussion questions on readings %20
Each student will submit one page essay (single-space) each week reacting to the major issues discussed in the readings. These essays should not be summaries, but critical and analytical evaluations of all the readings. You must email me these essays by 9am on Wednesdays before the class. These essays will be followed by three written discussion questions. With these questions you must demonstrate that you have carefully read and understood the readings individually as well as the linkages among the readings.
**Final paper 40%**  
Each student will write a research paper. This will be a full research paper (including theory, literature review, research design, and data analysis) on the topic of your choice (related to political representation or accountability). This paper should not be more than 20 double-spaced pages (excluding bibliography, tables and figures). The details for the paper will be distributed later.

**Paper presentations 15%**  
Each student will present their research paper in class towards the end of the semester. The presentations will be no longer than 15 minutes (similar to conference proceedings). You must use power-point, keynote, or beamer for these presentations. These presentations will be followed by discussant comments (see below) and by a Q&A section. Your grade will be determined based on your presentation and your performance during the Q&A section.

**Discussant Comments 5%**  
Each student will discuss one other paper (following the presentation) for at most 10 minutes. These discussant comments should be written and distributed to class before the class. You are encouraged to use visual aids and do additional research for an effective discussion.

**Required Readings:**

Some readings are political science journal articles that you can easily download from the Heard Library.

There are some articles from journals which are not available at Vanderbilt. These articles and book chapters have asterisks in front them. I will post these articles and the chapters on OAK.

The following books are required for this course. All books should be available in the bookstore.


**Course Schedule:**

**January 13: Introduction- Syllabus**

**January 20: The Theory of Representation**


**January 27: Constituency Representation in American Context**


**February 3: Dynamic Representation**


**February 10: The Effects of Electoral Systems on Representation and Accountability**


**February 17: Subconstituency Representation**


** Ezrow, Lawrence, Catherine E. De Vries, Marco Steenbergen, and Erica E. Edwards. “Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to their Supporters?” Forthcoming, *Party Politics*.


**February 24: Representation and the limitations of uninformed voters: Is there a “public opinion” to represent?**


**March 3: Comparative Accountability**


**March 17: Economic Voting (Randy Stevenson will be our guest)**


**March 24: An alternate perspective on mass-elite policy linkages: directional voting and policy expectations theory**


**March 31: no class- Midwest Conference**

**April 7: Representation and Accountability in Post-Communist Europe**


April 14: Representation and Accountability in Latin America


April 21-28: Paper Presentations