Introduction to the American Political Process

Legislative Behavior: The Median Voter Theorem
Median Voter Theorem

- Basic Logic
  - Think spatially
  - Place people and policies in the space
  - How do people make choice

- Predictions
Examples

- Minimum Wage – no status quo
- Minimum Wage – status quo
- 2000 Election
Implications

- Median voter gets his/her preferred policies
- Centrist policies
1. Assumptions
   - One-dimensional policy space
   - Utility function
   - Majority rule voting

2. Results
   - Median voter location informative
   - Condorcet Winner
   - Composition of voting body can change without changing outcomes
   - Centrist policies
Extensions

- Multidimensional Space
  - Chaos result
  - Solutions
Lawmaking is a shared responsibility: SOP

- Congress
- President
- Judiciary
How is legislation made?

- A bill becomes a law
  - Bill Introduced
  - Referred to relevant committee
  - Referred to relevant subcommittee
  - Hearings
  - Subcommittee Approval
  - Committee approval
  - Rules Committee
  - Floor debate
  - Passage
  - Conference Committee
  - Veto/Law Signed