Women in Politics Workshop  
Friday, April 11, 2014  
9:30AM-4:00PM  
Baker Center Toyota Auditorium

Each paper presenter will have 7 minutes to present their paper, which will be followed by 10 minutes of discussant comments. We will then have open discussion from the floor at the end of each session.

Please read all the papers in advance to allow for a more fruitful dialogue among participants.

Breakfast: 9:30am

Welcome and Introductions: 10am

MORNING SESSION: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN’S ELECTION AND INCORPORATION

Author: Adrienne Smith, University of Tennessee  
Title: Women’s Role in the Rainbow: Electoral Coalitions, Competition, and Descriptive Representation in American City Governments  
Discussant: Melanie Hughes  
Time 10:10am

Abstract: Do historically excluded groups work together to further their electoral interests or do they primarily compete for a limited number of spots not absorbed by dominant interests? A growing body of work examines the dynamics of electoral coalition building versus competition but fails to incorporate fully the complexities of identity group memberships or address how women fit into this puzzle. Applying an intersectional approach and focusing on American cities, I propose that women’s memberships in and collaboration with racial and ethnic minority groups influences their ability to gain government posts. Given their common experiences of exclusion, non-minority women, minority women, and minority men oftentimes join forces to win municipal elections. Minority women, in particular, use their crossover appeal to develop strategic electoral partnerships. I present a case study of Atlanta, Georgia and analyze a new data source on California’s city elections to gauge the accuracy of the proposed hypotheses. The Atlanta case illustrates how the coalitional mechanisms work in practice and the quantitative analysis suggests that non-minority and minority female political leaders form partnerships to win municipal legislative elections in California.

Author: Beth Reingold, Emory University (and Kerry L. Haynie, Duke University and Kathleen A. Bratton, Louisiana State University)  
Title: Gender, Race, Ethnicity and the Political Geography of Descriptive Representation in U.S. State Legislatures  
Discussant: Nate Kelly  
Time: 10:27am
Abstract: Significant bodies of research tell us that women are more likely to hold state legislative office in more liberal and “moralistic” states with larger “pools” of highly educated, professional women, low levels of legislative professionalism, and multi-member districts; and that single-member, majority-minority districts are key to African American and Latino officeholding at all levels. But when it comes to which environments and institutional structures promote the descriptive representation of women of color, a great deal of uncertainty remains. Drawing on research suggesting women of color possess certain intersectional strengths and advantages over white women and men of color, we theorize that the electoral fortunes of both African American women and Latinas are less constrained than standard, “single-axis” models of descriptive representation would suggest. Our state- and district-level analyses of descriptive representation in all 49 state houses in 2005 confirm suspicions that such models are often not generalizable across race/ethnicity or across gender; that women of color are often uniquely positioned in the intersections of gender, race, and ethnicity; but that the picture is even more complex and conditional than anticipated.

Author: Melanie Hughes, University of Pittsburgh
Title: Minority Women’s Absolute and Relative Levels of Political Representation Worldwide
Discussant: Ian Down
Time: 10:44am

Abstract: At present, we know little about the dynamics that shape the political outcomes of women from marginalized groups in different parts of the world. Even measuring the political incorporation of women from racial, ethnic, and religious minority groups is far from straightforward. Researchers could measure minority women’s legislative representation as absolute levels – their share of legislative seats in the national legislature. But, the size of minority female populations worldwide varies considerably. Thus, researchers could also measure minority women’s legislative representation as relative levels – comparing their political outcomes to those of men from their group. In this paper, I suggest that different factors contribute to minority women’s absolute and relative success. Factors that affect the supply of minority women candidates, such as the share of women in the labor force, are likely to affect their absolute numbers in national legislatures. Alternatively, factors that create greater demand for minority women candidates, such as the electoral system, are likely to shape the political success of minority women relative to men from the same minority group. Using data on the political representation of women from more than 400 majority and minority groups across 81 countries, I use hierarchical linear modeling to test my expectations. My results speak to the complexities of understanding the political representation of women from marginalized groups. However, this research also demonstrates the importance of acknowledging women’s diversity in order to understand the forces that shape women’s access to political power worldwide.

Author: Tiffany Barnes, University of Kentucky
Title: Women’s Representation and Legislative Committee Appointments: The Case of the Argentine Provinces
Discussant: Adrienne Smith
Time: 11:01am
Abstract: Over the last two decades a large number of countries worldwide have adopted a gender quota to increase women’s political representation in the legislature. While quotas are designed to achieve equality in legislative power and decision-making, it is unclear if electing more women to legislative office is sufficient to accomplish institutional incorporation. Once women are elected to office, are they being incorporated into the legislative body and gaining their own political power, or are they being marginalized? Using an original data set that tracks committee appointments in the twenty-two Argentine legislative chambers over an eighteen-year period, I evaluate the extent to which women have access to powerful committee appointments—beyond traditional women’s domains committees—and how women’s access to committee appointments changes over time. I hypothesize that while women may initially be sidelined, as they gain more experience in the legislature they may overcome institutional barriers and develop institutional knowledge that will better equip them to work within the system to gain access to valuable committee appointments.

Author: Sarah Fulton, Texas A&M University
Title: The Discrimination Threat and The Calculus of Running: New Implications for Office-Seeking Behavior
Discussant: Pat Freeland
Time: 11:18am

Abstract: Recent research suggests that women candidates for Congress encounter greater difficulty than men in eliciting the support of voters on Election Day (Fulton 2013, 2012). Specifically, this research finds that women candidates receive a 3% vote disadvantage relative to men when candidate characteristics are held constant. Over the two election cycles in which these studies were conducted, the 3% discrepancy translates into fourteen women who could have won their races, if they had been men. What remains unclear, however, is how this bias affects the calculations of potential candidates for office? My research reveals that the threat of discrimination reduces women’s likelihood of running for higher office both directly and indirectly. My study concludes that the discrimination threat demands more serious consideration, as it has implications for both the quality of electoral competition and women’s democratic representation.

Author: Jana Morgan, University of Tennessee
Title: Gendered Economic and Political Inequalities
Discussant: Tracy Osborn
Time: 11:35am

Abstract: This paper explores how individual characteristics and attitudes as well as party system features and social structures shape the nature of the gender gap in Latin Americans’ vote choices. The evidence suggests that inequalities in women’s educational and economic opportunities are major drivers of the traditional gender gaps in Latin American voting behavior. Moreover, analysis of the decision to vote for or against female presidential candidates suggests that Latin American women do not find much substantive representation within established patterns of party-based linkage, and as a result they seek descriptive representation when the option is available.
Open Discussion of Morning Session Papers, Moderated by Jana Morgan
Time: 11:52am

Lunch: 12:30

AFTERNOON SESSION: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON OUTCOMES OF WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION

Author: Tracy Osborn, University of Iowa
Title: Party Change and Women’s Issues in the State Legislatures: The Case of the Washington State House
Discussant: Tony Nownes
Time: 1:30

Abstract: Researchers of women and politics have long sought to understand the connection between the election of women to office and the creation of substantive policies that affect women. Increasingly, we have come to understand that political parties play an intervening role in this relationship. However, it is unclear whether short-term changes in party majority control and strength in the legislature, long-term changes in party alignment with women’s interests, or both contribute to our current, varied understanding of how parties matter. In this paper, I examine both short-term and long-term party effects using a new data set of bills introduced in the Washington State House from 1960-2010. Though the analysis is largely descriptive at this point, the data indicate possible short-term party effects, in that party majority control enables the ruling party in the chamber to introduce more policy alternatives to women’s issues policy problems.

Author: Danielle Atkins, University of Tennessee
Title: Going Beyond Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic: The Effects of Teacher Representation on Teen Pregnancy Rate
Discussant: Sarah Fulton
Time: 1:47

Abstract: Research in the field of representative bureaucracy provides evidence that the presence of minority and female bureaucrats can improve outcomes for minority and female clients of an agency. However, the previous work has almost exclusively connected the benefits of representation to outcomes directly linked to the primary purpose of the organization. We contend that there may be additional benefits linked to bureaucratic representation that are beyond the mission of the agency. To test this contention, we examine whether the presence of minority and female teachers can improve outcomes, beyond educational measures, for female students. Specifically, using data from Georgia public schools, we test whether the presence of minority and female teachers lowers teen pregnancy rates. We find that as the representation of African-American teachers reaches the tipping point (around 20%) we see a significant reduction in the African-American teen pregnancy rate.

Author: Frederico Batista Pereira, Vanderbilt University
Title: Women’s Representation, Stereotype Threat, and the Gender Gap in Political
Abstract: Evidence from social psychology suggests that reminding test-takers of gender differences in performance increases the gender gap in actual performance. The mechanism that explains such effect is called stereotype threat. Meanwhile, recent studies find that stereotype threat also produces gender gaps among surveys respondents that answer political knowledge questions. However, survey research shows overwhelming evidence for the gender gap even when respondents do not receive explicit reminders of gender differences in performance. This paper aims to understand why there is such a gap in the first place. The paper uses an experimental design that manipulates the gender composition of batteries of feeling thermometers towards prominent politicians in order to prime stereotype considerations among respondents. Results show a gender gap in political knowledge when respondents are asked to rate a list of male politicians, while a much smaller gap is found when respondents rate a list containing both male and female leaders. The findings suggest not only a plausible explanation for why surveys may produce gender differences in responses, but also a point out to mechanism regarding the effects of female representation on public opinion.

Author: Melissa Buice, University of Missouri
Title: Indigenous Women, Social Movement Perspectives, and Lessons from Bolivia’s Post-liberal Transformations
Discussant: Tiffany Barnes
Time: 2:21

Abstract: In Bolivia, indigenous women have impressively and successfully mobilized for electoral victories and have exercised unprecedented influence on the government’s decisions on policy in recent years. I investigate the causes behind this emerging influence of a marginalized group in order to illuminate important lessons from resource mobilization, framing and cultural, and political opportunity/process approaches. Qualitative historical analysis of primary and secondary data on indigenous women’s social movements in Bolivia between 2003 and 2012 reveals the impact of organizational, state, and international variables on four policy areas: natural gas, land reform, gas and food protests, and the TIPNIS conflict. The major finding of this article is that indigenous women need to confront very open political opportunities with very high amounts of human capital resources—especially women in leadership roles and strong networks—in order to have a significant impact on policy outcomes.

Author: Sabrina Karim, Emory University (and Kyle Beardsley, Duke University)
Title: Equal Opportunity Peacekeeping: Female Peacekeeping after UN Security Council Resolution 1325
Discussant: Brandon Prins or Curtis Bell
Time: 2:38

Abstract: By and large, extant studies and books on peacekeeping have focused on the characteristics of peacekeeping missions that best allow them to succeed. This book shares an interest in understanding how to improve peacekeeping missions. The focus, however, is on
gender equality—equality both in terms of the representation of women (female ratio balancing) and in terms of women’s status relative to men’s (egalitarianism within missions)—as an end goal for peacekeeping mission.

We consider the relevance of gender equality on three different levels of activity related to peacekeeping: activity in the troop-contributing countries, activity in the missions, and activity in the host countries. At the first level, we ask the questions: What characteristics of the troop and police contributing countries best explain the variation in the proportions of female peacekeepers sent? What characteristics of the destination countries affect the willingness for contributing countries to send more female peacekeepers? At the second level, we ask the important questions: What are the experiences of female peacekeepers in missions? How do gender ratios and gender norms in missions affect mission dynamics and performance? At the third level, we ask the important questions: How does peacekeeping affect gender equality in the local communities? How do gender ratios and egalitarianism in missions affect responses from local population?

At present, peacekeeping missions suffer from gender inequality and are not sufficiently addressing gender equality in the communities to which they are deployed. Few sending countries send females at the proportion suggested by the Secretary General, and no mission has reached such levels. At the mission level, female peacekeepers face structural barriers within the mission such as stringent regulations, discrimination and even harassment. Improving gender equality in peacekeeping missions is already difficult because of the way masculinity and femininity are constructed in security forces, which is why changing gender norms, in addition to increasing the representation of females, is important for gender equality. These struggles to address gender inequalities in the peacekeeping operations have consequences at the local level. Improved gender equality in the mission helps achieve gender equality locally, but the relationship between international and local actors in promoting gender equality is a delicate balance, as too much emphasis on outside assistance limits local ownership of the issues.

Our fundamental claim is that the recent push to pursue gender equality through and in peacekeeping operations should be applauded, but it is not coming close to realizing its full potential because of three barriers that are to varying extents self-inflicted. These barriers have limited the numbers of female peacekeepers deployed by troop-contributing countries (female ratio balancing), limited the extent to which the mission culture of the peace operations has changed so that female contributions in all roles are valued equally to male contributions in all roles (egalitarianism), and distorted the balance between local stakeholders and international actors in improving gender equality in the post-conflict, destination countries.

Author: Leslie Schwindt-Bayer, Rice University
Title: Gender, Corruption, and Accountability: Why Women are (Sometimes) More Resistant to Corruption Than Men
Discussant: Curtis Bell
Time: 2:55

Abstract: Prior research has established that more women in government is associated with lower perceived corruption, and that women are individually less likely to condone or express willingness to engage in corruption. But these relationships are sensitive to context in a way that suggests a deeper causal mechanism at work. We argue that accountability is this mechanism: when government officials are more likely to be held personally accountable for
corruption, women are less-likely than men to engage in it. We find evidence for this proposition in a panel of nearly 100 countries over the past 20 years; this evidence is robust to multiple measures of accountability and corruption.

Open Discussion of Afternoon Session Papers, Moderated by Jana Morgan
Time: 3:12-4:00pm