

Poli 891
Spring 2010
Prof. Baumgartner

Questions for Week 12 April 12

Note: We are changing the syllabus slightly to accommodate the visit of Christoffer Green Pedersen to class on April 19. These readings were originally scheduled for April 19, but we will flip the readings for those two weeks.

Readings:

1. Jones, Bryan D., Frank R. Baumgartner, Christian Breunig, Christopher Wlezien, Stuart Soroka, Martial Foucault, Abel François, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Peter John, Chris Koski, Peter B. Mortensen, Frédéric Varone, and Stefaan Walgrave. 2009. A General Empirical Law for Public Budgets: A Comparative Analysis. *American Journal of Political Science* 53, 4 (October): 855–73.
2. Baumgartner, Frank R., Christian Breunig, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Bryan D. Jones, Peter B. Mortensen, Michiel Neytemans, and Stefaan Walgrave. 2009. Punctuated Equilibrium in Comparative Perspective. *American Journal of Political Science* 53, 3 (July): 602–19.
3. Baumgartner, Frank R., Emiliano Grossman, and Sylvain Brouard. 2009. Agenda-setting Dynamics in France: Revisiting the “Partisan Hypothesis.” *French Politics*, 7, 2: 57–95.
4. Baumgartner, Frank R., Martial Foucault, and Abel François. 2009. Public Budgeting in the French Fifth Republic: The End of *La République des partis*? *West European Politics* 32, 2: 401–19.
5. John, Peter, and Will Jennings. 2010. Punctuations and Turning Points in British Politics: The Policy Agenda of the Queen’s Speech, 1940-2005. *British Journal of Political Science* forthcoming.

Questions:

1. Is there a “law” for budgets? How would you know? What would be a next step in this literature?
2. In the “3 country” study (US, Belgium, Denmark), some of the series are “out of order.” More importantly, it is hard to distinguish between “friction” or decision-costs and “cascades” or mimicking effects. How could one solve that problem.
3. The two papers on France suggest virtually no electoral differences. Do you believe it? Why so much study of elections? What would be the best way to do a large-scale test of the impact of elections on public policy?
4. Review John and Jennings’ findings and implications.