Today's Agenda

Bureaucratic Politics and Organizational Process Models
  The governmental politics model
  The organizational process model
The Causal Links to War
  Impact of organizational interests on state strategies
  Organizations and the distortion of information
  Impact of organizational routines on policy rigidity

For Monday, March 5:
Email me (ckbutler@unm.edu)
  • A question and a quote from the Weeks article
  AND
  • A question and a quote from the Leeds article
Bureaucratic Politics and Organizational Process Models

The governmental politics model (aka the bureaucratic politics model; Allison's Model III)

Focus on executive branch
Rational but not unitary

Foreign policy determined by:
- Who are the key actors
- How much power they have
- How they define their interests

Advisors, especially cabinet-level ones, have two goals:
- Advise on the "national interest"
- Advocate the interests of their organization within the government

Discussion Question: Why would cabinet secretaries advocate the interests of their department over that of the national interest? (There are several reasons.)

Variable power and influence
Organizational power
- Formal position
- Resources of department
- Information available through department
- Constituent support

Individual power
- Political skill
- Access to head of government

"foreign policy is the outcome of an internal political process of conflict, bargaining, and consensus building among these different actors." (165)
The organizational process model (Allison's Model II)
Non-unitary and not completely rational
Structure and procedures
  Decision-making under standard operating procedures
    "which of its pre-existing routines best fits the situation": routine-driven behavior
  Incrementalism
  Fighting the last war
  Satisficing: settling on an "adequate" solution, often one already in the "toolbox"
Factored problems
  Breaking a problem down into dimensions, OR
  How different departments perceive a problem facing the nation
Potential consequences
  Lack of coordination
  Lack of policy integration
Discussion Question: How was the 9/11/2001 attack potentially the result of factored problems?
The Causal Links to War

Impact of organizational interests on state strategies
Military versus diplomatic versus economic influence on foreign policy
Discussion Question: Are military leaders usually the most militaristic decision-makers?

Crisis decision-making versus general policy leading up to crises

Budgets
Manpower
Setting up procedures and doctrines and war plans
Equipment choices
Autonomy

The effect of bureaucratic in-fighting
Sometimes a more peaceful resolution
Delay
Compromise that no one advocated initially
Mixed signals and misperceptions

Organizations and the distortion of information

Overestimation/underestimation for organizational reasons

Politicization of intelligence
Not wanting to forward bad news
Career incentives
"Whistle blowing" not the norm
The effectiveness trap
Deliberate distortion of information
Impact of organizational routines on policy rigidity
  Reinforcing existing policies and strategies
  Policy momentum
  Denying leaders flexibility
Effective crisis management
  Executive control of military options
  Pauses in military operations
  Political-military coordination
  [Demonstrating resolve while bargaining]
Executive decisions versus implementation