READINGS:

Uden: Twenty five years with the logic of Collective Action (1993)

• Olsen's argument - The reason rational egoists will not act in their common interest is that interest groups trade in collective or public goods which are characterised by non-excludability.
• The most rational course of action for a self-interested individual, is to take a free-ride: to enjoy the benefits of the collective goods with contributing to the costs.
• Size is a dependent factor on the free-rider theory

Interest Groups and Public Policy: The Insider/Outsider model revisited - Maloney, Jordan, McLaughlin

• The distinction between insider groups and outsider groups is based on interest groups strategies.
• Policy making influence is not equal for all participants.

Parties

Political parties usually have discipline, ideology, elections, representation, in office, organisation, policy

Political parties can help socialise politicians into democratic norms. When strong parties politicians usually have to work their way up slowly. Come to value democratic system and learn crucial skills. You become socialised into the norms of democracy. Makes it difficult for political outsiders to be elected. Hugo Chavez not socialised into the democratic norms, installed authoritarian government.

Why do Parties Matter?
• Informed decisions
• Accountability
• Governability
• Incorporate potential 'spoilers'
• Socialise politicians into democratic norms (and bloc outsiders)

Numbers of Parties and 'Duvenger's Law'
• Parties almost never exist in isolation (at least in democracy)
• Belong to party systems, which vary on 2 dimensions.
    1. Number of parties
    2. Party system institutionalism

One Party Dominant : India, Japan (Liberal Democratic Party) and South Africa (1994 - African National Congress)
Two party: UK, US, Australia, Taiwan
Moderate multi-party (3-5 parties) : Germany, Mexico and Chile
Extreme multi-party: Brazil, Netherlands, Israel, Peru, Guatemalan, Indonesia

One party dominant systems are rare (in democracies) and tend to have an expiration date. Japan is an exception as one party has dominated from the end of WWI (only out of power for 4 years)

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Electoral systems = rule used to elect legislatures
Three important dimensions - electoral formula, district magnitude,
Electoral formula = the way votes get translated into seats

Plurality (first past the post)
Proportional Representation

Australia uses a third kind : 'alternative vote'

PLURALITY

- Must have more votes than anyone else
- You can win a plurality but not a majority. You have to win more votes than any other candidate. You vote for a candidate not a party.
- Used US, UK, Commonwealth (e.g India, Canada, Jamaica)

> Party A - 40% (Winner)
> Party B. - 35%
> Party C - 25%

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

- Seats are allowed to parties in proportion to their share of vote
- Rather than voting for a candidate you vote for a party. Parties draw up party lists rather than individual candidates. You vote for a party.
- Used in Western Europe, Israel, Latin America.

> Party A - 40% (40% of seats)
> Party B - 35% (35% of seats)
> Party C - 25% (25% of seats)

District Magnitude

Is the **number of legislators chosen from an electoral district**. It does **not refer to the physical size** of the district.

Single Member Districts
District magnitude = 1 (47 districts in NSW, 47 MPs)
E.g Australia House of Rep. US, UK

Multi-member Districts = > greater than 1
PR always involves multi-member districts
e.g. Most of Western Europe, Israel

Electoral Threshold

Minimum % of vote party needs to win a seat

Explicit
- Formal rule saying you must win X amount
- Example: 5% rule in Germany

Implicit
- Function of district magnitude and basic math
- Example: if district magnetite = 5, implicit threshold 20%
- Example: if district magnitude = 10, implicit threshold of 10%

"All systems of proportional representation are proportional but some are more proportional than others."