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978-1-107-04879-9 - Separation of Powers and Legislative Organization: The President, the Senate, and Political Parties in the Making of House Rules

Gisela Sin

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Separation of Powers and Legislative Organization

This book examines how the constitutional requirements of the lawmaking process, together with factional divisions within the parties, affect the distribution of power within the House. Gisela Sin's consideration of constitutional actors and intraparty factions in the analysis of House rule making marks a significant departure from previous theories, which postulate the House as an institution that sets its rules in isolation. Sin argues that, by constitutional design, the success of the House in passing laws is contingent on the preferences of the Senate and the president; House members thus anticipate these preferences as they make strategic decisions about rules. Through an examination of major rule changes from 1879 to 2013, the author analyzes how changes in the preferences of constitutional actors outside the House, as well as their political alignments vis-à-vis House factions, predict the timing of rule changes and the type of rules adopted.

Gisela Sin is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She studies political institutions with an emphasis on the strategic elements of separation of powers and is currently working on a book on presidential veto politics in Latin America. She is coauthor of a book on Argentinean institutions, *Congreso, Presidencia, y Justicia en Argentina*, and her research has been published in *Comparative Political Studies*, the *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, *Studies in American Political Development*, the *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, *Perspective on Politics*, and *Public Choice*. Sin has presented her work at universities throughout Latin America and Europe and was a scholar in residence at Universidad de Salamanca and a Fulbright Scholar in the United States. She holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan and a B.A. from Universidad del Salvador in Argentina.

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“While most congressional scholars (myself included) generally don’t look to the Constitution to explain chamber rules, after reading Professor Sin’s groundbreaking work, I am convinced. The amazing thing about her argument is that it is on the one hand obvious, but on the other almost completely overlooked by a generation of congressional scholars. This book will drive significant revisions to both theories of Congress and theories of legislative design more generally.”

– William Bianco, Indiana University

“In this highly original book, Gisela Sin argues that considerations of bargaining influence vis-à-vis the Senate and Executive shape rules choices within the House of Representatives. It is an important departure from existing chamber-centric accounts of historical procedural developments, and a much needed foray into the strategic implications of bicameralism.”

– John D. Wilkerson, University of Washington

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Separation of Powers and Legislative Organization

*The President, the Senate, and Political
Parties in the Making of House Rules*

GISELA SIN

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign



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To Nate, Sophia, and Tobias

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