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MALLEABLE PARTISANSHIP?

POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN BUREAUCRATIC ELITES' PARTISAN IDENTIFICATION

This article challenges the common assumption that the partisan identification of bureaucratic elites is fixed over time. Building on principal-agent and organization theory, we hypothesize that bureaucratic elites may respond to political turnover events by adjusting their partisan identification towards that of their (new) elected principals. We test this prediction using data from the American State Administrators Project (ASAP) over the 1964-2008 period, which allows us to study the same US agency leaders (N=951 individuals) before and after partisan shifts in their agency's elected principals. We find significant evidence that agency leaders reorient their partisan identity in response to shifts in the party in power. Such adjustments are stronger for agency leaders directly appointed by, or having more frequent contacts with, their elected principals, and those more heavily involved in policy development. These results suggest a malleability of partisanship seldom attributed to bureaucratic elites in public and academic discourse.

TIME

**Monday, Jan. 22, 2024
12:10PM-1:20PM**

LOCATION

SSC 121

ZOOM DETAILS

**Meeting ID: 915 1301 3222
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