

## Where Do Presidents Politicize? Evidence from the George W. Bush Administration

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### Abstract

This paper explains why some agencies are more politicized than others using new data from a 2007-8 survey of 7,000 career and appointed federal executives. The paper focuses on politicization motivated by a presidential desire to change agency policies but constrained by the need to not excessively damage agency competence. The paper finds that liberal agencies are more politicized during the George W. Bush Administration and finds little evidence that politicization choices were constrained by performance concerns.

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Among the controversial aspects of the George W. Bush presidency were actions by his subordinates to politicize different agencies in the government including the Department of Justice.<sup>1</sup> Department of Justice appointees admitted that they had hired, fired, and promoted civil servants on the basis of political views in violation of civil service regulations. The White House was involved in selecting US attorneys for removal both because some would not prosecute public corruption cases aggressively enough and as a means of providing jobs for protégés of key Republican figures like Karl Rove.<sup>2</sup> An internal department probe concluded that Civil Rights Division head Bradley Schlozman injected partisan politics into hiring and other decisions.<sup>3</sup>

Presidency scholars have arranged politicization episodes like this one into broader theoretical accounts (Hecló 1977; Lewis 2008; Moe 1985; Nathan 1975). Yet, there is relatively little generalizable empirical research evaluating this feature of presidential politics. Existing research is largely comprised of analysis of key historical episodes and trends across time. When empirically oriented work has deviated from this pattern it has focused on those aspects of politicization that can easily be counted such as increases in the number or percentage of appointees. We know very little systematically about which agencies are politicized and why beyond raw numbers of political appointees. For example, we do not know which agencies are more likely to make decisions on the basis of ideology rather than evidence, which agencies'

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<sup>1</sup> Other examples include the Central Intelligence Agency and the Environmental Protection Agency. The new director of the CIA brought a cadre of partisan appointees with him to help him rein in the intelligence agency and ignited an internal firestorm of protests and resignations. Priest, Dana, and Walter Pincus. 2004. "CIA Chief Seeks to Reassure Employees." *Washington Post*, November 16, 2004, A1. The White House reviewed and revised agency reports by scientists at the EPA on global climate change to make sure the agency's pronouncements were consistent with White House positions. Revkin, Andrew C., and Katherine Q. Seelye. 2003. "Report by E.P.A. Leaves Out Data on Climate Change." *New York Times*, June 19, 2003 (on-line edition; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C07EED81138F93AA25755C0A9659C8B63>, last accessed March 2, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, Carrie. 2008. "Internal Justice Dept. Report Cites Illegal Hiring Practices." *Washington Post*, July 29, 2008, A1; Johnson, Carrie. 2009. "Report Cites Political and Racial Bias at Justice." *Washington Post*, January 14, 2009, A8; Eggen, Dan, and Paul Kane. 2007. "Gonzales: 'Mistakes Were Made.'" *Washington Post*, March 14, 2007, A1. See also Gordon 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Horton, Scott. 2009. "DOJ Internal Probe Confirms Politicization, Again." *Harper's*, January 13, 2009 (on-line edition, <http://harpers.org/archive/2009/01/hbc-90004180>, last accessed, March 5, 2009).

day-to-day business is infused with partisan politics, which agencies make promotion decision in the civil service on the basis of partisan or political views, and which agencies are more or less run by the White House. These are precisely the forms of politicization that were at issue in the Department of Justice.

This paper explains why some agencies are more politicized than others using new data from a 2007-8 survey of 7,000 career and appointed federal executives. The paper focuses on politicization motivated by a presidential desire to change agency policies but constrained by the need not to excessively damage agency competence. The survey included a variety of questions that ask respondents about the presence or absence of political influence in agency decision making of the type suggested by the Department of Justice case. These questions provide a unique opportunity to systematically evaluate the degree of politicization in different agencies and explore why some are more politicized than others. The paper finds that liberal agencies are more politicized during the George W. Bush Administration and that politicization choices were not evidently constrained by performance concerns.

The paper contains five sections. The first section reviews the different definitions of politicization and reviews existing empirical accounts of presidential politicization. It explains that very little empirical work examines politicization and that which does focuses on one particular type of politicization. The second section explains the motivations for politicization and where politicization should occur. The third section describes the data, variables, and methods used in the analysis. It describes the Survey on the Future of Government Service with particular attention to the questions that deal with politicization. The section also explores, based upon aggregate answers to these survey questions, which agencies are the most and least politicized. It then describes measures of the key theoretical concepts and the models used to test

these expectations. The fourth section presents the results and the final section discusses the results and concludes.

## Politicization in the United States

Politicization refers to a number of different but related phenomena associated with political intervention in administration although some forms of politicization attract more attention from social scientists than others (Derlien 1996; Suleiman 2003). The term commonly refers to the addition of political appointees on top of existing career civil service employees or the practice of placing loyal political appointees into important bureaucratic posts formerly held by career professionals (Dunn 1997, Heclo 1975, Lewis 2008, Rose 1987, Suleiman 2003). The term also refers to the practice of recruiting appointees only on the basis of party loyalty or connections, involving civil servants in political fights, deciding policies in agencies on the basis of ideology rather than evidence and making appointment and promotion decisions in the civil service on the basis of political attitudes (Suleiman 2003). More generally, politicization refers to presidential intervention into the theoretically apolitical bureaucracy.

Important advances have been made in the study of politicization but more work needs to be done explaining where politicization occurs more generally, beyond trends and analyses of numbers and percentages of appointees. Scholarly and public concerns about politicization trace back to the start of the Republic (Light 2008).<sup>4</sup> The most prominent academic work on politicization using this label, however, emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (Heclo 1977; Moe 1985; Nathan 1975). This work described a shift in presidential emphasis away from securing legislation and toward control of administration as a means of changing public policy. It explains

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<sup>4</sup> The controversy surrounding Alexander Hamilton's role in the Treasury Department, Thomas Jefferson's refusal to make midnight appointments in *Marbury v. Madison*, and Andrew Jackson's intervention in the Second Bank of the United States are notable examples.

the origins of this strategy in the modern presidency, the institutional incentives that animate it, and its effects on performance. Most work written during this period targeted specific episodes including, notably, the development of an administrative strategy in the Nixon Administration (Nathan 1975). Frustrated by large Democratic majorities in Congress, President Nixon systematically employed spending (impoundment), reorganization, and personnel powers to accomplish his public policy goals through the bureaucracy (Nathan 1975; see also Rudalevige 2005). Other works detailed the politicization of the Bureau of the Budget and its consequences (Hecklo 1975) or Reagan's attempts to get control of the regulatory and social welfare agencies (Durant 1992; Goldenberg 1984; Nathan 1983; Rosen 1983).

Subsequent works track the emergence of politicizing trends in the modern presidency more generally. They detail an increased presidential focus on loyalty in appointee selection (Pfiffner 1996; Weko 1995), an increase in the number of political appointees (National Commission on the Public Service 1989, 2003; see, however, Lewis 2008), and the harmful effects of various forms of politicization on performance (Dunn 1997; Hecklo 1977; Light 1995; Suleiman 2003; Volcker 1989; see, however, Maranto 1998). Aberbach and Rockman (1990) importantly show how politicization efforts were successful changing the partisan and ideological composition of the upper levels of the civil service. Suleiman (2003) details the increasing prominence of the New Public Management and the politicization that accompanies it across countries and details its influence on politicizing activity. Lewis (2008) tracks the number of appointees in different agencies in the U.S. since 1960 and shows how this variation is partly explained by concerns for policy and patronage. He has little to say, however, about other forms of politicization.

While these analyses provide rich detail about why and how presidents politicize, they rarely explain which agencies presidents politicize and in what ways they are politicized. The large-N work focuses almost exclusively on the number or percentage of appointees. The analysis that follows addresses *which agencies* presidents politicize. The argument is distilled into general hypotheses and these hypotheses are evaluated using new data and measures of politicization.

### Which Agencies Do Presidents Politicize?

There are a number of factors that influence presidential choices to politicize some agencies and not others (Hecklo 1977). Similar institutional and political incentives across presidencies explain a significant amount of the variance, however (Moe 1985). Modern presidents share certain similarities based upon their constitutional and political position. This is particularly true in the modern period, when the president's behavior and outlook are defined and disciplined by the continuing professional institutional presidency and stable party system. Both Republicans and Democrats are expected to influence policy administratively. As chief executive, modern presidents are held responsible for the functioning of the entire government (Moe and Wilson 1994). When an important social problem goes unaddressed or a federal agency fails to carry out its duty to rescue citizens or prevent terrorist attacks, it is the president that must ultimately answer for the problem. Administrative agencies also make important policy decisions that have electoral relevance such as drug approval, eligibility for social benefits, and environmental and market regulation. During each election season presidents promise to unilaterally make changes to foreign and domestic policy. Since the actions of administrative

agencies influence their success and the fate of the country, presidents have strong incentives to make sure that these agencies are responsive.

When presidents assume office they confront a continuing professional government comprised of two to three million federal civilian employees working in 15 cabinet departments and their sub-cabinet agencies along with 55-60 independent agencies. Some of these agencies share the president's priorities and views about policy and some do not. Some will do what the president prefers without much direction from the White House while others require more attention and intervention. One reason this is the case is that agencies themselves have views about what policy should be and this can be at variance with the president's own views (Bertelli et al. 2008; Clinton and Lewis 2008). The mission of some agencies puts them at odds with the president. If an agency's authorizing statutes require federal intervention in education or environmental regulation, for example, simply carrying out their mission will put the agency's civil servants at odds with the president. What is more, persons who support these missions self-select into these agencies so that liberals and Democrats are more likely to work in social welfare and regulatory agencies than Republicans. Conservatives and Republicans are more likely to work in defense and fiscal agencies (Aberbach and Rockman 1976; Bertelli et al. 2008; Maranto and Hult 2004). This implies that presidents are more likely to politicize agencies that have policy views at variance with their own. The focus of their politicization should be to get control of the agency and change its direction, from the allocation of its budgets, to the content of its reports, to the promulgation of its regulations.

*H1: Presidents are more likely to politicize when their policy views diverge from those of the agency.*

Presidents do not make politicization choices unconstrained. Presidential efforts to politicize the bureaucracy hinge upon the implicit or explicit approval of Congress. Congressional authorization and appropriations committees review executive actions within agencies and give instructions through informal communication, hearings, reports, or statutory language. While presidents have significant discretion under the law, they always act with an eye toward what Congress's response is likely to be. Congress and the president share similar concerns about policy outcomes, but these concerns can lead to different views about politicization because of institutional and partisan differences between the two branches. Congress is generally less enthusiastic about politicization since it can pull policy away from what they prefer. During the bulk of the Bush presidency, however, Congress itself was relatively conservative and sympathetic to the president's efforts to assert control of the executive bureaucracy.

Agency performance concerns also constrain the president either directly or indirectly through Congress. Politicization can threaten agency performance by injecting problematic political concerns into agency decision making, increasing influence costs (i.e., efforts wasted on internal politicking), and damaging the motivation and career paths of civil service professionals. Agencies that are incompetent cannot be particularly responsive to presidential direction and can also generate political problems through their incompetence as the Federal Emergency Management Agency demonstrated in its response to Hurricane Katrina.

Of course, politicization is a riskier strategy in some agencies than others. In some cases politicization can occur with little or no influence on performance and in other cases politicization dramatically harms agency competence. The key factor that influences the president's politicization choice is the *marginal* influence politicization will have on

performance. Agency sensitivity to politicization is a function of a number of factors. Prominent among them is the effects of politicization on the career choices of agency professionals.

Politicization can damage agency competence to varying degrees through its effects on agency career professionals. If politicization successfully changes policy away from what career professionals prefer or otherwise reduces their work satisfaction because they are excluded from key agency decisions or frequently overruled, some may leave, to the detriment of the agency. At minimum, they may stop investing in expertise and training that could help the agency or work with less enthusiasm (Gailmard and Patty 2007). Politicization can make it more difficult to recruit and retain the best career professionals or encourage them to join the agency in the first place. At top levels of the career hierarchy employees frequently are eligible to retire or have private sector options, often as government contractors. The retirement or private sector options become more attractive when politicization creates changes inside the agency that make work less rewarding. When agency career professionals, particularly at the top levels, have viable outside options small changes in politicization can lead to harmful departures and this should constrain politicization choices. Some agencies' performance, particularly in agencies where employees have site-specific expertise and outside options like retirement, will be very sensitive to politicization. The performance of other agencies, particularly those where employees have few outside options or are easily replaceable, will be less sensitive to politicization.

*H2: Politicization decreases as the sensitivity of agency competence to politicization increases.*

Together these two hypotheses suggest that variation in politicization among agencies should be a function of agency ideology and how sensitive the agency's performance is to

politicization. The next section turns to data that allows us to measure these different forms of politicization systematically across agencies.

## Data, Variables, and Methods

To measure politicization across the federal government this paper uses data from the 2007-2008 Survey on the Future of Government Service (Bertelli et al. 2008), the largest ever political science survey of federal executives. The survey was conducted by the Princeton Survey Research Center during the Fall and Winter of 2007-2008. It was sent to 7,448 federal administrators and program managers in the various departments and agencies.<sup>5</sup> The overall response rate, once potential respondents included incorrectly were excluded, was 32% (2,225/6,690).<sup>6</sup> The response rate for career professionals was 33% (1,978/5,909).

### *Reliability of the Survey Data*

While survey data has the advantage of allowing researchers to measure concepts that are otherwise hard to observe, they have drawbacks as well. First, while the overall number of respondents is large, the sample of respondents could differ in important ways from the population as a whole. Of particular concern is the possibility that the sample of respondents is systematically more liberal or Democratic than the population as a whole since those opposed to

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<sup>5</sup> This is the entire population of program managers and administrators according to the *Federal Yellow Book* and *Federal Regional Yellow Book* publishers. We obtained the names and contact information directly from Leadership Directories, Inc., a firm that publishes the *Federal Yellow Book*. The survey excludes executives that are not administrators or program managers.

<sup>6</sup> The response rate from the original 7,448 names was 32%. When potential respondents who were included incorrectly are excluded (i.e., those who are not employees of the federal government or not federal executives), the response rate in the text is produced. The original list included 461 potential respondents from the National Science Foundation because the firm incorrectly labeled NSF program officers as managers or executives. The original list also included 27 names of executives working for the Delaware River Basin Commission, National Gallery of Art, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, and Japan - United States Friendship Commission. Two of these agencies are multi-state compacts and so not technically federal agencies. The National Gallery of Art is partially private and the Japan - United States Friendship Commission is a multi-lateral agency with both Japanese and U.S. citizens working together.

the Bush Administration might be more inclined to respond to a survey about the state of public service. This concern was addressed in two ways. First, the survey's authors contracted with private firms to find home addresses and voter registration information for the survey population. They then compared party voter registration for those in the population to what respondents in the sample reported about their party ID.<sup>7</sup> Second, early and late responders to the survey were compared on identifiable characteristics.<sup>8</sup> In general, the respondents are very similar to non-respondents. If there is a difference between the sample and population it is that respondents are slightly more conservative and Republican than the population.

A second concern is that survey respondents will exaggerate or otherwise unreliably report levels of politicization in their agencies. This should not be a problem provided analysis proceeds carefully. At the most basic level, an overall exaggeration in the amount of politicization will not interfere with relative comparisons across agencies. If some agencies' respondents exaggerate and others' do not, this is also should not be a problem provided the location of the exaggeration is uncorrelated with the key variables of interest. If the exaggeration is correlated with a feature of an agency or respondent such as the agency or respondent's ideology, this can be controlled for in statistical models.

A final concern is that surveys take place at one point in time and without a panel design it is hard to make sense of change or trends. The Princeton Survey Research Center put this

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<sup>7</sup> The survey's authors contracted with a private firm to find home addresses for as many persons in the population in the Washington, DC metropolitan area as they could find (primarily through the matching of unique names). Out of 7,448 names, 2,918 were positively matched with exact home addresses. Of these 2,918 names, 415 were in the District of Columbia, 677 in Maryland, and 1,622 in Virginia. The survey's authors then obtained voter registration information for people whose home addresses were secured. Out of 1,092 persons with addresses in the District of Columbia and Maryland, voter information was available for 717 (66%). This information is publicly available in Maryland and the District of Columbia but not Virginia. In total, 57.4% of executives (both respondents and non-respondents) living in these locations were registered Democrats compared to 51.8% of our sample (64.4% in the District of Columbia and 54% in Maryland). The remainder in the population is comprised of those who are registered Republicans (24.02%) or did not register with either major party (18.58%). Given Virginia's political configuration it is possible that the population actually looks much closer to the survey sample.

<sup>8</sup> In general, early responders look very similar to late responders with the exception that women responding late to the survey tend to be slightly less likely to be self-identifying Democrats.

survey into the field in the seventh year of the Bush presidency. If aggressive politicizing took place, it arguably occurred in the first term. With seven years to implant his DNA into the bureaucracy, the need for politicization is arguably at a low ebb by the seventh year. To further complicate matters, respondent evaluations of politicization may reference politicization levels early in the term rather than the previous administration. If so, they will report a decline or low relative levels of politicization even though they might be high in absolute terms, particularly in relation to other agencies. Both factors mitigate against finding evidence of politicization.

### *Measuring Politicization*

With these caveats in mind the paper turns the measures of politicization. The survey included a number of questions intended to assess the degree of politicization in each agency along the lines suggested by the Department of Justice example at the start of the paper. These questions ask about the following forms of politicization: 1) the extent to which ideology rather than evidence determine policy decisions, 2) the extent to which agencies are politicized enough so that it is common knowledge who the Republicans and Democrats are in the career service, 3) the extent to which policy or partisan views influence promotion decisions (in violation of civil service regulations), and 4) how much influence the White House has over policy decisions in each agency.

Figure 1 graphs the average responses to these questions by agency.<sup>9</sup> The questions and their associated descriptive statistics are listed below. Answers to each have been recoded so that higher values indicate more politicization.

1. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting [strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly

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<sup>9</sup> The graphs include only agencies with at least twenty respondents. The raw data is included in Appendix A.

agree, don't know]: "*Policy decisions concerning my agency are based upon evidence rather than ideological beliefs*" (mean 2.59; SD 0.91; Min 1; Max 4)

2. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting [strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, don't know]: "*Among career managers in my agency I have a pretty good idea of who is a Democrat and who is a Republican*" (mean 2.76; SD 0.86; Min 1; Max 4)
3. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting [strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, don't know]: "*In my agency the policy or political views of career professionals at the GS-12 to GS-15 level influences their chances for promotion or attractive assignments*" (mean 1.71; SD 0.75; Min 1; Max 4)
4. *In general, how much influence do the following groups have over the policy decisions in your agency (White House)?* [none, little, some, a good bit, a great deal, don't know] (mean 3.80; SD 1.13; Min 1; Max 5)

Among the consistently most politicized agencies by these measures are the State Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and the Department of Education. Three of these four agencies are generally considered liberal agencies and on its face, this suggests that President Bush targeted liberal agencies more than conservative or moderate agencies (Clinton and Lewis 2008). Without aggressive direction from the president or his appointees, these agencies likely would have produced policies the president would not otherwise support. The fourth agency, the VA, was implicated in the Walter Reed hospital scandal and political issues surrounding the treatment of American veterans returning from service in Iraq or Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup>

[Insert Figure 1 here.]

Interestingly, these measures of politicization do not correspond neatly with the percentage of appointees in these agencies. While the Department of Education and State Department have relatively high percentages of appointees, the EPA has a moderate amount and

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<sup>10</sup> Fletcher, Michael A., and William Branigin. 2007. "Ex-Army Doctor, Vietnam Vet Nominated as VA Secretary." *Washington Post*, October 31, 2007, A17.

the VA has a relatively low percentage relative to other agencies (Lewis 2008, 82). This reinforces the need to evaluate presidential politicization using more than counts or percentages of appointees which, while important, provide only one lens into politicization.

Among the least politicized agencies by these measures are the Federal Trade Commission, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of the Treasury, and the group of smaller agencies lumped into the “Other” category. Two of these agencies are independent commissions, designed in statute to be insulated from presidential influence. This implies that structural barriers to influence written in to statute may increase the difficulty of politicizing these agencies. The fact that smaller agencies lumped together in the catch all “other” category are among the least politicized suggests that more visible agencies and larger agencies are more likely to be politicized. The Department of the Treasury’s relevance to the president obviously increased after the period of the survey but the agency persisted through large portions of the Bush Administration with significant appointee vacancies. This might help explain the low reported levels of politicization.

One other notable case here is the Department of Justice which has low reported levels of politicization relative to other agencies. On its face, this appears inconsistent with popular accounts of DOJ’s politicization but it is worth considering three factors. First, by mid-September 2007 when the survey was about to go in to the field, at least 7 top officials at DOJ had left the department including Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.<sup>11</sup> DOJ was in the process of returning to normalcy or depoliticizing when the survey was in the field. Relative to the height of the controversy, DOJ was less politicized and this likely influenced the responses of DOJ officials. Second, we do not know what the baseline responses to these questions are for DOJ personnel and so it is possible that the levels of politicization reported are still high relative to

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<sup>11</sup> Eggen, Dan. 2007. “Third-in-Command at Justice Dept. Resigns.” *Washington Post*, June 23, 2007, A4.

historical levels. Finally, it is possible that politicization levels are generally higher in other departments which do not share the Justice Department's law orientation and legal and law enforcement professionalism.

### *Independent Variables—Key Theoretical Variables*

The theoretical expectation is that politicization driven by concerns for *policy* should be highest in agencies whose policy views diverge from those of the president. Since George W. Bush was conservative, politicization for policy should emerge in liberal agencies. To determine which agencies are liberal and which are conservative I use estimates from Clinton-Lewis 2008 (mean 0.24; SD 1.1; Min -1.72; Max 2.4).<sup>12</sup> Higher values indicate a more conservative agency and coefficient estimates should be negative, indicating that more conservative agencies are less likely to be politicized. Models also include a squared term since there is no reason to expect the relationship between ideology and politicization to be linear. A simple comparison of means for liberal agencies compared to moderate and conservative agencies shows a statistically distinguishable difference in politicization levels in the expected direction in three of the four cases (Figure 2).<sup>13</sup> Respondents who work in liberal agencies are significantly more likely to report that ideology plays a more important role in policy decisions, that they know who the

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<sup>12</sup> These measures of agency ideology are best for this analysis for two reasons. First, they incorporate information about agency mission and history into estimates of liberalism-conservatism. Second, ideology estimates using data from the survey are arguably endogenous. That is, the same factors that explain the levels of politicization also determine the composition of liberals and conservatives in the management team. Indeed, one of the measures of politicization is the extent to which political views influence promotion decisions.

<sup>13</sup> To conduct difference of means tests I created an indicator coded 1 for all agencies whose Clinton-Lewis score was statistically distinguishable from zero in the liberal direction. All t-tests were significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level except for the question about political views and promotions in the civil service where the p-value was 0.55.

Republicans and Democrats are in their agency, and that the White House has a good bit or great deal of influence over policy decisions in their agency.<sup>14</sup>

[Insert Figure 2 here.]

Presidents' choices about where to politicize are determined not only by agency policy views, but also by how politicization will influence agency competence. Competence concerns can influence politicization levels both directly and indirectly. Presidents recognize the need for continuing professional personnel with a long-term perspective, expertise in government work built through experience, and site-specific knowledge. Members of Congress are often more sensitive to the effects of politicization on agency performance because their views on policy differ from those of the president. Presidents are less likely to politicize if they anticipate and adverse reaction from that body due to competence concerns.<sup>15</sup> To measure the sensitivity of agency performance to politicization I use two measures from the survey. The first survey item measures the extent to which successful work requires site-specific knowledge. The survey asks "Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements about your job and work setting: "Necessary expertise for my job can only be gained through experience working in my agency [strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree]." Answers have been recoded so that higher values indicate more agreement with this statement and higher values should lead to less politicization since site-specific knowledge is hard to replace (mean 2.64; SD 0.30; Min 1; Max 4). Agencies with the highest values include the Department of Homeland Security, portions of the Agriculture Department, and the National Labor Relations

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<sup>14</sup> If Democrats are excluded, independents and Republicans report overall lower levels of politicization but the same overall pattern. Liberal agencies have significantly higher levels of politicization (even with fewer cases) in two of the four cases. In the case of civil service violations, however, liberal agencies have slightly lower (though not significant) average levels of politicization when Democratic respondents are excluded.

<sup>15</sup> It is possible that presidents are less concerned about competence in liberal agencies despite the fact that they will still be blamed for poor performance. To evaluate this claim, I also estimated models on liberal and conservative agencies separately and there was no evidence of a difference between liberal and conservative agencies.

Board (NLRB) and those with the lowest include the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Education, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The second measure is the proportion of agency career executives who are eligible for retirement. The survey asks “Are you or will you become eligible to retire in the next 12 months? [yes, no, don’t know].” On average, 49.2% of career executives reported that they were or would become eligible to retire within 12 months. Those with higher percentages should be less politicized since small changes in work satisfaction could lead large numbers of executives to choose the retirement option.<sup>16</sup> The agencies with the highest percentage of retirement eligible executives were the Department of Labor, the State Department, and the NLRB. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Archives and Records Administration, and National Institutes of Health were those with the lowest. The influence of retirement-eligibility and site-specific expertise may be interrelated. If executives are eligible for retirement, this is less of a concern if they are easily replaced in the market. If, however, these executives are repositories of important information that cannot be obtained easily, this should be a constraint on politicization.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Of course, the percentage of retirement-eligible employees could be endogenous. That is, agencies with few retirement-eligible employees could have few because those who were eligible to retire already departed in response to earlier politicization choices by the Bush Administration. To evaluate this possibility I collected data on the percentage of employees 60 years of age and older in each agency in 2000 before the Bush Administration and 2007 at the time of the survey. I correlated the change in the percentage of agency employees in this age range with measures of politicization to see whether more politicized agencies in 2007-8 had fewer retirement-aged workers now than in 2000 relative to other agencies. In fact, more politicized agencies in 2007-8 had bigger increases in retirement-eligible employees during this period than other agencies.

<sup>17</sup> The performance of agencies with complex tasks or demands for high expertise tends to be sensitive to politicization. One way previous work has sought to measure variation in work complexity is to examine the composition of agency workforces. Lewis (2008) found the percentage of technical employees to be correlated with equilibrium levels of politicization between 1988-2005. I have also estimated models using the percentage of agency employees classified in technical occupations and describe them in the results section.

### *Independent Variables--Controls*

The primary specifications control for a number of agency-specific and respondent-specific factors arguably correlated with other key independent variables whose exclusion could lead to biased estimates on the key variables of interest. The costs of politicizing some agencies will be higher because of their size or institutional barriers to presidential influence. To control for size the models include the natural log of agency employment (mean 9.96; SD 1.94; Min 1.79; Max 13.41).<sup>18</sup> Doing so is important since size is correlated with liberalism-conservatism. The largest agencies, the departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security, are all relatively conservative. The models also include an indicator for whether or not an agency is an independent commission (0,1; 6.8%).<sup>19</sup> These agencies have often been specifically designed to be insulated from political or presidential influence (Lewis 2003; McCarty 2004; McCubbins, Noll, and Weingast 1989; Moe 1989). Commissions typically include party-balancing

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<sup>18</sup> Source: Office of Personnel Management ([fedscope.opm.gov](http://fedscope.opm.gov)) data for September 2007.

<sup>19</sup> In the entire population there were 557 potential respondents that worked in independent commissions. Of the 557 executives in independent commissions, 218 responded to the survey (39%). The independent commissions include the following agencies with minor commissions denoted with and (m) and larger independent regulatory commissions denoted by *italics*: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (m), African Development Foundation (m), Arctic Research Commission (m), Broadcasting Board of Governors, *Commodity Futures Trading Commission*, *Consumer Product Safety Commission*, Coordinating Council On Juvenile Justice And Delinquency Prevention (m), Corporation for National and Community Service, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, Export-Import Bank, Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (m), *Federal Communications Commission*, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, *Federal Election Commission*, Federal Housing Finance Board, Federal Maritime Commission, *Federal Reserve System*, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (m), *Federal Trade Commission*, Marine Mammal Commission (m), Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation (m), James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation (m), Merit Systems Protection Board, *National Labor Relations Board*, Morris K. Udall Scholarship And Excellence In National Environmental Policy Foundation (m), National Capital Planning Commission (m), National Mediation Board, National Transportation Safety Board, Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation (m), *Nuclear Regulatory Commission*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, Railroad Retirement Board, *Securities and Exchange Commission*, United States Chemical Safety And Hazard Investigation Board (m), United States Commission on Fine Arts (m), and the United States International Trade Commission. I do not include the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Tennessee Valley Authority, or Smithsonian Institution as commissions because their boards are more advisory or like boards of directors rather than boards that are involved in day-to-day functioning of the agencies. I exclude the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation and the US Interagency Council on Homelessness because they are not really independent. They are headed by directors who report to other presidentially appointed officials such as the secretaries of labor, commerce, etc. The results reported below are robust to including or excluding minor commissions, examining only the major independent regulatory commissions, or excluding all commissions.

requirements and fixed and staggered terms for appointees and are free from OMB's regulatory and budgetary review.<sup>20</sup> These agencies should be less politicized than other agencies in the cabinet or with structures similar to cabinet agencies.

Individual respondents also differ in important ways that may influence their ability to accurately assess the level of politicization in their agencies. The models control for their ideology, years of experience in the agency, work location, and extent of contact with top levels of the agencies. To control for a respondent's ideology I include ideal point estimates from Bertelli et al. (2008) which were calculated using respondents' stated responses to fourteen questions about how they would have voted on actual bills considered in Congress.<sup>21</sup> Higher values indicate more conservative views and this coefficient should be negative under the belief that liberals are more likely to recognize or voice concerns about politicization.<sup>22</sup> Employees who have worked in an agency for a long time and employees who have access to the highest levels of decision making in the agency are more likely to have an accurate view of what is happening in the agency. To account for this models control for years of experience in their current position in their agency (mean 6.91; SD 6.18; Min-0; Max 45), whether the appointee works in a regional office (0,1; 6.3%), the frequency of contact with agency appointees (Never (1)-5.7%; Rarely (2)-16.8%; Monthly (3)-14.9%; Weekly (4)-19.9%; Daily (5)-42.8%; mean 3.77; SD 1.31), and indicators for the respondents' place in the hierarchy which are program

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<sup>20</sup> They can promulgate rules without OMB review and submit their budgetary requests directly to Congress (Lewis 2003).

<sup>21</sup> Estimates were generated from a two-parameter item response model of votes as described in Clinton et al. 2004.

<sup>22</sup> I have also estimated models using other measures of ideology including answers to the typical 7-point liberal-conservative scale question (mean 4.25; SD 1.40; Min-1; Max-8) and whether the respondent is a Democrat (0,1; 56.7%). The results are consistent with what is reported here.

manager (0,1; 23.5%), administrator (0,1; 37.5%), bureau or agency head (0,1; 2.1%) with all other managers in the base category.<sup>23</sup>

### *Methods*

Since the data are ordered and categorical and the distances between categories may not be equal, I estimate a series of ordered probit models of the different measures of politicization. Since the observations are not independent because groups of executives work in the same agencies, I report robust standard errors clustered by agency.<sup>24</sup> I have also estimated models where the agency is the unit of analysis rather than the individual survey respondent. The results confirm what is reported here and are included in Appendix B.

### **Results**

The models fit relatively well although there is some diversity in the factors that are significantly related to politicization in the different models. We can reject the null that there is no improvement over a cut-point only model ( $p < 0.00$ ) in all cases. More generally, agency ideology plays an important role in explaining levels and forms of politicization across the federal government. According to the model estimates of survey responses in Table 1, liberal agencies are more likely to have policy decisions made on the basis of ideology as opposed to evidence, more likely to operate in a culture where peoples' partisanship is out in the open, more

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<sup>23</sup> I have also estimated models using only those respondents at the very highest levels—administrators and agency heads—and the results differ some. Namely, the coefficient estimates on agency ideology are smaller and the standard errors are larger in all cases. In two of the models coefficient estimates on agency ideology are negative and significant at the 0.10 level. In the other two models I could not reject the null of no influence and the sign on ideology switches in the model dealing with the importance of ideology vs. evidence.

<sup>24</sup> What constitutes an agency depends upon the level of aggregation. For example, one can consider the Department of Agriculture as the relevant agency or one can consider the larger bureaus within the department as the relevant agencies. The advantage of using the bureaus is that doing so provides more agency-specific variation. The disadvantage is that much of the politicizing activity occurs around the office of the secretary and under and assistant secretaries that are often one level up from these larger bureaus. This analysis focuses on agencies at the bureau level but I have estimated the models at higher levels of aggregation as well. The results are similar to what is reported here.

likely to have civil servants' policy views influence their assignments in the civil service, and have more pronounced White House influence over policy decisions, even when controlling for a host of factors including the ideology of the respondent.<sup>25</sup> The model results for the influence of agency sensitivity to politicization (i.e., site-specific expertise, outside options), however, are decidedly mixed.

[Insert Table 1 here.]

Before delving into the results with regard to the hypotheses presented above, there are several notable findings among the agency-specific and respondent-specific controls in the models. Since the dependent variables in the models are ordinal variables indicating strength of individual agreement or disagreement in most cases, the coefficients will be interpreted in terms of changes in the probability that an individual respondent reports agreement or strong agreement with a statement presented to them in the survey.<sup>26</sup> First, there is some evidence that independent commissions are less politicized than other agencies. In all of the models, the coefficient indicating commission structure is negative and two of these coefficients are significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, career executives working in commissions are 35 percentage points less likely to report that they know who the Democrats and Republicans are that work in their agency and 37 percentage points less likely to believe that the White House has “a good bit” or “great deal” of influence over policy decisions in their agency.

Second, while results vary by model, liberal and conservative respondents and respondents at different levels in the hierarchy, respond differently. Conservative respondents are significantly less likely to report politicization in two of the models. They are less likely to report

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<sup>25</sup> When models are estimated with agencies as the unit of analysis, the results confirm what is reported here.

<sup>26</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, probability estimates are calculated with values set assuming the respondent is a federal program manager who speaks with appointees weekly, works in the headquarters office, agrees that necessary experience for her job can only be learned on the job, and has all other variables are set at their means.

that ideology plays a more important role than evidence in agency decisions and less likely to report that they know who the Republicans and Democrats are in their agencies. Increasing the conservatism of the respondent by one standard deviation decreases by 5 to 8 percentage points the probability that the respondent agrees or strongly agrees with the relevant statement about the presence of politicization. Those respondents who are lower in the hierarchy and those in regional offices are more likely to agree with statements about the presence of politics in their agencies. Coefficients on these indicators are significant in two of the four models and suggest that respondents in regional offices and program managers are 3 to 5 and 5 to 7 percentage points more likely to agree or strongly agree with statements about the presence of politicization in the first four models, respectively. Heads of bureaus, by contrast, are less likely to report the penetration of politics into agency decision. They are about 30 percentage points less likely to report that they agree or strongly agree with the statements that they know who the Republicans and Democrats are in their agency and that job assignments and promotions are influenced by the policy views of civil servants. They are also less likely to report “a good bit” or “great deal” of White House influence over policy decisions by 22 percentage points.

### *Politicizing Liberal and Conservative Agencies*

One of the most consistent findings across the models, one related to the hypotheses above, is the influence of agency ideology on presidential politicization choices. In all four models the coefficient on agency liberalism-conservatism negative and it was significant at the 0.10 or 0.05 level in two-tailed tests. Respondents in liberal agencies were more likely to report that policy decisions were made on the basis ideology vs. evidence, that they knew the partisanship of their colleagues, that job assignments in the civil service were influenced by the

policy views of federal employees, and that the White House exerted “a good bit” or “great deal” of influence over policy decisions in their agency.

The influence that agency ideology has on politicization varies depending upon the form of politicization measured. Figure 3 graphs how changes in ideology are estimated to influence reported levels of politicization. To put these effects into perspective it is worth considering real agencies. For example, if the Department of Defense (2.21) had the same ideological profile as the Department of Labor (-1.43), the probability that a respondent would agree or strongly agree that politicization is present (or disagree or strongly disagree that it is absent) would increase by 9, 22, 10, and 10 percentage points in order of the models. To take another example, if the Department of Commerce (1.25) looked more like the Department of Housing and Urban Development (-1.33) the comparable increase would be 9, 19, 8, and 9 percentage points. To put a finer point on it, if the Department of Commerce were liberal like the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the average executive in the agency would be 19 percentage points more likely to agree or strongly agree with that statement “Among career managers in my agency I have a pretty good idea of who is a Democrat and who is a Republican” and 9 percentage points more likely to agree that the White House had “a good bit” or “great deal” of influence over policy decisions in the agency. So, even when controlling for a host of factors including the ideology of the respondent, executives in liberal and conservative agencies report different levels of politicization as expected.<sup>27</sup>

[Insert Figure 3 here.]

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<sup>27</sup> One potential concern here is that executives who share the views of the president know whether influence is being exerted. Do agency officials who make policy according to their own views act of their own volition or in response to choices made by politicians to put them there in the first place? The preceding analysis attempted to partially account for this possibility by controlling for the political views of the respondents.

These are important findings. This is some of the first systematic empirical evidence we have that presidents systematically target agencies with different policy views for politicization. These efforts go beyond the addition of appointees which may or may not facilitate the type of politicization reported here. American government is increasingly becoming bureaucratic government and the ability to change public policy and succeed electorally hinges on control of the bureaucracy. This evidence suggests that presidents strategically engage in efforts to implant their vision of policy into agency decision making.

*Do Concerns for Politicization's Impact on Performance Constrain Politicization?*

There is a long history of work in political science that argues that politicization hurts agency performance but an equally long sequence of works that explains that presidents continue to politicize despite its effects on performance (Hecklo 1975; 1977; Moe 1985; Suleiman 2003; Volcker 1989, 2003). The theoretical expectation, however, was that performance concerns would constrain politicization and would do so most in those agencies whose performance is most sensitive to politicization. The models included measures of site-specific knowledge and proportion of executives eligible for retirement as two proxies for how sensitive different agencies' performance would be to politicization. The findings in Table 1 confirm what others have reported, namely that politicization occurs largely without reference to its effects on performance (see, however, Lewis 2008). The coefficient estimates of the main effects of site-specific expertise and the proportion of executives eligible for retirement are in the expected direction but not statistically distinguishable from zero. The estimates of the interaction term, while not significant, are all positive which is unexpected. The interaction coefficient signs indicate that when executives in agencies have more site-specific knowledge, increases in the

likelihood of leaving the agency through retirement actually increase the likelihood of politicization rather than decrease it. In total, there is very little evidence in this data that an agency's sensitivity to politicization for performance as measured by these survey questions influences or constrains politicization choices in the expected ways.

These findings contravene the findings of Lewis (2008) who reports that agency sensitivity to politicization as measured by task complexity is significantly related to politicization choices. Lewis (2008), however, uses the proportion of an agency's workforce that is engaged in technical occupations as a measure of task complexity. When I reestimated these models using this measure model estimates generally confirm Lewis (2008). As the proportion of an agency's employees that are technical increases, the levels of politicization decrease in three out of four models.<sup>28</sup> The survey-based measures are arguably closer to the real concept than the employment-based measures, however.

These results have several potential implications, The most obvious is that the performance concerns simply may not constrain politicization choices in a real way. Presidents may believe that getting an agency to think right and make the right choices is the best way to make it competent. Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger famously said, "As far as I'm concerned, anyone who supported Reagan is competent" (Pfiffner 1996, 65). Of course, an agency's sensitivity to politicization is a subtle and difficult-to-measure concept. This makes empirical testing difficult and definitive tests elusive. With more precise measures, clearer and more consistent empirical results may emerge, however. It is also quite possible that performance concerns are a constraint

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<sup>28</sup> In three of four models the coefficient is negative, indicating that higher percentages of technical employees are correlated with less politicization. Three of these coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level or better. One of the coefficients is positive and significant, however ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the model of whether agency decisions are made on the basis of ideology vs. evidence, agencies with a higher percentage of technical employees are estimated to be more politicized.

on presidents for some agencies but not others and more theorizing is necessary to find out when and for what agencies are presidents constrained by performance concerns.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The politicization of the Department of Justice had observable consequences for the way in which law was enforced by U.S. Attorneys, the integrity of the civil service, and, arguably, the long-term capacity of the Department of Justice to carry out its mission (Gordon 2009; U.S. Department of Justice 2008, 2009). It was one of a number of politicization episodes in the Bush Presidency and symptomatic of a larger regularity in the modern presidency. Modern presidents, both Democrats and Republicans, politicize the bureaucracy to get control of the continuing professional government.

This paper has made two main contributions to the study of the American presidency and American politics generally. The first is to extend our understanding of which agencies of government are politicized and why. This paper has demonstrated that the politicization publicized in the Department of Justice case by the press, Congress, and internal investigations exists in other agencies, some of it in violation of civil service laws and regulations. Efforts by President Bush and his subordinates to alter the course of liberal agencies help explain variation across the government in which agencies were politicized. There was very little evidence that concerns for agency competence constrained politicization choices in this instance.

A second contribution of the paper is to expand the empirical evaluation of presidential administrative strategies to a new class of politicizing activities. Presidential scholars have made important strides understanding the president's different choices for controlling the bureaucracy (Moe 1985; Waterman 1989). Yet, measurement difficulties have raised obstacles to

systematically studying where presidents inject politics most aggressively. The paper used new survey data to measure which agencies are more likely to make decisions on the basis of ideology rather than evidence, which agencies make promotion decision in the civil service on the basis of partisan or political views, which agencies are more or less run by the White House.

The paper's contributions point the way to future research on other forms of politicization and research which moves the analysis away from cross-sectional research to over-time analysis. While the paper highlighted forms of politicization relevant in the Department of Justice case, there are other forms of politicization such as placing appointees into jobs on the basis of loyalty or connections rather than competence or involving civil servants in political fights. A key innovation in this paper to use new survey data to measure politicization is also a limitation. The focus on data from 2007-8 limits the analysis of politicization to one president, during a period of divided government, at a late point in the president's tenure. Without the benefit of seeing changes in politicization in different agencies across presidents with different configurations in Congress and at different points in a president's tenure, it is difficult to fully understand politicization dynamics and what is regular and generalizable. Further surveys of this type allow for useful comparisons across time.

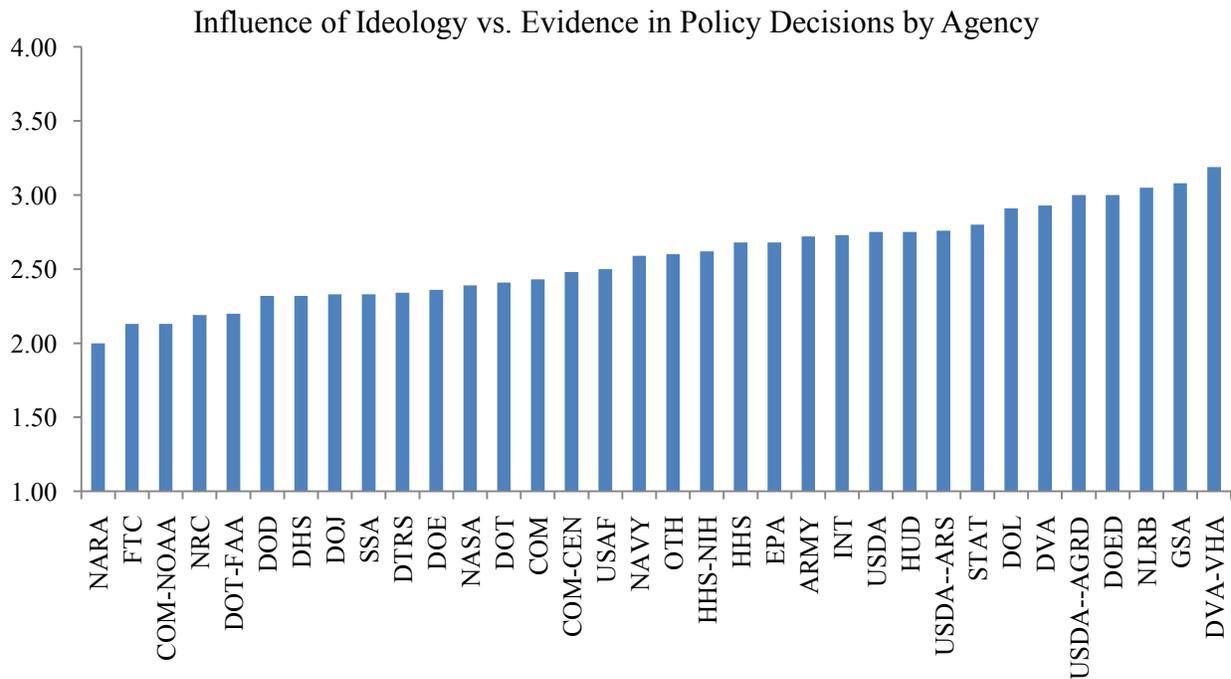
This research reinforces the importance of research in presidential administrative strategies for understanding modern American and presidential politics. As government work has grown in volume and complexity modern government has become bureaucratic government and directing this bureaucracy is an essential component of politics. All modern presidents have tried to inject politics into administration. Their success or failure at doing so influences their success or failure as presidents and makes understanding their efforts essential.

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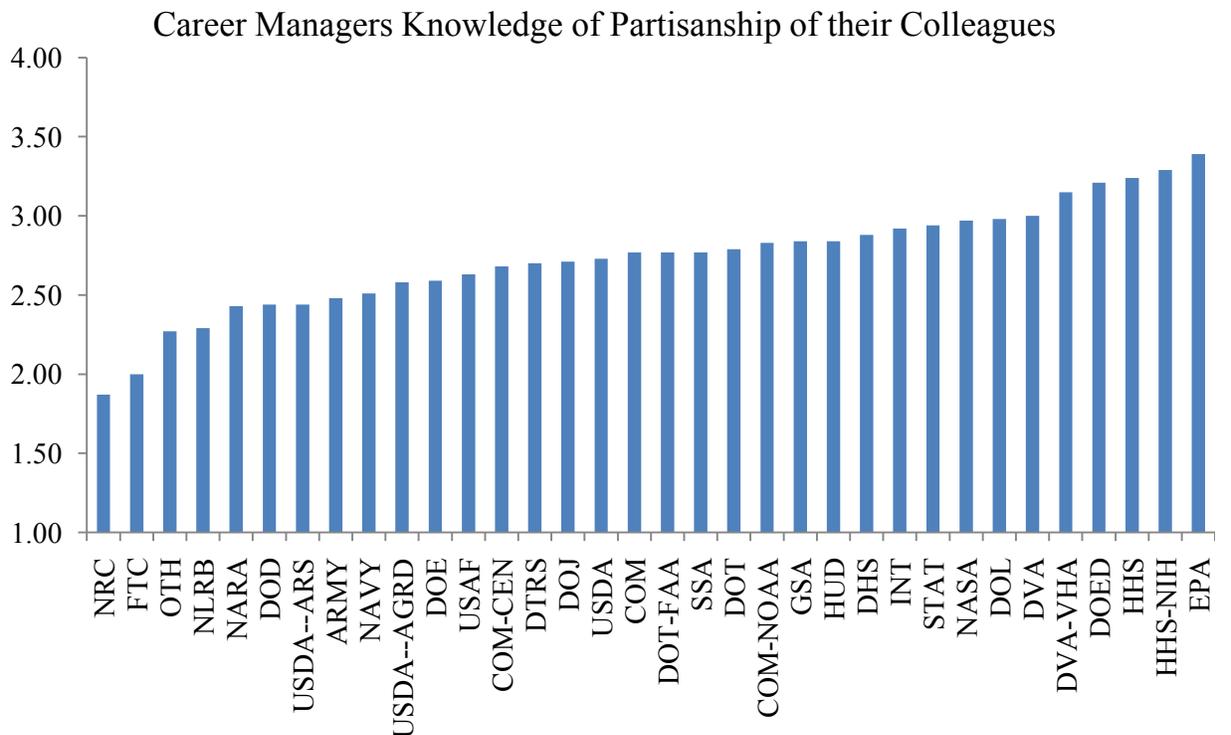
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Figure 1. Different Measures of Politicization by Federal Agency, 2007-8

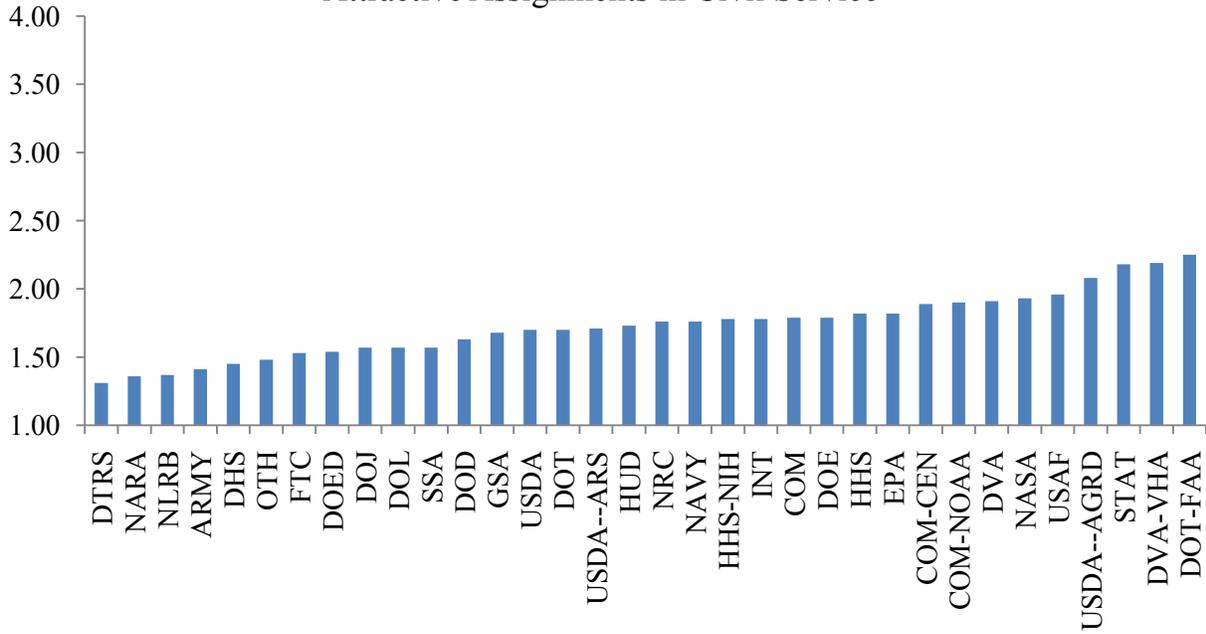


Note: Question wording is "Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting: Policy decisions concerning my agency are based upon evidence rather than ideological beliefs" (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) disagree (4) strongly disagree.



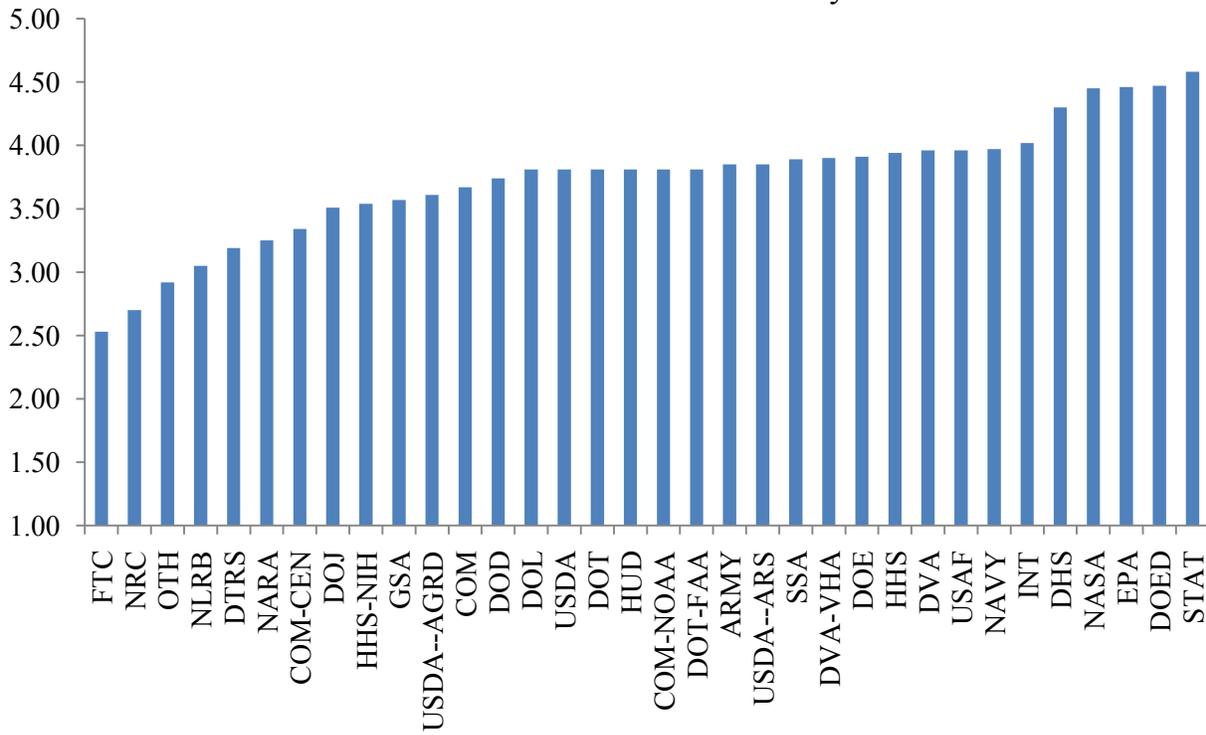
Note: Question wording is "Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting: Among career managers in my agency I have a pretty good idea of who is a Democrat and who is a Republican" (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, (4) strongly agree.

### Policy and Political Views Influence Chances of Promotion or Attractive Assignments in Civil Service



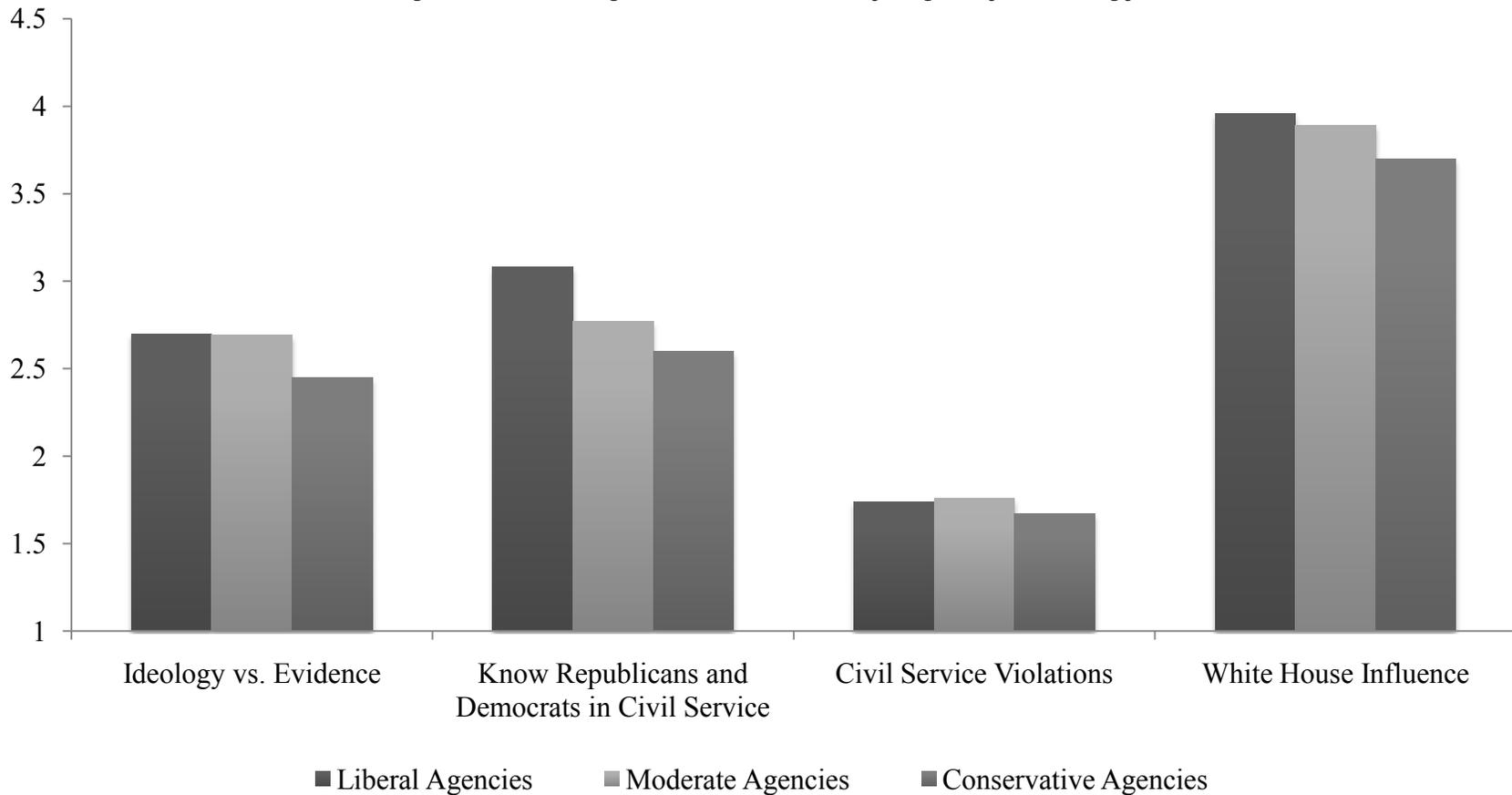
Note: Question wording is "Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting: In my agency the policy or political views of career professionals at the GS-12 to GS-15 level influences their chances for promotion or attractive assignments" (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, (4) strongly agree.

### Extent of White House Influence Over Policy Decisions



Note: Question wording is "In general, how much influence do the following groups have over the policy decisions in your agency (White House)?" (1) none, (2) little, (3) some, (4) a good bit, (5) a great deal.

Figure 2. Average Politicization by Agency Ideology



Note: Survey on the Future of Government Service (2007-8). All questions follow the following prompt except for the fourth: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your work and job setting [strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, don't know]:

Responses recoded so that higher values indicate politicization.

(1) "Policy decisions concerning my agency are based upon evidence rather than ideological beliefs"

(2) "Among career managers in my agency I have a pretty good idea of who is a Democrat and who is a Republican"

(3) "In my agency the policy or political views of career professionals at the GS-12 to GS-15 level influences their chances for promotion or attractive assignments"

(4) "In general, how much influence do the following groups have over the policy decisions in your agency (White House)?" [(1) None, (2) little, (3) some, (4) a good bit, (5) A great deal.]

Figure 3. Influence of Agency Ideology on Politicization

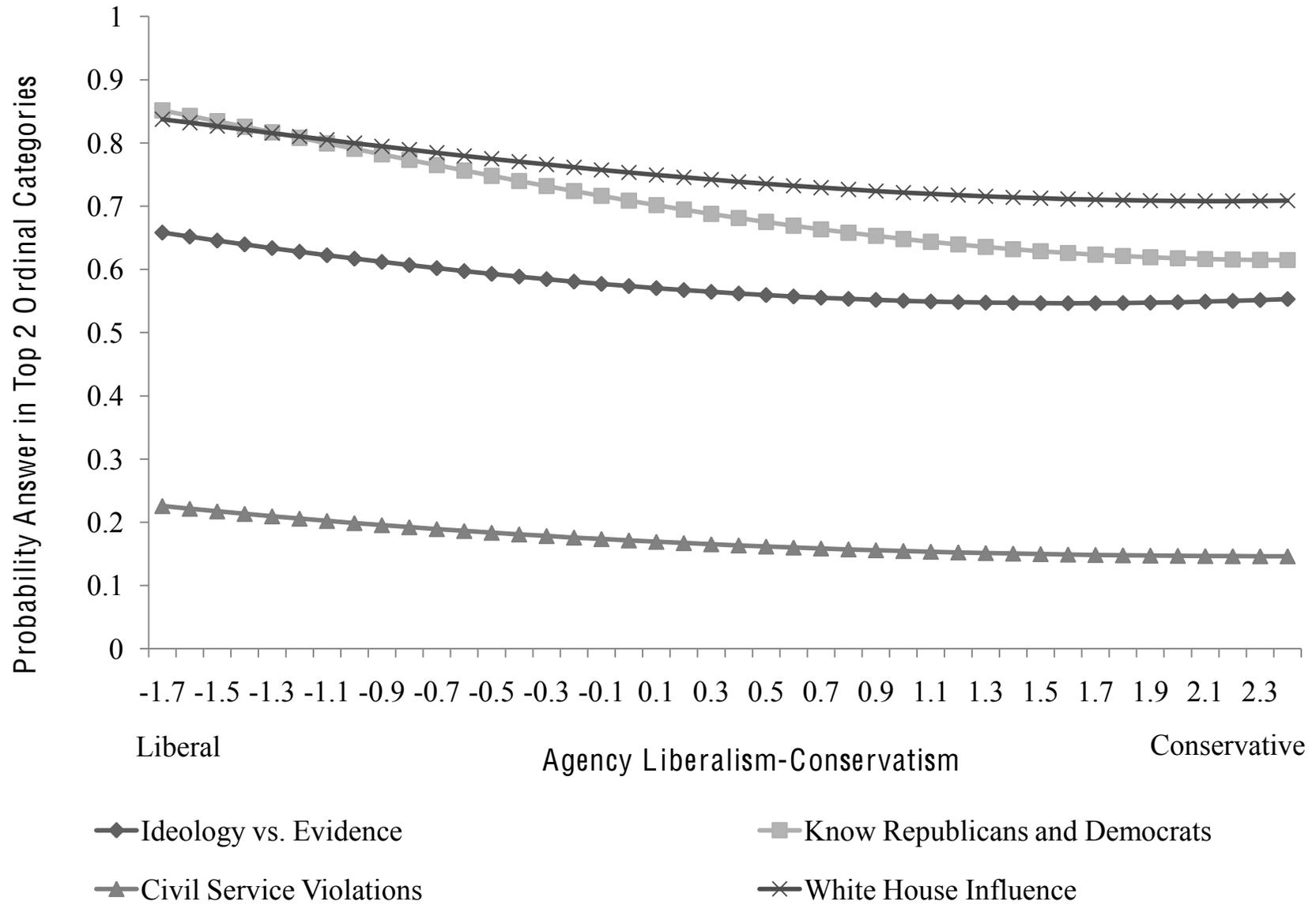


Table 1. ML Estimates of Ordered Probit Models of Politicization

Variable	Ideology vs. Evidence		Know Republicans and Democrats in Civil Service		Civil Service Violations		White House Influence	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
<i>Preference Divergence</i>								
Liberalism-Conservatism	-0.09*	0.05	-0.21**	0.05	-0.09*	0.04	-0.13**	0.04
Liberalism-Conservatism^2	0.03	0.03	0.04*	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03
<i>Sensitivity of Performance to Politicization</i>								
Site-specific Expertise	-0.36	0.26	-0.35	0.24	-0.01	0.22	-0.17	0.26
Proportion Eligible for Retirement (0-1)	-2.06	1.45	-1.47	1.29	-1.34	1.40	-1.32	1.35
Site-sp expt*Prop. Retirement Eligible	0.86	0.55	0.58	0.46	0.51	0.51	0.55	0.50
<i>Controls and Cutpoints</i>								
Ln(2007 Employment)	-0.00	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02
Commission (0,1)	-0.05	0.17	-0.92**	0.12	-0.15	0.19	-0.99**	0.14
Respondent Liberalism-Conservatism	-0.16**	0.03	-0.25**	0.04	0.07	0.04	-0.02	0.04
Years Worked in Agency	0.01	0.01	0.01*	0.00	-0.01**	0.01	-0.01	0.01
Work in Regional Office (0,1)	0.14*	0.08	0.12	0.09	0.42**	0.08	0.05	0.11
Frequency of Contact with Appointees	0.06**	0.03	0.09**	0.03	-0.02	0.03	0.21**	0.04
Program Manager (0,1)	0.22**	0.09	0.14	0.10	0.23**	0.09	0.04	0.08
Administrator (0,1)	-0.06	0.05	-0.14*	0.09	0.05	0.09	-0.20**	0.09
Head of Bureau (0,1)	-0.30	0.38	-0.75**	0.31	-1.59**	0.42	-0.67**	0.34
Cutpoint 1	-1.87	0.76	-1.89	0.70	-0.16	0.61	-1.54	0.69
Cutpoint 2	-0.54	0.76	0.57	0.69	1.11	0.61	-0.82	0.69
Cutpoint 3	0.39	0.76	0.66	0.69	2.06	0.61	-0.04	0.69
Cutpoint 4	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.88	0.69
Observations	1347		1313		1258		1481	
$\chi^2$ (14 df)	77.0**		247.9**		105.5**		212.4**	

Note: Dependent variable is ordered and categorical. \*significant at the 0.10 level in two-tailed tests; \*\*significant at the 0.05 level in two-tailed tests. Standard errors adjusted for clustering on agency.

Appendix A. Federal Agency Politicization by Question and Selected Agency, 2008<sup>29</sup>

Agency	Liberalism-Conservatism	Ideology vs. Evidence	Know Republicans and Democrats in Civil Service	Civil Service Violations	White House Influence	Commission	Site-specific knowledge	Proportion Eligible to Retire
ARMY	2.04	2.72	2.48	1.41	3.85	0.00	2.85	0.40
COM	1.25	2.43	2.77	1.79	3.67	0.00	2.68	0.47
COM-CEN	1.25	2.48	2.68	1.89	3.34	0.00	2.88	0.43
COM-NOAA	1.25	2.13	2.83	1.90	3.81	0.00	2.52	0.42
DHS	0.88	2.32	2.88	1.45	4.30	0.00	3.00	0.52
DOD	2.21	2.32	2.44	1.63	3.74	0.00	2.83	0.57
DOE	0.35	2.36	2.59	1.79	3.91	0.00	2.50	0.48
DOED	-1.22	3.00	3.21	1.54	4.47	0.00	2.29	0.48
DOJ	0.37	2.33	2.71	1.57	3.51	0.00	2.83	0.43
DOL	-1.43	2.91	2.98	1.57	3.81	0.00	2.73	0.68
DOT	0.07	2.41	2.79	1.70	3.81	0.00	2.60	0.51
DOT-FAA	0.07	2.20	2.77	2.25	3.81	0.00	2.59	0.53
DTRS	1.07	2.34	2.70	1.31	3.19	0.00	2.46	0.47
DVA	0.23	2.93	3.00	1.91	3.96	0.00	2.65	0.56
DVA-VHA	0.23	3.19	3.15	2.19	3.90	0.00	2.95	0.63
EPA	-1.21	2.68	3.39	1.82	4.46	0.00	2.42	0.45
FTC	0.12	2.13	2.00	1.53	2.53	1.00	2.19	0.50
GSA	0.26	3.08	2.84	1.68	3.57	0.00	2.76	0.61
HHS	-1.32	2.68	3.24	1.82	3.94	0.00	2.59	0.40
HHS-NIH	-1.32	2.62	3.29	1.78	3.54	0.00	2.57	0.39
HUD	-1.33	2.75	2.84	1.73	3.81	0.00	2.51	0.56
INT	0.47	2.73	2.92	1.78	4.02	0.00	2.40	0.45

<sup>29</sup> Note: Includes only those agencies with at least 20 respondents. Liberalism-Conservatism scores from Clinton-Lewis 2008. The base category of “OTH” is the mean of the Clinton-Lewis scores. Sub-cabinet agencies share the Clinton-Lewis scores of the whole cabinet department. All other data are agency averages for these questions from Survey on the Future of Government Service (Bertelli et al. 2008).

NASA	-0.07	2.39	2.97	1.93	4.45	0.00	2.66	0.26
NARA	-0.12	2.00	2.43	1.36	3.25	0.00	2.56	0.33
NAVY	2.40	2.59	2.51	1.76	3.97	0.00	2.76	0.53
NLRB	-0.27	3.05	2.29	1.37	3.05	1.00	3.04	0.96
NRC	0.53	2.19	1.87	1.76	2.70	1.00	2.68	0.59
OTH	0.00	2.60	2.27	1.48	2.92	0.00	2.58	0.54
SSA	-0.45	2.33	2.77	1.57	3.89	0.00	2.77	0.64
STAT	-0.27	2.80	2.94	2.18	4.58	0.00	2.90	0.67
USAF	1.95	2.50	2.63	1.96	3.96	0.00	2.89	0.58
USDA	0.16	2.75	2.73	1.70	3.81	0.00	2.68	0.43
USDA--AGRD	0.16	3.00	2.58	2.08	3.61	0.00	3.13	0.52
USDA--ARS	0.16	2.76	2.44	1.71	3.85	0.00	2.41	0.40

Appendix B. OLS Estimates of Politicization With Agencies as Units of Analysis

Variable	Ideology vs. Evidence		Know Republicans and Democrats in Civil Service		Civil Service Violations		White House Influence	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
<i>Preference Divergence</i>								
Liberalism-Conservatism	-0.09*	0.05	-0.24**	0.04	-0.12**	0.04	-0.13*	0.07
Liberalism-Conservatism <sup>2</sup>	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04
<i>Sensitivity of Performance to Politicization</i>								
Site-specific Expertise	-0.31*	0.18	-0.07	0.17	-0.00	0.16	-0.30	0.28
Proportion Eligible for Retirement (0-1)	-1.26	0.91	-0.72	0.87	-0.69	0.80	-1.98	1.39
Site-sp expt*Prop. Retirement Eligible	0.57	0.34	0.37	0.32	0.28	0.29	0.83	0.51
<i>Controls and Constant</i>								
Ln(2007 Employment)	0.00	0.02	0.05**	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.06*	0.03
Commission (0,1)	-0.02	0.12	-0.35**	0.12	-0.12	0.11	-0.86**	0.19
Constant	3.28**	0.50	2.35**	0.47	1.53**	0.43	3.92**	0.75
Observations	108		108		108		108	
<i>F</i> (7 df)	1.25		7.97**		1.98*		6.92**	

Note: Dependent variables are average agency responses to questions about politicization with ordinal responses. \*significant at the 0.10 level in two-tailed tests; \*\*significant at the 0.05 level in two-tailed tests. Standard errors adjusted for clustering on agency.