

Report on the
ISA Catalytic Research Workshop
Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy
Convened by Juliet Kaarbo and Kai Oppermann
25 March 2014, Toronto
Sheraton Centre Hotel, City Hall

Juliet Kaarbo and Kai Oppermann
7 April 2014

The workshop took place as scheduled on 25 March 2014 from 8.30am to 5.30pm and followed the agenda that was prepared by the convenors (see Appendix). All twelve participants who had been invited to the workshop were in attendance and took an active part in the proceedings. The main objectives of the workshop were a) to discuss current scholarship on coalition politics and foreign policy and to identify avenues for further research; b) to establish an international network of scholars on different levels of seniority who are involved in cutting-edge research in the field; and c) to work towards a common research agenda, including publication projects and research grant applications. These objectives were pursued as follows.

The morning and early afternoon sessions were dedicated to discussing five research papers by workshop participants. Each paper was circulated well in advance and all participants were requested to read the papers in preparation of the workshop. In order to make as much time as possible for discussion, the workshop did not involve formal paper presentations. Rather, each paper was allocated to a discussant who had 15 minutes for initial comments and questions. The floor was then opened up for general discussion. Each paper had one hour of in-depth discussion which gave participants a unique opportunity to explore and challenge current research in the field. The papers were recognised by participants as innovative contributions to the field and the discussions were extremely fruitful. In particular, these workshop sessions allowed participants to identify recent progress as well as the boundaries in our knowledge about the outcome and process of coalition foreign policy making.

As for the second key objective, the workshop brought together scholars from five different countries (US, UK, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands). Participants included full professors, associate and assistant professors as well as PhD students. The workshop served both to reinforce existing networks that had been established at panels and workshops which participants had organised on the topic in previous years; as well as to extend these networks and to establish new links between scholars from both sides of the Atlantic. To this purpose, the convenors had also organised for workshop participants to have lunch as a group. In order to put the network on a more permanent basis and to increase its external visibility in the community, the workshop agreed to regularly exchange draft research papers and to explore the possibility of a mailing list and a website dedicated to current research on coalition politics and foreign policy.

With a view towards the third workshop objective, the last two sessions were set up precisely to discuss missing links in current research on coalition politics and foreign policy and to agree on specific action points. These sessions were each led by two workshop participants who were assisted in the preparation of the session by four other participants. A key output of these discussions was that participants identified different steps for future research, for example regarding the links between small group dynamics and coalition foreign policy as well as the roles of party ideology and public opinion.

As for the specific action points, the workshop agreed to submit a proposal for a forum on coalition politics and foreign policy to *International Studies Review*, which was identified as a good venue to disseminate our research. Participants discussed a possible list of papers for such a forum, and the convenors committed to putting together an outline and to drafting the proposal. The workshop also discussed an outline for a possible edited volume to be pursued as a longer-term publication project. Moreover, the workshop agreed to explore specific possibilities for research grant proposals which were introduced and discussed at the workshop.

In summary, the workshop was very productive and intellectually rewarding. The feedback from participants was highly positive. In particular, the workshop successfully identified promising avenues for further research; established an international network of scholars to explore these avenues; and agreed on specific action points to implement collaborative research on coalition politics and foreign policy.

APPENDIX:

Agenda

Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy

An ISA Catalytic Research Workshop

Convened by Juliet Kaarbo and Kai Opperman

25 March 2014

Toronto

Sheraton Centre Hotel

Room: City Hall

Session 1 : Current Scholarship on Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy

8:30-8:45 Introductions

8:45-10:45 Quantitative Papers: Beasley/Kaarbo (Discussant: Pickering) and Clare (Discussants: Oktay-Karagul)

10:45-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-1:00 Qualitative Papers: Joly (Discussant: Ozkececi-Taner) and Hagan (Discussant: Oppermann)

1:00-2:15 Lunch as a group. Each participant is responsible for the cost of one individual meal

A table has been reserved at Little Anthony's (<http://www.littleanthonys.ca>), less than five minutes from the Sheraton

Session 2 : Current Scholarship on Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy

2:15-3:15 Agenda-Setting Paper: van Willigen (Discussant: Davidson)

Session 3 : What are We Missing?

3:15-4:15 Brummer and Beasley will lead discussion on future research steps, including: a) the role of party ideologies in coalition foreign policy; b) similarities and differences across issue areas; c) the impact of different institutional, cultural, and historical contexts on coalition decision making; d) small group and leadership

dynamics in coalition cabinets; e) the influence of public opinion and parliaments on coalition foreign policy; and f) the implications of research on coalition cabinets for effective democratic governance and constitutional design.

Ozkececi-Taner, Joly, Oktay-Karagul, and Clare will assist with pre-conference preparation for this discussion.

4:15-4:30 Coffee Break

Session 4 : Where Do We Go From Here?

4:30-5:30 Kaarbo and Oppermann will lead discussion on specific action points, including: a) the structure and outlet of an edited volume or special issue; b) the development of a website to showcase coalition politics research; c) establishing a series of international seminars to bring together scholars and policymakers; and d) grant opportunities to fund research and other activities.

Pickering, Van Willigen, Hagan, and Davidson will assist with pre-conference preparation for this discussion.