

When Do Elections Matter? Appointments and Bureaucratic Resistance in the United States¹

The U.S. president and his allies have decried the presence of a “deep state” of resistance to the president’s agenda. The public reporting on the administration, however, suggests that some of the bureaucratic resistance to the president may be coming from the president’s own political appointees rather than the permanent civil service. This raises the general question of when appointees do what the president wants and when they resist presidential direction. In this paper we use data from surveys of U.S. federal executives across two presidencies and hundreds of agencies to evaluate appointee responsiveness to the president. The results indicate that the choices of the president and long-standing features of agency design and culture predict appointee responsiveness to the president. We conclude with implications for electoral politics and presidential management.

David E. Lewis
Vanderbilt University
david.e.lewis@vanderbilt.edu

Mark D. Richardson
James Madison University
richarmd@jmu.edu

¹ Paper prepared for presentation at the Public Management Research Conference, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, June 11-14, 2019. We are grateful to the federal employees who shared their experiences and views via the survey. We thank Ed Freeland and Naila Rahman at the Princeton Survey Research Center for advice and survey support and the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Vanderbilt University for financial support.

The U.S. president and his allies have decried the presence of a “deep state” of resistance to the president’s agenda. The public reporting on the administration, however, suggests that some of the bureaucratic resistance to the president is coming from political appointees selected by the president rather than the permanent civil service.² In a widely discussed 2018 opinion piece in the *New York Times* an anonymous administration appointee pledged to stop parts of the president’s agenda and prevent the president from acting on his worst impulses.³ Several books and articles detailing the Trump Administration describe presidential appointees regularly ignoring or countermanding the president’s orders (see, e.g., Miller 2018; Woodward 2018).

The issue is not that the president’s appointees are not reliably Republican. Rather, political appointees in some agencies are more predictably attentive to the president’s *personal* priorities and goals within the context of a Republican administration. There is a particularly loyal group, located in the Executive Office of the President (EOP) and key agencies such as the Department of the Treasury. In other agencies such as the Department of State or the Federal Reserve, however, political appointees have been less responsive to presidential direction. The president’s difficulties with his appointed team have led to the highest turnover rate of any modern president (O’Connell 2017; Tenpas 2018).

President Trump’s interactions with and complaints about the teams of appointee that he has selected raise the general question of when appointees do what the president wants and when appointees resist presidential direction. This is an important question since most presidents experience resistance from appointees in some agencies. This is to be expected since modern

² See, e.g., Jeremy Diamond, “The Many Examples of Trump Officials Resisting the President,” *CNN*, September 6, 2018 (<https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/06/politics/donald-trump-resistance/index.html>, accessed May 24, 2019); David A. Graham, “No One Listens to the President,” *The Atlantic*, April 19, 2019 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/no-one-listens-to-the-president/587557/>, accessed May 24, 2019).

³ Anonymous, “I Am Part of the Resistance Inside the Trump Administration,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2018 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/05/opinion/trump-white-house-anonymous-resistance.html>, accessed May 17, 2019).

presidents must fill a large number of the more than 3,000 appointed positions with persons they do not know personally (see generally Hecló 1977; Pfiffner 1996; Warshaw 1996; Weko 1995). The candidates presidents select naturally have their own interpretation of their responsibilities and their individual views and ambitions partly govern their choices.

While presidents would prefer that all appointees be personally loyal to the president and competent for the work, presidents must also select appointees for other reasons. Some are named in response to requests for patronage or to appease party factions (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Mackenzie 1981; Tolchin and Tolchin 1971, 2010). All administrations include appointees that secure their jobs through connections to powerful patrons who retain the appointees' primary loyalties even while they serve in the administration (Mackenzie 1981; Warshaw 1996). The presidential choice is complicated by the fact that presidents must nominate candidates pleasing to the Senate and broadly representative of the public (see, e.g., Hammond and Hill 1993; McCarty and Razaghian 1999; Nokken and Sala 2000; Snyder and Weingast 2000). Simply put, presidents are not able to select appointees solely on the basis of loyalty. Presidents prioritize loyalty in some agencies and positions more than others and appointees consequently vary in their responsiveness to the president (see, e.g., Krause and O'Connell 2016; Parsneau 2013).

In most cases, appointees want to do what the president prefers since this is part of the job and the policy goals of the president and the appointee likely overlap (Aberbach and Rockman 2000). Yet, there are cases of disagreement, sometimes due to poor vetting by the White House, sometimes because issues emerge that neither the president nor the appointee anticipated, and sometimes because the views of the president or the appointee change during the administration. Few appointees accept the invitation to work in the administration thinking they were going to resist the president. Rather, some interpret their selection as proof that the president shares their views

and others discover during their service that the president wants something different than they prefer.

Understanding when political appointees are responsive to the president is important since political appointees are essential for democratic accountability. Appointees help presidents translate the outcome of elections into policy change. When appointees are unresponsive to lawful presidential direction, this raises important constitutional questions.⁴ While President Trump complained hyperbolically about a soft coup in his administration, resistance to the lawful directions of elected officials does raise serious constitutional questions in our democratic system. Most good staff persons know that their job is partly to prevent their boss from taking actions their boss would not take if fully informed. Yet, President Trump's complaints about appointees inside and outside the Executive Office of the President (EOP) undercutting him have more to do with policy differences than well-intentioned service of the President.

While there is important scholarship explaining why appointees might resist the president and detailing specific cases where appointees have resisted the president, there are few empirical works that allow us to generalize about this phenomenon. Several important contributions evaluate the backgrounds of political appointees prior to appointment to measure the likely responsiveness of appointees once in office (Aberbach and Rockman 2000; Krause and O'Connell 2016; Lewis and Waterman 2013; Ouyang et al. 2017; Parsneau 2013). Fewer works evaluate the behavior of appointees once in office in order to assess responsiveness systematically (see, however, Krause and O'Connell n.d.). Some surveys of federal executives attempt to assess the behavior of appointees in office but few measure responsiveness directly and none have samples large enough to examine variation across agencies (Aberbach and Rockman 2000; Maranto 2005; Michaels 1997). Other

⁴ We sidestep for the moment that one form of resistance is to side with Congress's interpretation of what the law requires.

works demonstrate that agency outputs such as investigations or enforcement actions reflect the preferences of the president or Congress, often because of the influence of political appointees (see, e.g., Moe 1985b, Wood and Waterman 1994, Randall 1979).

In this paper, we build on this existing work and examine directly why some appointees are more responsive to the president than others. We explain how presidents allocate loyal persons to specific agencies and positions to accomplish their priorities. This leads to predictable differences in average appointee responsiveness between these priority agencies and positions and other positions in government. We use novel survey data on appointee responsiveness in 2007 and 2014 to evaluate these claims. The surveys of U.S. federal executives include hundreds of agencies and thousands of federal executives. The results indicate that the most responsive appointees work in the Executive Office of the President and in agencies that are priorities for the president. The patterns regarding agency ideology are more nuanced. Notably, appointees in the most conservative agencies are less responsive in both the Bush and Obama Administrations. We discuss the possible reasons why conservative agencies might be less responsive, including the professional norms associated with traditionally conservative law enforcement and military agencies. We conclude with implications for electoral politics and presidential management.

Political Appointees and Responsiveness to the President

One of the distinctive features of the United States presidential system is the large number of political appointees. More than 3,000 persons selected by the administration serve in executive positions in the 250-300 agencies that comprise the executive establishment (Selin and Lewis 2018). The president nominates and the Senate confirms about one third of these executives. The remainder do not require Senate confirmation. Collectively, these appointee teams influence public

policy in their agencies by virtue of their influence over policymaking tools such rulemaking, grants, contracts, and direct enforcement actions.

Given their number and importance for public policy and governance, modern presidents have expended significant effort to improve their ability to vet nominees (Bonafede 1987; Brown and Thompson 1997; Pfiffner 1996; Warshaw 1996; Weko 1995). Presidents have increased the number of White House staff dedicated to personnel, improved processes, hired professional recruiters, and adopted new technology. Whereas, the staff of President Kennedy's personnel office included three persons, the office has exceeded more than 100 persons at the start of some recent administrations (Pfiffner 2017).

This increased capacity has allowed presidents to better select appointees on the basis of loyalty and competence (Edwards 2001; Moe 1985; Weko 1995). New administrations are routinely concerned about the willingness of the continuing professionals in government to implement the policies of the new administration (see, e.g., Aberbach and Rockman 2000; Golden 2000; Michaels 1997; Nathan 1975). Indeed, the primary concern of most administrations regarding bureaucratic resistance is the opposition they anticipate coming from the continuing civil servants, either directly or indirectly through the influence civil servants will have on the appointees once they get on the job (Maranto 2005; Nathan 1975).

While much of the discussion surrounding appointments focuses on loyalty and competence, a large literature in political science explains how presidents select appointees for a variety of reasons beyond these characteristics. In putting agency appointee teams together, presidents must be attentive to the views of the Senate, key interest groups, and the public (see, e.g., Bertelli and Grose 2009; Chang 2001; Mackenzie 1981; McCarty and Razaghian 1999; Snyder and Weingast 2000). Chief executives use appointments to satisfy requests for patronage from key members of Congress, administration officials, and supporters (Bearfield 2009; Rottinghaus and Bergan 2011; Tolchin and

Tolchin 1971, 2010). One way presidents smooth over party factions is through the strategic use of appointments. Indeed, key interests in society want their perspectives represented in the new administration and the giving of appointed positions is a powerful way to answer requests for representation. Some agencies predictably get large numbers of appointees selected primarily to satisfy demands for patronage (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Lewis 2008).

Scholars detail significant variation in policy views among appointees probably stemming from the different factors that influence appointment (see, e.g., Bertelli and Grose 2011; Bonica et al. 2015; Chen and Johnson 2015; Clinton et al. 2012; Bressman and Vandenberg 2006). This does not imply that persons with views different from the president will not implement the president's program faithfully but it does illustrate a limitation on the president in the appointment process.⁵ Indeed, most existing work on appointments acknowledges that appointees vary in their loyalty to the president despite presidential efforts to select appointees on this basis.

Centralization, Politicization, and Appointee Responsiveness

The success of the president in selecting and placing these appointees in the administration importantly determines the president's influence over policy and management. Congress has delegated significant policymaking authority to administrative agencies. The executive branch is enormous and complex. Its 2.7 million civilian employees spend close to \$4 trillion per year on thousands of programs administered by hundreds of agencies. These civil servants build roads, provide health care, conduct research, and manage national parks. They set policy each day through

⁵ Several existing theories explain why presidents might not select ideological allies that have little to do with demands for patronage or representativeness. For example, Bertelli and Feldmann (2007) suggest that presidents select appointees with an eye toward balancing out countervailing pressures on agencies. This might lead them in some cases to select nominees more extreme than themselves. Jo and Rothenberg (2014) suggest that the need to elicit information from career civil servants with different views than the president may lead presidents to select appointees whose views are more congruent with the civil servants than one might expect. The implication of both theories is that appointees may be less responsive to the president because that is the best way for them to accomplish other policy goals.

the rules they write, the guidance they issue, the enforcement choices, the grants they issue, and the policies they set.

Without guidance from the White House, these agencies are likely to continue doing what they were doing prior to the president's election. This may include pursuing an agenda set by the previous administration. New presidents make efforts to get control of this vast policymaking apparatus generally by either centralizing or politicizing (Moe 1985).

Centralization

Centralization is the practice of pulling important policy decisions into the White House orbit (Rudalevige 2002). Presidents require that the key decisions get made in one of the units within the EOP. A presidential determination that the White House will drive policy in a specific area is often accompanied by the designation of a lead agency (e.g., the Office of Management and Budget, Domestic Policy Council) from those that already exist or the creation of a new entity. This sometimes includes the naming of a White House 'czar' or the creation of a new White House Office (e.g., the Office of Innovation, Office of Faith Based Initiatives) (Vaughn and Villalobos 2015). Presidents that centralize often increase the number of staff members dedicated to that area and create new informal or formal processes for policy decisions.

There are a number of advantages to centralization from the president's perspective. Pulling decisions closer to the president clarifies accountability and allows the president greater oversight. Centralization also indicates a level of presidential interest that eases implementation and is important symbolically. Officials that can speak credibly with the backing of the president giving them more influence in the policy process. Lastly, most appointed positions in the EOP do not require Senate confirmation, freeing the president to choose loyalists who may not survive confirmation.

Centralization also means that the persons involved in policymaking will be the persons most loyal to the president. This is true because persons working in the EOP see their job as working for the president rather than the president and Congress. They work in staff agencies to the president rather than an executive department or agency. It is unlikely that any new president has a good handle on all that government does. All presidents, however, have strong views about some of these agencies, policies, and programs. Many campaigned to bring significant change to some parts of the massive government.

Politicization

When presidents politicize, they select loyal appointees, place them in the departments and agencies, and then entrust them with authority to make decisions. This includes the existing appointed positions and any new positions the president would create. Ideally, presidents would select appointees or teams of appointees that would meet all of the desirable criteria—loyalty, competence, acceptability to the Senate, patronage, satisfy party factions, appropriate diversity, etc. Unfortunately for the president, the pool of persons that help the president on all these dimensions is shallow (Mackenzie 1981; Lewis 2008).⁶ Indeed, recent work on presidential appointments examines how presidents match different types of appointees with different types of positions. It seeks to explain, for example, when presidents prioritize Senate preferences or patronage considerations over other factors (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Lewis and Waterman 2013; Parsneau 2013). This literature notably distinguishes between higher and lower priority positions suggesting that presidents will place the most loyal appointees in the highest priority departments (Parsneau 2013). Reagan Presidential Personnel Director Pendleton James famously focused on the “key 87”

⁶ For example, Republicans have fewer candidates than Democrats for positions in agencies such as the Department of Labor, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the Peace Corps. Democrats have fewer candidates to lead the military services or Drug Enforcement Administration.

jobs essential for their economic agenda.⁷ Personnel officials across administrations describe how they prioritize some positions over others, including positions important to the president's agenda and the positions most influential for policymaking (Kumar 2015; Mann 1964; Pfiffner 1996).

Where Loyalty is a Priority

If presidents have to prioritize some agencies and positions over others for loyal appointees, they should focus on those that are key to accomplishing their agenda, either when they centralize or when they politicize. The most responsive appointee teams should be those that work in agencies in the EOP and in agencies essential for implementing the president's agenda.

H1: Political appointees in agencies or positions responsible for centrally directed policy making will be more responsive to the president than other appointees.

H2: Political appointees working in agencies whose policies are a stated priority of the president will be more responsive to the president than other political appointees.

In some cases, the priorities for the president are determined by the character of the agencies they inherit. Some agencies require aggressive appointee leadership to make the agency responsive to the president. These agencies will naturally resist change because of long histories, stable procedures, and the attitudes of long serving employees. Other agencies are staffed with career professionals that share the president's views on policy prior to the president naming an appointee. In the first case, presidential selections are quite important since agencies in this category will produce outputs at variance with the president's wishes if left on autopilot. Agencies in the second group can accommodate appointees selected for reasons other than loyalty since the overall direction of the agency is consistent with presidential preferences.

⁷ E. Pendleton James, Director, Office of Presidential Personnel, Oral History, Miller Center, November 3, 2003 (<https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-oral-histories/e-pendleton-james-oral-history-director-office>, accessed May 24, 2019).

H3: Political appointees in agencies with policy views that differ from the president will be more responsive to the president than agencies with policy views similar to the president.

Data, Variables, and Methods

To evaluate which appointees are responsive to the president we use data from the 2007-2008 and 2014 versions of the Survey on the Future of Government Service. Researchers fielded first survey in late 2007 and early 2008 (the end of President Bush's second term) and the second survey from August to December of 2014 (the end of President Obama's second term). Both surveys targeted senior appointed and career civil executives (e.g., career members of the Senior Executive Service, other senior career managers at the GS-14 or GS-15 level) from across the executive establishment, including the 15 executive departments, over 60 independent agencies, and 7 agencies in the Executive Office of the President. Researchers sent surveys to 7,448 and 14,698 federal executives and the response rates were 33% and 24%, respectively.⁸ The surveys rely on the observations and experiences of federal executives at the highest levels to evaluate the responsiveness of appointees in different contexts. They offer a unique means of measuring something that is very difficult to observe and quantify systematically across agencies and presidencies.

The surveys asked respondents to evaluate the responsiveness of political appointees in their agencies to the policy decisions of the president. Specifically, the surveys asked:

[2014] “Thinking about personnel in [your agency], in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions of the President?”⁹

⁸ Clinton et al. (2012) compared the distribution of partisanship in the target population to the distribution of self-reported partisanship among survey respondents, where possible, and did not find that Democrats, Republicans, or Independents responded at higher rates. For the second survey, a private firm was used to determine partisanship among the target population, where possible. The distribution of self-reported partisanship among respondents does not differ materially from the distribution of partisanship among the target population. There is mixed statistical evidence that suggests that Democrats are slightly more likely to respond to the second survey.

⁹ In the 2014 survey, the question was asked of a randomly selected half-sample.

[2007] “Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of the *President* and his *political appointees*?”

Response options on both surveys were: Very responsive, Responsive, Somewhat responsive, Slightly responsive, and Not at all responsive. This measure has several strengths. First, senior civil servants are either appointees or work closely with appointees. They directly observe appointees’ responses to presidential directives. In addition, career civil servants often work for the federal government for decades and observe how appointees respond to presidential directives across administrations. Furthermore, the survey asked respondents to evaluate appointees in their agencies as a group. This means that responses are based on their perceptions of the appointee team that manages their agency. Lastly, civil servants’ responses are directly comparable across agencies. Collectively, the answers to these questions provided by thousands of civil servants across two presidencies provide a useful means of comparing the responsiveness of appointees to the president.

The top line results reveal that respondents perceive appointees to be responsive. In 2014, approximately 93% of respondents reported that appointees are very responsive (72%) or responsive (21%). In 2007, 91% report that appointees are very responsive (74%) or responsive (17%).¹⁰ As the distributions suggest, our measure may suffer from a ceiling effect since only 7.5% and 9% of responses in the three categories of least responsiveness in 2014 and 2007, respectively. Accordingly, we primarily focus our analysis on changes in the very responsive category.

Measuring Agency Centrality, Priority, and Ideology

Our expectation is that appointees working in positions essential to centralizing and politicizing strategies will be the most responsive. To evaluate these claims we include indicators for appointees working in the Executive Office of the President (0,1; 1.53%) and appointees working in

¹⁰ N = 1,504 in 2014; N = 1,175 in 2007.

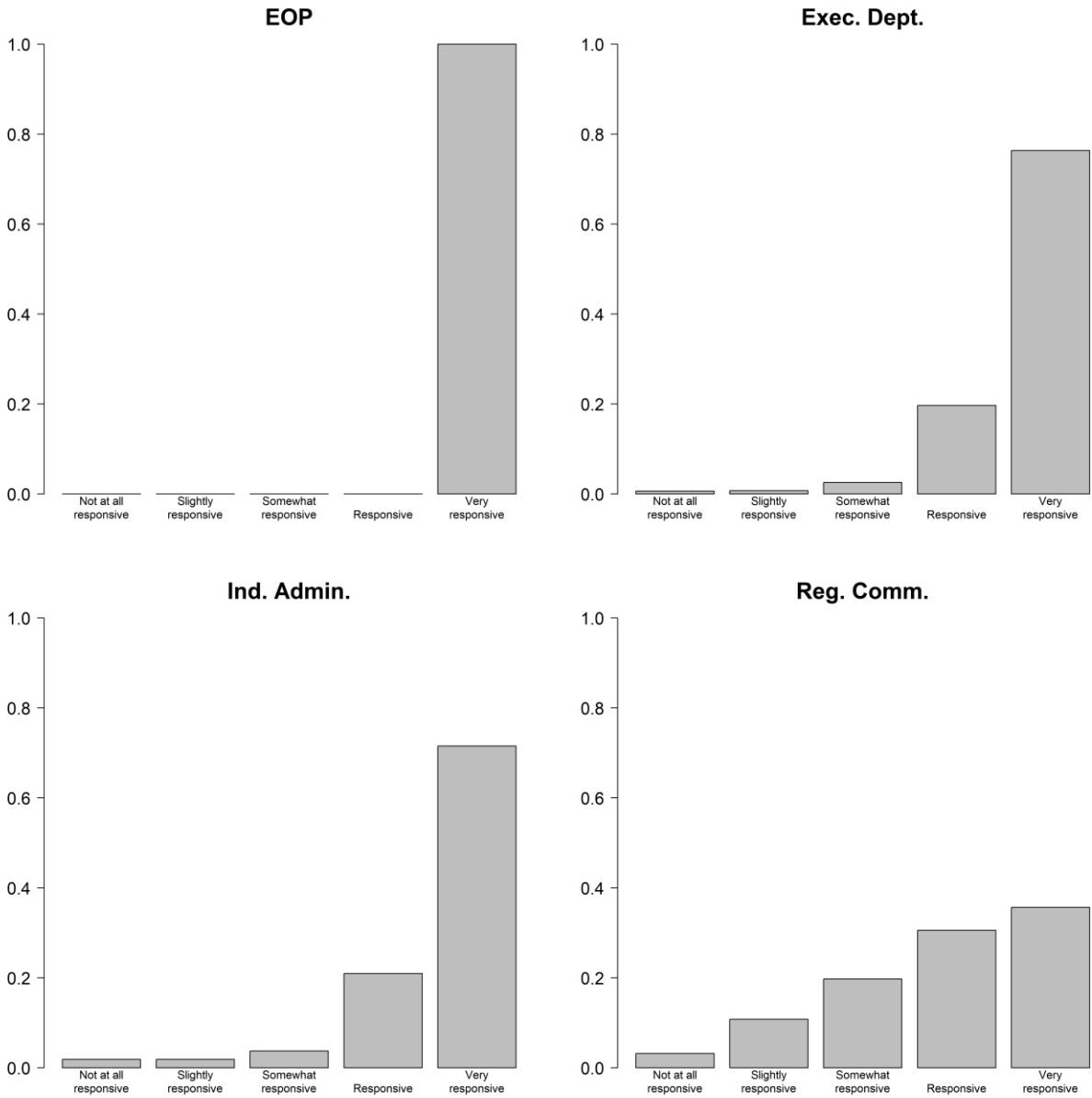
agencies that implement policies that are priorities for the president (0,1; 22.27%). To determine priority agencies, we first identified presidential policy priorities using State of the Union Addresses in the year preceding each survey. We then identified the agencies responsible for the policy domains mentioned in the address.¹¹

Figure 1 shows the distribution of responsiveness by the location of the respondent's agency in the larger executive establishment. As expected, proximity to the president is correlated with the responsiveness of appointees. One-hundred percent of respondents in the EOP report that appointees are very responsive to the president, falling to 76% in agencies within executive departments, 72% in independent administrations, and 36% in independent commissions in 2014. The numbers are similar for 2007 (i.e., EOP-100%; Executive Department—79%; Independent Administration—72%; Independent Commission--49%). Civil servants in both administrations perceive appointees in the EOP to very responsive to the president. It is also clear that appointees in regulatory commissions, which have structural characteristics designed to limit the influence of political principals, are perceived to be less responsive to the president. The reduction in the perceived responsiveness of appointees in regulatory commissions is remarkable and highlights the importance of statutory provisions (e.g., party-balance requirement, fixed terms with for cause protections) that restrict the president's choice of appointees or that allow appointees from a previous administration to serve well into the current one.¹² Presidents face a more challenging task when attempting to direct regulatory commissions relative to the remainder of the executive branch.

¹¹ We used the coding in Clinton, Lewis, and Selin (2014) for 2007 data. Coding for the 2014 data is included in Appendix D.

¹² We plan to explicitly estimate the effect of such insulating mechanisms on responsiveness in a future direct.

Figure 1: Distribution of Responsiveness Conditional on Centrality and Insulation (2014)



Notes: N = 23 in EOP agencies, 1,057 in executive departments, 267 in independent administrations, and 267 in regulatory commissions. We do not conduct chi-square tests because of the limited number of observations in some response categories.

As expected, the bivariate distributions suggest that appointees in agencies whose policies were mentioned in the State of the Union are more responsive to the president. In 2014, the probability mass is shifted into the very responsive (78%) and responsive (19%) categories relative to agencies that are not a presidential priority (very responsive – 70%, responsive – 21%). The 8

percentage point increase in the likelihood of a respondent perceiving that appointees are very responsive in priority agencies relative to non-priority agencies supports hypothesis 2, namely that appointees in agencies that are responsible for presidential priorities will be more responsive to the president. The 2014 patterns mirror those in 2007. Data from both years appears suggests that respondents in priority agencies perceive their appointee teams as more responsive than appointee teams in non-priority agencies.

Table 1: Distribution of Responsiveness Conditional on Priority

Response	2014		2007	
	Not a priority	Priority	Not a priority	Priority
Very responsive	0.70	0.78	0.71	0.81
Responsive	0.21	0.19	0.19	0.13
Somewhat responsive	0.05	0.02	0.08	0.04
Slightly responsive	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.01
Not at all responsive	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00

Note: Cell entries are proportions of respondents giving each response. N = 1,169 in non-priority agencies and 335 in priority agencies in 2014. N= 832 in non-priority agencies and 343 in priority agencies in 2007-8. Entries may not sum to 1 due to rounding.

Testing the third hypothesis requires a measure of agency policy views. Respondents to the 2014 survey were asked which agencies tended to have policy views that were liberal, conservative, or neither across multiple presidential administrations. Applying a Bayesian multirater item response model to these data, yields estimates of perceived agency ideology (Richardson, Clinton, and Lewis 2018) and provide a means of dividing up agencies into liberal, moderate and conservative agencies (Table 2).¹³ In 2014, 78% of respondents report that appointees are very responsive in liberal agencies compared to 67% in moderate agencies, and 71% in conservative agencies in the Obama Administration. In 2007, there is virtually no difference among liberal, moderate, and conservative agencies. This initial evidence suggests that presidents are not selecting their most responsive appointees for the most ideologically divergent agencies. Of course, the effects of ideology could be

¹³ We coded agencies for which the upper bound on the 95% regions of highest posterior density is less than 0 as “liberal”, agencies for which the lower bound is greater than 0 as “conservative”, and “moderate” otherwise. The simulation output was post-processed to be distributed N(0, 1).

moderated by other factors such as whether the agency is a priority for the president which suggests the need for a multivariate analysis.

Table 2: Distribution of Responsiveness Conditional on Agency Ideology

Response	2014			2007		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Very responsive	0.78	0.67	0.71	0.74	0.74	0.75
Responsive	0.18	0.22	0.21	0.17	0.17	0.16
Somewhat	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.08
Slightly	0.01	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
Not at all	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00

Note: Cell entries are proportions of respondents giving each response. N = 550 in liberal agencies, 486 in moderate agencies, and 310 in conservative agencies in 2014. N=515 in liberal agencies, 555 in moderate agencies, and 105 in conservative agencies in 2007-8. Entries may not sum to 1 due to rounding.

Models of Ordered Responses

We now move from bivariate analysis to multivariate analysis. Our data are individual level data on perceptions of appointee responsiveness in federal agencies.¹⁴ Our dependent variable is ordinal, and we, therefore, estimate ordered probit models. Our primary independent variables are the agency-level variables described above. We include different versions of the agency ideology variable (continuous vs. indicators for liberal, moderate, conservative) and we interact whether or not an agency is a priority with ideology in order to determine whether the effects of ideology or priority moderate the other. We also include a set of individual-level controls to account for factors that may cause individual perceptions to vary systematically.¹⁵ For example, Republican civil servants' perceptions of the responsiveness of appointees in Republican administration may be systematically different than the perceptions of Democratic civil servants. We include controls for the following individual characteristics: Republican (14%)¹⁶ and Democrat (52%) indicators, an

¹⁴ We have also estimated agency-level models and include those estimates in Appendix A.

¹⁵ One concern here is that model error is heteroscedastic, which may cause both the standard errors and coefficient estimates in our MLE model to be inconsistent. We plan to explore using a Bayesian hierarchical model to better account for variance structure of the data.

¹⁶ This is based on the 3 outcome PID variable question and does not include leaners.

indicator for whether the respondent is a political appointee (13%), whether the respondent is a member of the Senior Executive Service (45%, includes appointees and careerists), whether the respondent works in the D.C. region defined as D.C., Maryland, or Virginia (77%), whether the respondent is in the EX pay plan (2%), and the number of years the respondent has worked for the federal government (Mean 22.79, SD 11.23, Min 0, Max 50).¹⁷

We do not include an indicator variable for EOP agencies because all respondents in these agencies report that appointees are very responsive, which causes the EOP indicator variable to lack common support across response categories. We drop EOP respondents from the model to maintain consistency of the reference category (i.e., independent administrations) for the executive department and regulatory commission indicator variables.¹⁸

Results

Tables 3 includes models for 2014 and the estimates reveal a number of interesting relationships. First, all models support our expectations about the effect of the structure of the executive branch on responsiveness. Appointees in independent commissions are predicted to be less responsive, on average, than appointees in independent administrations. The point estimate is consistently negative and we can distinguish it from zero with a high degree of confidence across models and administrations. Setting the variable in the model to represent a typical civil servant¹⁹ and using Model 1 in Table 1, the predicted probability that a civil servant in a regulatory

¹⁷ The summary statistics for 2007 are as follows: Republican (22%), Democrat (43%), political appointee (13%), Senior Executive Service (32%), whether the respondent works in DC (60%), EX pay plan (2%), number of years the respondent has worked for the federal government (Mean 23.64, SD 11.16, Min 0, Max 47).

¹⁸ Omitting these respondents has little effect on our results because they are few in number (24 in 2014 and XX in 2007).

¹⁹ We define a typical civil servant to be in DC, not a member of the SES, no in the EX pay plan, and not a political appointee. These variables are set at their mode. We set years of service at 16 years, the mean in 2014, which we also use in 2007 for consistency. We assume that the civil servant is personally an independent. We assume the civil servant works in a moderate agency (i.e., the ideology estimate is 0) that is not a presidential priority, unless we are varying priority or ideology of the agency to examine variation in perceived responsiveness.

commission perceives appointees as very responsive is 0.35 (with a 95% confidence interval of [0.26, 0.44]), compared to 0.75 [0.69, 0.81] in executive departments and 0.69 [0.61, 0.77] in independent administrations.

Table 3. Ordered Probit Estimates of Federal Executive Perceptions of Political Appointee Responsiveness to the President, 2014

VARIABLES	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Executive Department (0,1)	0.16 (0.11)	0.23** (0.11)	0.13 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)
Independent Commission (0,1)	-0.90*** (0.13)	-0.84*** (0.13)	-0.88*** (0.13)	-0.84*** (0.14)
Priority (0,1)	0.09 (0.10)	0.08 (0.10)	0.04 (0.10)	0.33* (0.19)
Agency Ideology (L, C)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.24*** (0.05)		
Priority x Agency Ideology		0.20** (0.08)		
Liberal Agency (0,1)			0.28*** (0.09)	0.40*** (0.10)
Priority x Liberal Agency				-0.56** (0.23)
Conservative Agency (0,1)			-0.04 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.12)
Priority x Conservative Agency				-0.15 (0.26)
DC (0,1)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)
SES (0,1)	0.12 (0.08)	0.10 (0.08)	0.09 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)
EX Pay Plan (0,1)	-0.60** (0.29)	-0.57** (0.29)	-0.59** (0.29)	-0.53* (0.29)
Appointee (0,1)	0.29** (0.14)	0.25* (0.14)	0.27** (0.14)	0.26* (0.14)
Democrat (0,1)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)
Republican (0,1)	-0.03 (0.12)	-0.02 (0.12)	-0.03 (0.12)	-0.02 (0.12)
Years Employed in Civil Service	0.00 (0.003)	0.00 (0.003)	0.00 (0.003)	0.00 (0.003)
Observations	1,168	1,168	1,168	1,168
LR χ^2	115.75***	121.74***	115.64***	122.45***
log L	-909.54	-906.55	-909.60	-906.20

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. “Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of the *President?*” [Political appointees] (Very responsive 5, 4, Somewhat responsive 3, 2, Not at all responsive 1, Don’t Know).

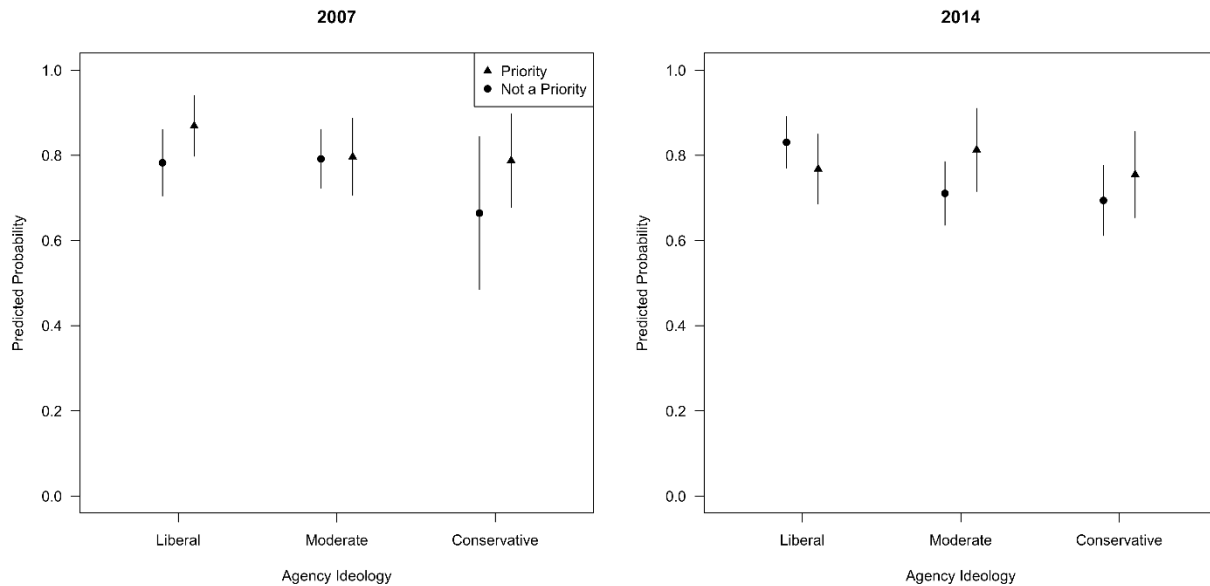
While the coefficient on the indicator for executive departments is consistently positive, we can only distinguish it from 0 with a high degree of confidence consistently in Model 2. This pattern suggests that appointees in executive departments are more responsive to the president than appointees in independent administrations, but we lack the precision in 2014 to make reach this conclusion with a high degree of confidence.

Models 1 and 3 in Table 3 provide mixed evidence that appointees in agencies that manage presidential priorities are more responsive. The coefficient estimate on the priority indicator is positive, but we lack the precision to say it is not zero or negative with a high degree of confidence. Substantively, respondents in agencies whose policies were mentioned in the 2014 State of the Union are about 3 percentage points more likely to report that appointees are very responsive to the president. The effects of the priority variable become clearer when interacted with agency ideology (more below).

Turning to the relationship between agency ideology and the responsiveness of appointees, we operationalized agency ideology as a continuous variable (that approximately ranges from -2 to 2 with larger values indicated more conservative agencies) and as indicator variable for liberal and conservative agencies with moderate agencies as the reference category. The indicator operationalization is useful for two reasons. First, it allows non-linearity in the effect of agency ideology on responsiveness. Second, the continuous measure may suffer from false precision and overstate the true differences between agencies with similar point estimates. The estimates reveal that during the Obama Administration, federal executives reported that appointees in the more liberal agencies were more responsive than appointees in conservative agencies. Executives in liberal agencies are about 9 percentage points more likely to report that political appointees in their agencies were very responsive to the president.

These results run contrary to expectations. Our expectation was that the most responsive appointees would be named to agencies whose policy views differed most from the president. Yet, the pattern in 2014 is the reverse. Appointees in the conservative agencies were less responsive to the president than appointees in liberal agencies. There are a number of possible explanations. First, the pool of potential appointees available to work in liberal agencies might be deeper for liberal presidents than the pool available to work in conservative agencies, particularly at the end of an administration. Presidents with fewer choices might have to select nominees for conservative or moderate agencies that are less personally responsive to the president. Second, presidents may be constrained from appointing ideologues in agencies whose preferences differ dramatically from the president, either because their lack of fit will inhibit cooperation or because those with different preferences will be less successful eliciting key information from the agency (Barnard 1938; Gailmard and Patty 2012).

Figure 2. Estimated Probability a Respondent Reports that Appointees are “Very Responsive” to the Policy Decisions of the President by Agency Priority and Ideology



Another explanation is that the effect of agency ideology is moderated by whether or not the agency is a priority to the president. Models 2 and 4 in Table 3 include interactions between ideology

and priority. Figure 2 graphs the estimated effect of agency priority and ideology jointly on perceptions of the responsiveness of appointees. The figure graphs the estimated probability that a representative respondent believe her appointees are very responsive by whether she works in an agency that implements a presidential priority and by the ideological leanings of her agency. Notably, in 2014 (right panel) respondents in liberal agencies are estimated to perceive their appointees as most responsive. Yet, if respondents work in moderate or conservative agencies that implement policies that are priorities, these differences disappear. Appointees in these agencies also appear responsive to the president.

To check the robustness of these findings across years we replicate the models from 2014 with the 2007 data and include the estimates in Table 4. The estimates generally confirm the three hypotheses. In so doing, they replicate some of the 2014 results. With regard to ideology, however, the results are quite different and suggest some interesting possibilities with regard to presidential appointment politics.

To begin, appointees in the EOP and the executive departments are estimated to be more responsive than appointees in independent administrations and commissions. Respondents in executive departments are 6 percentage points more likely to report that their appointees were very responsive to the president or his appointees while those in independent commissions were 19 percentage points less likely to choose this response. Those appointees that the president relies on to control centralized policy making appear to be more responsive to the president than appointees outside the EOP and the executive departments.

Table 2. Ordered Probit Estimates of Federal Executive Perceptions of Political Appointee Responsiveness to the President, 2007-2008

Variable	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Executive Department (0,1)	0.18	0.09 *	0.19	0.09 **	0.19	0.09 **	0.20	0.10 **
Independent Commission (0,1)	-0.65	0.13 **	-0.65	0.13 **	-0.65	0.13 **	-0.64	0.13 **
Presidential Priority (0,1)	0.19	0.10 **	0.17	0.10 *	0.22	0.10 **	0.02	0.16
Agency Ideology (L, C)	-0.09	0.06	-0.05	0.07				
Liberal Agency (0,1)					0.03	0.09	-0.03	0.10
Conservative Agency (0,1)					-0.25	0.16	-0.39	0.24
Presidential Priority*Ag Ideology			-0.09	0.11				
Presidential Priority*Liberal Agency							0.32	0.21
Presidential Priority*Conservative Agency							0.36	0.33
Political Appointee (0,1)	-0.05	0.17	-0.05	0.17	-0.04	0.17	-0.05	0.18
Washington, DC (0,1)	0.21	0.08 **	0.20	0.08 **	0.20	0.09 **	0.21	0.09 **
Senior Executive Service (0,1)	0.10	0.08	0.10	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.09
Executive Schedule (0,1)	-0.03	0.12	-0.03	0.12	-0.03	0.12	-0.03	0.12
Years of Experience	0.01	0.00 **	0.01	0.00 **	0.01	0.00 **	0.01	0.00 **
Republican (0,1)	-0.04	0.11	-0.04	0.11	-0.04	0.11	-0.05	0.11
Democrat (0,1)	-0.02	0.09	-0.02	0.09	-0.01	0.09	0.00	0.09
Cut 1	-2.13	0.19	-2.15	0.19	-2.16	0.20	-2.20	0.20
Cut 2	-1.61	0.15	-1.62	0.16	-1.64	0.16	-1.68	0.17
Cut 3	-0.90	0.14	-0.92	0.14	-0.93	0.15	-0.96	0.15
Cut 4	-0.15	0.14	-0.17	0.14	-0.18	0.15	-0.21	0.15
Number of Observations		1107.00		1107.00		1107.00		1107.00
X2		81.73 **		82.49 **		82.16 **		84.88 **
LL		848.32		847.94		848.11		-846.75

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. “Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of the *President* and his *political appointees*?” [Political appointees] (Very responsive-5, 4, Somewhat responsive-3, 2, Not at all responsive-1, Don’t Know).

One clear result from the 2007 data relates to the degree of appointee responsiveness in agencies implementing policies on the president's agenda. The coefficient estimates on the priority variable are large and significant in all four models. Respondents working in agencies whose policies President Bush had mentioned in his 2007 State of the Union were 5-6 percentage points more likely to report that appointees in their agency were very responsive to the Bush Administration, even when controlling for a host of other factors.

The 2007 data, then, confirms the basic expectations of the first two hypotheses. The agencies and positions key for centralization or the president's agenda were more likely to be filled by appointee teams responsive to the president.

Interestingly, the estimates on agency ideology look more like we expected and consistent with our third hypothesis. The coefficient on agency ideology is large and estimated precisely. Substantively, respondents in conservative agencies report that appointees in their agencies are less responsive to the president than respondents in liberal agencies or moderate agencies. These results suggest that President Bush may have selected appointees for liberal and moderate agencies more on the basis of ideology than in conservative agencies. He may have used conservative agencies, those that would do what he wanted without much direction, as places to satisfy other goals that are part of the appointment process (Lewis 2008).

Interestingly, both the Bush and Obama Administrations had more responsive appointees in liberal agencies and less responsive appointees in conservative agencies. This is seen most clearly in Figure 2 above. This raises the question of whether presidents are selecting appointees for loyalty based upon the logic outlined above--i.e., presidents select loyalists to run ideologically divergent agencies-- or whether there is something simply distinctive about conservative agencies that makes appointment politics different in these agencies. Among the most conservative agencies are the military, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies. It is worth considering whether the professional

norms associated with law enforcement, intelligence, and the military constrain appointees from being as responsive to the president as appointees might be in other agencies.

While appointees in conservative agencies are less responsive on average than appointees in liberal agencies in the Bush Administration, the gap in appointee responsiveness does disappear if the agency implements a policy that the president mentioned in his State of the Union address. In this way, the patterns of appointment are similar across the Bush and Obama presidencies. Both ideology and priority can influence the responsiveness of appointee teams but the importance of ideology seems to disappear in the presence of presidential attention.

More generally, the overall pattern in Figure 2 suggests a ceiling effect. The measures of appointee responsiveness are quite high and cannot go much higher. Indeed, all respondents in the EOP reported that their appointees were very responsive to the president. Different factors can get appointee teams to bump against that ceiling and that makes estimation difficult. Indeed, any number of factors may lead presidents to select appointee teams that are very responsive, whether a deep pool of available nominees, a desire to counteract an ideological bureaucracy, or the fact that an agency is really important for a presidential priority.

Discussion

The question of appointee responsiveness is an important one for democratic theory and practice in the United States. For presidential elections to matter, the president's team must be responsive to the policy decisions of the president. Yet, historically political appointees have been more or less responsive to the president in ways that are consequential for policy outcomes. Modern presidential history is filled with examples of appointee resistance, from Richard Neustadt's reporting about President Truman's predictions for the Eisenhower presidency to President

Kennedy's problems with the State Department (Neustadt 1960, 9; Schlesinger 1965, 406). President Trump is no exception.

In many ways the data presented here are reassuring. Overwhelming majorities of federal executives—career and appointed—report that political appointees in their agencies are very responsive or responsive to the policy decisions of the president. Political appointees understand their role as subordinate to the president and attempting to accomplish shared partisan and ideological goals in their role. Where appointees resist presidential direction, it is often where we would expect—in independent commissions designed to be insulated from presidential control. Party balancing limitations on appointments (e.g., “no more than x members of the commission can be from one party”), staggered terms, and “for cause” protections limit the president’s pool of potential nominees and the president’s ability to fire appointees after they are confirmed. Congress has chosen these designs to limit any one president’s influence over policy and provide for stable and expert policy making, ideally on the basis of technocratic expertise. President Trump’s frustration with the policymaking of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve is a good example of the effect of these structures in practice. The President has been unhappy with the agency’s monetary policy decisions but cannot remove its members since they serve for 14 year terms.²⁰

Beyond overall responsiveness and the influence of agency design, the data reveal some clear patterns in appointee responsiveness across agencies. First, respondents report that proximity to the president is correlated with appointee responsiveness. Appointees in the EOP are the most responsive, followed by appointees in the executive departments, independent administrations, and

²⁰ Matthew Boesler and Laurence Arnold, “What Trump Can (and Can’t) Do to Steer Fed Policy,” Bloomberg, April 11, 2019 (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-04-12/what-trump-can-and-can-t-do-to-steer-fed-policy-quicktake>, accessed June 8, 2019). While the president cannot remove a board member without cause, the president may have more flexibility in naming a chair. The chair is named by the president for a term of 4 years but the Federal Reserve statute includes no formal “for cause” protection against a chair’s removal (Selin and Lewis 2018, Appendix, p. 26).

independent commission. For a presidential strategy of centralization to be effective, presidents need their closest appointees to share their views. Second, respondents report that appointees working in agencies that are priorities for the president are responsive to the president. The bivariate data reveal this pattern, coefficient estimates on these variables are consistently positive, and many of these estimates are precise enough to reject the null, particularly in the 2007 data. This is consistent with a presidential politicization strategy where presidents prioritize some positions over others for loyal appointees.

The patterns with regard to agency ideology are less clear. The coefficient estimates in 2007 are consistent with President Bush selecting loyal appointees in the most ideologically divergent agencies (i.e., liberal agencies) but the estimates are not precise. For President Obama, however, the most responsive appointees were appointees in liberal agencies. For both presidents, appointees in conservative agencies were less responsive to the president. This raises a more general question of interpretation. One interesting interpretation is that the responsiveness of appointees in conservative agencies may be limited by professional forces in both Democratic and Republican administration. If conservative agencies tend to be military, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies, these are the kinds of agencies that are limited by law and professional norms. For example, appointees in the Department of Justice traditionally are quite independent from the president. Similarly, the budget process for the Department of Defense is importantly shaped by four-year national defense strategy. If this is the case, the pool of persons available to serve have a conception of their own professional responsibility which limits their responsiveness to the president.

A second related explanation for the fact that appointees in liberal agencies were more responsive to President Obama might be the limited in the pool of potential nominees for conservative agencies. For example, the pool of persons with necessary expertise in defense matters willing to serve at the end of the Obama Administration may have been limited as compared to the

pool available to work in the Department of State or the Labor Department. In a Republican Administration, however, the bench of potential appointees in defense and foreign policy may be deeper. So, while President Obama might have preferred to select someone more responsive, he might have been limited by the available pool that was politically acceptable.

A final aspect of this to remember is that variation in appointee responsiveness among liberal and conservative agencies may not matter much given the overall reported responsiveness. The degree of responsiveness cannot get much higher, at least as measured on the survey. If this is the case, some of the differences among types of agencies may wash out.

Threats to Inference

As with any correlational analysis of survey data, there are questions of causality and interpretation. We recognize a number of threats to inference in the current form of this analysis. First, the respondents to this survey are politically sophisticated and are likely to know the “right” answer to some of these questions, regardless of their actual experience. So, for example, respondents in the EOP may know that their appointees should be responsive to the president and respond accordingly. We know from past work and current reporting that there are significant policy disagreements within the EOP, yet little of this variation was revealed in the surveys (Bressman and Vandenberg 2006; Woodward 2018).

Differences in perceptions of responsiveness can also reflect differences in what is asked of the agency. For example, respondents in priority agencies may report more appointee responsiveness simply because their appointees are being asked to do more by the White House. Some appointees are given an opportunity to prove their responsiveness and others are not. While this is a reasonable concern, the survey data suggest it might not be a big problem. The 2007 survey asked respondents about the extent to which they agree with the statement “The extent of White

House involvement in agency decisions has increased the last few years.” Respondents that agree with this statement are less likely to work in priority agencies and less likely to work in agencies with responsive appointees ($p < 0.00$).

Throughout this analysis we have focused on the absolute responsiveness of appointees to policy decisions of the president. Yet, appointees work in a system with multiple principals. One inferential concern is that we may be measuring overall responsiveness to elected officials instead of responsiveness to the president specifically. Some agencies have more policymaking autonomy in general. We have also estimated models of responsiveness of appointees to Congress and the *relative* responsiveness to the president versus Congress. We include those estimates in Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively. The estimates suggest that the patterns of responsiveness to Congress are quite different from those of responsiveness to the president and generally confirm the estimates in Table 4.

Conclusion

Entering his third year as president, Donald Trump has had higher turnover than any modern president (O’Connell 2018; Tenpas 2018). He has stated a preference for acting officials, suggesting that persons serving in an acting capacity are more responsive to his direction. The president has been unhappy with the lack of responsiveness of his own team and taken action to secure more pliable appointees. The president’s publicly stated complaints about this issue have brought into sharp relief a concern that he shares with most modern presidents. Indeed, one job of presidential personnel officials is to remove appointees that are not fulfilling the president’s expectations.

The analysis in this paper suggests that while federal executives perceive appointees to be very responsive to the president, there is significant variation across the executive establishment.

This variation is in part predictable, related to the structure of different agencies but also the appointment strategies of modern presidents. Efforts to centralize and politicize lead to predictable patterns of appointee responsiveness. Given the large number of appointed positions, presidents can only prioritize loyalty and responsiveness in the most important of those positions.

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Appendix A. Ordered Probit Estimates of Perceptions of Appointee Responsiveness to President, 2014 (Agency Averages as Units of Analysis)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
Executive Office of the President (0,1)	0.53*** (0.15)	0.54*** (0.15)
Executive Department (0,1)	0.08 (0.09)	0.09 (0.10)
Independent Commission (0,1)	-0.48*** (0.17)	-0.48*** (0.17)
Presidential Priority (0,1)	0.30** (0.14)	0.30** (0.15)
Agency Ideology (L, C)	-0.06 (0.04)	-0.07 (0.05)
Presidential Priority*Ag Ideology		0.04 (0.06)
Political Appointee (0,1)	0.20 (0.24)	0.19 (0.25)
Washington, DC (0,1)	-0.35 (0.25)	-0.35 (0.25)
Senior Executive Service (0,1)	0.42* (0.25)	0.41 (0.25)
Executive Schedule (0,1)	0.12 (0.97)	0.12 (0.97)
Years of Experience	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Party ID (D, R)	0.04 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)
Constant	4.04*** (0.36)	4.03*** (0.36)
Observations	163	163
R-squared	0.24	0.24

Note: “Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of the *President* and his *political appointees*?” [Political appointees] (Very responsive 5, 4, Somewhat responsive 3, 2, Not at all responsive 1, Don’t Know). Ordinary Least Squares regression. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Appendix B. Ordered Probit Estimates of Federal Executive Perceptions of Political Appointee Responsiveness to the Congress, 2007-2008

Variable	B	SE		B	SE		B	SE		B	SE	
Executive Office of the President (0,1)	-0.27	0.36		-0.18	0.37		-0.24	0.37		-0.27	0.38	
Executive Department (0,1)	-0.05	0.08		-0.05	0.08		-0.05	0.08		-0.03	0.08	
Independent Commission (0,1)	-0.22	0.12	*	-0.21	0.12	*	-0.23	0.12	**	-0.22	0.12	*
Presidential Priority (0,1)	0.00	0.08		-0.09	0.08		0.03	0.08		-0.21	0.12	
Agency Ideology (L, C)	0.15	0.05	**	0.29	0.06	**						
Liberal Agency (0,1)							-0.23	0.08	**	-0.32	0.09	**
Conservative Agency (0,1)							-0.01	0.13		-0.20	0.21	
Presidential Priority*Ag Ideology				-0.27	0.09	**						
Presidential Priority*Liberal Agency										0.39	0.16	**
Presidential Priority*Conservative Agency										0.45	0.28	
Political Appointee (0,1)	-0.06	0.15		-0.08	0.15		-0.06	0.15		-0.08	0.15	
Washington, DC (0,1)	-0.16	0.07	**	-0.18	0.07	**	-0.21	0.07	**	-0.19	0.07	**
Senior Executive Service (0,1)	0.06	0.07		0.07	0.07		0.06	0.07		0.06	0.07	
Executive Schedule (0,1)	0.05	0.10		0.06	0.10		0.06	0.10		0.05	0.10	
Years of Experience	-0.01	0.00	*	-0.01	0.00	*	-0.01	0.00		-0.01	0.00	*
Republican (0,1)	0.17	0.10	*	0.17	0.10	*	0.17	0.10	*	0.16	0.10	*
Democrat (0,1)	-0.02	0.08		-0.03	0.08		-0.03	0.08		-0.03	0.08	
Cut 1	-2.19	0.14		-2.27	0.14		-2.26	0.15		-2.31	0.15	
Cut 2	-1.72	0.13		-1.79	0.13		-1.79	0.14		-1.84	0.14	
Cut 3	-0.82	0.12		-0.88	0.12		-0.89	0.13		-0.93	0.13	
Cut 4	0.06	0.12		0.00	0.12		-0.01	0.13		-0.05	0.13	
Number of Observations		1094.00			1094.00			1094.00			1094.00	
X2		29.38	**		39.18	**		28.19	**		34.74	**
LL		-1415.75			-1410.86			-1416.35			-1413.07	

Note: "Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of *Congress*?" [Political appointees] (Very responsive 5, 4, Somewhat responsive 3, 2, Not at all responsive 1, Don't Know).

**Appendix C. Ordered Probit Estimates of Difference in Perceptions of Appointee
Responsiveness to President vs. Congress, 2007-2008**

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Executive Office of the President (0,1)	0.51 (0.46)	0.43 (0.46)	0.53 (0.37)	0.51 (0.37)
Executive Department (0,1)	0.15** (0.08)	0.15** (0.08)	0.15** (0.08)	0.14* (0.08)
Independent Commission (0,1)	-0.34*** (0.12)	-0.35*** (0.12)	-0.33*** (0.12)	-0.34*** (0.12)
Presidential Priority (0,1)	0.10 (0.07)	0.18** (0.07)	0.07 (0.08)	0.18 (0.12)
Agency Ideology (L, C)	-0.19*** (0.05)	-0.32*** (0.07)		
Liberal Agency (0,1)			0.25*** (0.08)	0.30*** (0.09)
Conservative Agency (0,1)			-0.08 (0.13)	-0.08 (0.21)
Presidential Priority*Ag Ideology		0.27*** (0.08)		
Presidential Priority*Liberal Agency				-0.19 (0.16)
Presidential Priority*Conservative Agency				-0.08 (0.28)
Washington, DC (0,1)	0.28*** (0.07)	0.29*** (0.07)	0.32*** (0.07)	0.31*** (0.07)
Senior Executive Service (0,1)	0.01 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)
Democrat (0,1)	-0.00 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)
Republican (0,1)	-0.16* (0.09)	-0.17* (0.09)	-0.17* (0.09)	-0.17* (0.09)
Political Appointee (0,1)	0.00 (0.13)	0.02 (0.13)	-0.00 (0.15)	0.01 (0.15)
Executive Schedule (0,1)	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)
Years of Experience	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
Constant cut1	-2.50*** (0.23)	-2.45*** (0.24)	-2.44*** (0.26)	-2.42*** (0.26)
Constant cut2	-1.79*** (0.16)	-1.74*** (0.16)	-1.73*** (0.16)	-1.71*** (0.16)
Constant cut3	-1.19*** (0.13)	-1.14*** (0.13)	-1.13*** (0.14)	-1.11*** (0.14)
Constant cut4	0.67*** (0.12)	0.73*** (0.12)	0.72*** (0.13)	0.74*** (0.13)

Constant cut5	1.49*** (0.12)	1.56*** (0.13)	1.55*** (0.14)	1.57*** (0.14)
Constant cut6	2.28*** (0.14)	2.35*** (0.14)	2.33*** (0.15)	2.35*** (0.15)
Constant cut7	2.79*** (0.16)	2.86*** (0.17)	2.83*** (0.16)	2.86*** (0.16)
Observations	1,083	1,083	1,083	1,083

Note: Note: “Thinking about the personnel in your agency, in general how responsive are these different groups to the policy decisions and pronouncements of the *President* and his *political appointees*?” [Congress] (Very responsive 5, 4, Somewhat responsive 3, 2, Not at all responsive 1, Don’t Know). Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Appendix D. Priorities Mentioned in the 2014 State of the Union and Associated Agencies

State of the Union	Bureau or Agency
Minimum Wage for Contract Employees	Wage and Hour Division (DOL)
Health Care	CMMS; FDA; EBSA; IRS; AHRQ; OS; HRSA; NIH; AA; CDC; NIH; HIS
Immigration	CBP; CIS; Consular (STAT); ICE; DOL (OFILC);
War on Terror; Afghanistan	Military Services; Intelligence; State
Foreign Policy	Office of the Sec. State, OSD (DOD)
Education: Pre-K; community colleges; race to the top	OPS (DoEd); OESE (DoEd); SERS (DoEd)

Source: “Inside the State of the Union: What the President Proposed.” *National Public Radio*, January 29, 2014 (<http://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2014/01/28/267939585/inside-the-state-of-the-union-what-the-president-proposed>, accessed December 27, 2015).