

**The Politics of Institutionalizing the Presidency: Neutral versus Responsive
Competence in the Executive Office of the President***

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In 2001, President Bush attempted to quietly close two small White House offices, the Office of National Aids Policy and the Office on the President's Initiative for One America. His decision angered AIDS and race activists who questioned Bush's commitment to those issues.¹ Bush also closed the Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach.² He is not the only president to have closed offices in the institutional presidency. President Clinton succeeded in closing the Council on Competitiveness, the Critical Materials Council, and the National Space Council. Among others, President Reagan shut down the Council on Wage and Price Stability, Carter the President's Economic Policy Board, and Nixon the Office of Economic Opportunity.³ Short of termination, presidents have also ignored or substantially reorganized units of the institutional presidency upon assuming office. President Nixon left the Office of Economic Opportunity perpetually understaffed and several presidents have done the same with the Council on Environmental Quality. President Eisenhower substantially reorganized the Council of Economic Advisers, Kennedy the National Security Council, and Nixon the Bureau of the Budget.⁴ Yet, some units inside the institutional presidency are fully utilized, stable, and they persist over time relatively unchanged like the Office of the U.S Trade Representative and the OMB since 1970.

This begs the question of what presidents are looking for from their staff agencies. Hugh Hecló (1975) famously argues that presidents should look for neutral competence in their staff agencies, particularly the Office of Management and Budget. By neutrality, Hecló means "giving one's cooperation and best independent judgment of the issues to partisan bosses—and of being sufficiently uncommitted to be able to do so for a succession of partisan leaders." The primary means of ensuring neutrality in executive office agencies was to have them staffed by career employees. Staffing the agencies with career employees would also ensure a degree of competence. Hecló claims that agencies staffed with career employees have expertise and relational assets that other more politicized agencies do not have. In particular, neutral competence facilitates institutional memory, a long term perspective, the maintenance of valuable informal information flows that facilitate governance, and a uniquely valuable brokerage perspective on executive branch conflicts. This perspective reflects the institutional interest of the presidency disconnected from sectoral and partisan claims on the office.

The counterpoint to Hecló's view is articulated by Terry Moe (1985). Moe argues that presidents seek a more politically responsive staffing system. Referring specifically to President Reagan's attempt to "politicize" the bureaucracy, Moe argues that neutral competence does not serve presidential interests. Rather, Moe argues Presidents are willing to sacrifice the benefits Hecló articulates for increased attentiveness to the interests of the president in office.

Each president has the option of using, ignoring, reorganizing, or abolishing the various offices inside the institutional presidency. Apart from the guidance provided by Hecló and Moe, we know very little about how presidents make these decisions. In this

¹ Hall, Mimi, and Judy Keen. "Bush to close offices on AIDS, race." *USA Today*. February 7, 2001, p. A1 (on-line edition).

² Kornblut, Anne E. "Shut office signals shift on women." *Boston Globe*. March 28, 2001, p. A1 (on-line edition).

³ See Relyea 1997.

⁴ See Hood 1954, Falk 1964, and Berman 1979, respectively.

paper I provide a theory of the president's relationship with presidential agencies based in the micro-level incentives of presidents. I argue that presidents do value responsive competence in their interactions with agencies in the institutional presidency. I also argue, however, that agencies with demonstrated expertise of the type described by Hecl are less likely to be ignored, reorganized, or eliminated. I test hypotheses from the theory with data collected on all units in the Executive Office of the President from 1939-2002.

I. The Institutional Presidency

By and large the question of whether presidents ignore, reorganize, or abolish units in the Executive Office of the Presidency has been taken up in the context of scholarship examining how the office of the presidency has grown and become "institutionalized."⁵ The utility, stability, and persistence of units around the president is taken as a sign that the office is becoming institutionalized. Several works describe the transformation of the presidency from a person to an organization as an irresistible Weberian march toward differentiation, complexity, stability, and coherence that occurs simultaneously with an increase in staff size and resources. The growth of government and increased demands on the president lead naturally to the growth of a bureaucratic staff system (see, e.g., Rossiter 1949, Seligman 1956). In this view institutionalization follows an irresistible logic where staff units naturally develop and differentiate to divide labor efficiently and develop expertise. Over time these units in the institutional presidency develop procedures, norms, and processes to handle repeated tasks and interaction. Ultimately, they develop organizational identities shaped by their unique perspective in the division of labor. Once in existence, these units become adaptable and adopt strategies to ensure their own longevity.

Ragsdale and Theis (1997) examine 4 characteristics of institutionalization to determine when the presidency became institutionalized. They conclude that the presidency became institutionalized in the 1970s and that national government activity had the greatest impact on the institutionalization of the presidency. Walcott and Hult (1995) similarly suggest that increasing task demands lead to institutionalization but they also suggest that organizational dynamics shaped by growing informational assets lead to the stability and persistence of organizational forms.⁶

Other works suggest that, in addition to the institutionalization caused by the growth of government, the strategic interaction between the executive and legislative branches helps predict institutional growth in the two branches (Howell and Lewis 2002,

⁵ In a fundamental respect the office of the president, though always filled by one person with more or less institutionalized staff support, has always been an institution. In other words, the office described in the Constitution has always had the characteristics of an "institution." That is, it is an office that has "a value and stability in itself" (Ragsdale and Theis 1997). It has survived internal and external political change and it is differentiable from other parts of the political system. The president's actions are enabled, defined, and constrained by the constitutional separation of powers system. Any discussion of the institutional presidency must begin with the recognition that, in some ways, the presidency has always been institutionalized and the modern presidency's attitude toward the institutional presidency and its units will be fundamentally shaped by the unique role of the president in our separation of powers system.

⁶ Neither works highlight the possibility of deinstitutionalization (i.e., instability and termination of organizational units) but could be interpreted to imply that deinstitutionalization of the presidency could occur. For example, a decrease in federal government activity or proof that existing units provide no additional expertise could lead to substantial instability or reductions in EOP units. See, however, Wyszomirski 1982.

Krause 2002, Moe and Wilson 1994). Moe and Wilson (1994) and Howell and Lewis (2002) argue that presidents are opportunistic actors who can exploit Congress's collective action problems to create and design units of the institutional presidency to their advantage. Krause (2002) examines the growth in the presidential and legislative branches and argues that the institutional dynamics in our separation of powers system allow presidents short run advantages in increasing their institutional resources vis-à-vis Congress. He also finds, however, that presidents cannot permanently exploit Congress.

The final set of works suggest that presidential choices shape the institutionalization process. Walcott and Hult (1995) mention the influence of presidential policy priorities and presidential management needs. Dickinson (1997) argues that the bargaining needs of modern presidents drive presidential staffing decisions.

While all of these factors likely influence the utilization, stability, and longevity of the units of the institutional presidency, it is also true that each new president in the modern period makes a keep, reorganize, or discard decision with the units of institutional presidency which fundamentally depends upon presidential choice.⁷ An study of this choice should contribute not only to our understanding of the neutral vs. responsive competence debate but also our knowledge about the institutionalization of the presidency.

II. Institutional Incentives, Presidential Staff, and the EOP

Most scholars mark the beginning of the institutional presidency with the creation of the Executive Office of the President (EOP) in 1939 (see, however, Hart 1987). The EOP has housed the administrative units supporting the presidency from this point forward and the number of agencies included in the EOP has varied from 3 to 17 from that point forward. The variation in the number, size, and responsibilities of agencies in the EOP shows a degree of instability in the institutional presidency. What explains the variation in number of agencies and also the likelihood of the use, reorganization or termination of units inside the EOP?

Problems that exist between units of the institutional presidency and the president derive from principal-agent problems—divergent preferences embedded in the organization, competence problems, and monitoring difficulties. Divergent preferences arise from differing policy perspectives, self-seeking, or simply miscommunication between the president and the agency can lead agencies to take actions at variance with the presidents wishes.⁸ A lack of competence can have the same effect. Even those agencies that are the most responsive to the president can fail due to a lack of competence. Problems arising from divergent preferences or incompetence are compounded by the fact that presidents are unable to monitor the behavior of their subordinates. If they could, they could stop them from taking actions contrary to their own interest.

⁷ While it is true that some of these units are harder to change than others because of statutory authority, unusually high clientele support, or expertise, the fact remains that presidents have a huge amount of discretion over the structures that serve them. If structures in the EOP are durable, they are durable for one reason: it makes sense for the president to keep them. Therefore, rooting the stability and longevity of EOP units in a theory of presidential choice is necessary for a full understanding of the institutional presidency.

⁸ For an interesting article on signal clarity and preference divergence between agencies and the president see Krause (2002).

Divergent Preferences

The first formal transition after the Executive Office of the President had been created revealed the difficulties with the formal staffing structure.⁹ Presidents still needed the type of loyal help and advice they got from their personal aides and new institutional arrangements, while situated to provide expertise, did not always have the president's best interests in mind. Of particular issue in the Truman-to-Eisenhower transition were the Council of Economic Advisers and the National Security Council. Congress created both new bodies to institutionalize in the presidency a means of getting good advice on issues of critical importance to the country. Eisenhower's response was to substantially reorganize them to enhance his control. He submitted Reorganization Plan 9 to Congress on June 1, 1953. The plan strengthened the power of the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) by giving all authority heretofore delegated to the CEA as a whole the chair instead. It also abolished the position of vice-chair.¹⁰ For the National Security Council (NSC) Eisenhower created two new units, the Planning Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, to do policy planning and ensure implementation, respectively.¹¹ Congress also provided the president with an Economic Adviser to the President outside the CEA and a National Security Adviser to serve partly as a buffer between the president and these agencies. Ultimately, Eisenhower feared two things in his institutional support: defection from his wishes and failure or incompetence. Presidents' relationships with their executive units historically follow much the same pattern. Presidents are looking for responsiveness, even from those agencies designed to provide expertise.

The degree of preference divergence between the president and particular units in the EOP can vary as a function of their purpose embedded in law and personnel. Some units in the EOP are designed with a specific policy goal in mind. For example, the Office of Economic Opportunity was the hallmark of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. It was anathema to Richard Nixon and he set about dismantling it in the early 1970s. Of course, some units of the EOP are entirely pliable in terms of what they do because of the dramatic turnover in personnel. The National Security Council, for example, has no career service protections on employment, making it supremely pliable and responsive relative to other offices. The Council of Economic Advisers and the Council on Environmental Quality, on the other hand, are substantially filled with employees from the competitive service. Presidents can work diligently to ensure that the preferences of his staff coincide with his own through the selection process but civil service protections limit the extent to which they can choose their personnel.¹²

H1: The risk of neglect, reorganization, and termination increase as preference divergence between the president and the agency increase.

⁹ In fact, Truman himself was cool to the new structures himself. See Falk 1964 for an account of how little Truman used the National Security Council structure.

¹⁰ For a full history see Hood 1954.

¹¹ See Relyea 1997, pp. 185-88.

¹² Weko (1995) argues that the increase in size and importance of the White House Personnel Office is attributable to presidential attempts to screen staff, partly for loyalty.

Competence

Outcomes contrary to the president's interests can also arise because of incompetence or failure. Presidents can get bad advice, be misrepresented, or have their staff fail in implementation. Some staff competence attaches to the persons brought in by the president, other competence is achieved through experience in the job. Existing staff support and personnel from past administrations are attractive to the president precisely because of their experience or competence developed through work. Agencies designed with a high percentage of career employees provide the type of competence and expertise that Heclou lauded.

Of course, loyalty and competence often work at cross-purposes. Presidents who choose to keep existing units in the EOP sacrifice the loyalty that would come with replacing the unit with their own. Those units in the EOP that are filled completely with political appointees will be the most responsive but they will probably not be the most competent. Similarly, those agencies in the EOP that are staffed with a high percentage of civil servants will have a measure of expertise and institutional memory that are valuable but they will also be less responsive. Presidents usually prefer a balance of responsiveness and competence that minimizes the difference between the president's preference and the outcome. This means minimizing the preference divergence between himself and the agency management team and minimizing agency losses from lack of managerial skill, experience, or agency-specific knowledge.

H2: The risk of neglect, reorganization, and termination will covary with the percentage of career service employees in an agency. Specifically, the risks will be greatest for agencies with abnormally high or low percentages of career employees.

In the EOP, units develop informational and relational assets over time that help presidential decision making and increase efficiency in action. Terminating EOP units is a costly action precisely because the act of replacing the unit and its expertise is a difficult one. In most cases, the longer an agency has been in existence, the longer its institutional memory, the more developed its routines and processes, and the more informed its advice and activities. Agencies become more valuable to the president over time, reducing the risk of neglect, reorganization, or termination.

H3: The hazard rate of neglect, reorganization, or termination is decreasing over time.

Monitoring

We should expect that outcomes contrary to the president's wishes frequently occur in cases where presidents have a difficult time monitoring. Presidents who are willing to put forth the effort can vigorously monitor individual agencies or activities but they cannot monitor all agencies of the EOP at the same time, particularly as the institutional presidency grows (see Krause 2002, Moe 1993). Presidents can remedy some of the problems with divergent preferences and information asymmetries by organizational design and personal initiative. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, for example, tried to remedy the information asymmetry between himself and his aides by assigning multiple aides to the same task, leaving lines of jurisdiction unclear, and inducing competition (Dickinson 1997). A number of scholars have noted the different ways of

organizing the White House staff and its impact on presidential performance (see, e.g., George 1980, Hess 1988). Despite their best efforts to organize staff effectively for oversight or politicize selection processes, however, a growing EOP means greater information asymmetries between the president and his staff units. This implies that a growing EOP should increase the likelihood that some EOP units will take actions contrary to the wishes of the president. Doing so increases the likelihood of agency reorganization or termination.

H4: EOP units that are easiest to monitor will be the most stable and durable.

III. Data, Variables, and Methods

To test the impact of loyalty, information asymmetries, and competence on the stability and durability of units in the institutional presidency I use data from Relyea 1997 on EOP agency lifetimes, 1939-1992.¹³ I supplemented this data with data from the *United States Government Manual* (USGM) for the 1993-2002 period.¹⁴ In total, there are 54 agencies in the EOP during the 1939-2002 period. The agency data is organized into spells to accommodate the inclusion of time-varying covariates in hazard models. The number of spells for each agency equals the number of years it was in existence. So, for example, there are 63 observations on the White House Office since it was created in 1939 and still exists today. Of course, there is right-censoring since we do not observe when existing units in the EOP will be terminated. I account for this in model estimation.

Data on presidential neglect, reorganization, and termination is drawn from Relyea 1997 and the *USGM*. Determining when presidents ignored or neglected an EOP agency is a difficult task. I chose to use the number of vacancies in EOP agencies as a measure of neglect. Presidents who leave substantial vacancies in EOP agencies demonstrate a relative lack of concern since very few appointed positions require Senate confirmation. All spells where there were an abnormally high percentage of vacancies (1 SD above mean) are coded with a 1. All other years are coded with a 0. There are 74 agency years where there were a noticeably large number of vacancies. Twenty agencies were never coded as having a substantial number of vacancies. Of the 54 agencies, 42 of which underwent a substantial change varying from transfer out of the EOP to reorganization to outright abolition. The shortest duration for an agency before reorganization or termination was less than a year. Some agencies in the EOP have survived in basically the same form they started in for their entire existence. The median time to change is 4 years.

¹³ A complete list of agencies is included in Appendix A. There are other lists of EOP agency lifetimes from a variety of sources including Burke 1992 and Hart 1997. I hope to replicate the analyses in this section on these other lists of EOP agencies.

¹⁴ Another way to study the institutional presidency is to study the development and change of a specific unit within the president's orbit. Many fine works have done this (see, e.g. Berman 1979, Hood 1954, Kernell 1989, Seligman 1956, Tomkin 1998, Weko 1995, Zegart 1999). Doing so provides some advantages in depth of analysis. What is gained in depth, is lost in variance on both the dependent variable and independent variables. As a consequence, I have chosen not focus solely on, say, the White House Office (which experienced the greatest growth from 1939 forward) but on all the units of the EOP.

Preference Divergence

Since no direct measures of loyalty, information asymmetries, and competence exist, I have to fashion tests that will confirm or disconfirm the theory based on surrogates for each of these characteristics. To measure preference divergence, I include a number of variables. For models of reorganization and termination I include the percentage of an agency's employees that are civil servants. A high percentage of civil servants indicates reduced responsiveness to the president's policy preferences. Detailed employment data is available on most but not all agencies in the EOP. There are 38 agencies where employment data is available and of these 38, they average 42% career employees. The percentage of career employees varies from 0 to 100 percent.¹⁵ I cannot use this measure in models of presidential neglect since the number of vacancies covaries directly with the percentage of an agency's employees that are civil servants. The higher the percentage of civil servants, the lower the likely number of vacancies. This is complicated by the fact that the USGM only lists positions that are filled for a handful of agencies like the White House Office.

Second, I include an indicator for years when a new administration takes office. This is simply coded 1 for the first year of a president's term and 0 otherwise. The reason a new administration does not keep all previous staff is the divergence in preferences between the new president and the old staff. Each new president who assumes office seeks to reshape the executive establishment to facilitate their control.

Finally, I include an indicator for whether the president at the time of observation is different than the president at the time of creation of the EOP agency. Presidents will be more suspicious of the loyalties of agencies created by presidents from the opposite party.¹⁶ Since there is disagreement about the importance of parties vis-à-vis ideology, I also estimate models using changes Poole's 1998 common space scores as a measure of ideological change (see McCarty and Poole 1995, Poole 1998).

Competence

Agency competence can also vary with the percentage of civil servants. The higher the percentage of careerists in an agency, the higher the competence or expertise. Agencies with lots of expertise should be more durable than other agencies. The problem, of course, is that presidents make decisions about individual EOP units on the basis of both loyalty and competence. If a unit has too few careerists it is very responsive but does not provide as much expertise as the president would like. If a unit has too many careerists, it has a reservoir of expertise but it will not be responsive. As such, there exists an optimal level of civil service staffing inside EOP agencies such that

¹⁵ Source: Office of Personnel Management, Office of Workforce Information, Civilian Workforce Statistics, 1947-2002. I gathered this in person from microfiche at the OPM in Washington, DC. The data available is spotty and irregularly reported, so I used the data closest to an agency's creation that I could get. So, for example, the earliest OPM data I could get was from 1947. So, for all agencies created prior to 1947, I used the 1947 data. There was also a data gap in the late 1970s so that for all agencies created after 1976, I used data from 1982.

¹⁶ Since Congress plays a role in creating EOP agencies, too, I have also estimated models that include an indicator for whether the party of Congress has changed, an independent variable for unified government, and an interaction of the indicators for different majority, different president, and unified government. The greater the degree of party change, the higher the risk for the administrative agency. The results confirm what is reported here and are available upon request from the author.

increasing it will make the agency more vulnerable and decreasing it will make it more vulnerable to reorganization or termination. To capture the non-linear relationship between civil service percentage and agency stability and durability, I include civil service percentage squared in addition to plain civil service percentage. I expect that both very low civil service percentages and very high civil service percentages will increase the hazards to units in the EOP.

I use the age of the agency in years to measure the impact of competence or expertise. Agencies that have existed for a long time develop a specific expertise that makes them valuable from administration to administration. The value of this expertise can outweigh the utility losses from potential disloyalty. Since the dependent variable is time-dependent, I cannot include time as an independent variable. Rather, the impact of agency age on the hazard rate is accounted for in the functional form of the baseline hazard rate. If the value of an agency increases over time, the hazard rate of EOP agencies should be decreasing over time. I test this hypothesis both with non-parametric graphs of the hazard rate and parametric models of EOP agency hazards.

Monitoring

To measure whether monitoring difficulties matter, I include a measure of the number of employees in an agency at its start. The larger the agency, the more difficult it will be to monitor. This should increase the probability that it will take actions contrary to the president's interests and, thus, increase the likelihood of change or termination. I have aggregate employment data on 38 agencies. Agencies vary from no staff apart from people borrowed from other agencies to 2,478 employees. The average EOP agency has 272 employees to start.

Controls

Models of high vacancy rates and the likelihood of reorganization or termination require different controls. For models of vacancy rates, there are a number of factors that could increase the hazards to high vacancy rates including divided government or characteristics of the agencies themselves. I include an indicator for divided government to account for the possibility of vacancy rates due to disagreement over the limited number of appointees requiring Senate confirmation. I include an indicator for agencies created by executive action since the difficulty of reorganizing or terminating statutorily created agencies may make neglect a more popular strategy for dealing with them. I also include the log of total executive branch employment to account for the fact that presidents may have increasing pressure to staff EOP agencies to help them monitor the expanding executive branch.¹⁷

There are a number of other factors that could increase the hazards to agency reorganization or termination including the size of government, the state of the economy, a war, or characteristics of agencies themselves. Since, the size of government has been hypothesized to increase the size of the EOP, it is possible that size also increases the durability of EOP agencies. As such, I include the log of total executive branch

¹⁷ Source: Office of Personnel Management, Office of Workforce Information, Civilian Workforce Statistics (www.opm.gov).

employment.¹⁸ I have also estimated models using budget figures instead of employment figures to measure the size of government and the results corroborate my primary findings.¹⁹ Specifically, I estimated models using the log of outlays in 1996 dollars from 1939-2002.

Since economic hard times may pressure political actors to cut spending, and one prominent way political actors have historically cut costs is agency termination and reorganization (Arnold 1998), I include average yearly unemployment. Unemployment during this period averaged 5.8 percent and was as low as 1.2 percent and as high as 17 percent. I have estimated models using average yearly inflation with similar results.²⁰ I include a control for war because Congress historically has granted presidents a great deal of discretion to reorganize the bureaucracy to facilitate the war effort. The variable is an indicator variable coded 1 for the Korean War (1950-3), the Vietnam War (1965-75), and Persian Gulf War (1991).

EOP agency durability could be a function of agency characteristics. Since some agencies like the war agencies are designed to carry out a discrete, time-bound function, I include an indicator variable for all agencies that are temporary (0,1).²¹ I also include indicators for executive creation since agencies created by executive action are easier to change. Agencies created by statute require statutory termination whereas agencies created by executive action can be terminated by executive action or statute.

Methods

There are a number of ways to model hazard rates. Some techniques directly the hazard rate and others model the natural log of the survival time and others. The type of model often depends upon knowledge about the shape of the baseline hazard rate. The hazard rate is defined as:

$$h(t | t_0) = \lim_{\Delta t \rightarrow 0} \frac{\Pr\{dead\ at\ t + \Delta t\ |\ alive\ at\ t\}}{\Delta t}$$

where t is the age of the agency in years. In other words, the hazard rate is the probability that an agency will be terminated given that it has not been terminated already. I estimate a series of proportional hazard models. Proportional hazard models simply test whether the independent variables move a baseline hazard rate—which I specify—up or down and estimate by how much. In particular, the hazard rate is modeled as:

$$h(t, x) = q(t)\Theta(x)$$

where $\Theta(x)$, a function of a vector of independent variables, simply multiplies some time-varying baseline hazard rate, $q(t)$. We can choose many different functional forms for the baseline hazard rate depending upon our beliefs about what it looks like. Since I believe that the hazard rate is decreasing over time and I want to estimate a model that

¹⁸ Source: Office of Personnel Management, Office of Workforce Information, Civilian Workforce Statistics (www.opm.gov).

¹⁹ Source: Budget of the United States Government, FY2003 ([w3.access.gpo.gov/usbudget/](http://www3.access.gpo.gov/usbudget/)). Specifically, I estimated models using the log of federal government outlays, 1939-2002, in 1996 dollars. Coefficients on this variable were close to 0 and never significant.

²⁰ Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Web Site (<http://www.dol.gov>).

²¹ I have also estimated models that exclude all agencies that might be construed as temporary and the results are identical to what is reported here.

can accommodate time-varying covariates, I adopt a Gompertz specification for $q(t)$. If the ancillary parameter, X , is < 0 , this confirms a decreasing hazard rate over time.²²

IV. Results

Tables 1-3 contain the estimates of the models of EOP neglect and reorganization or termination.²³ Since there are only 54 cases, model estimates are sensitive to specification. The interpretation of the coefficients of hazard models can be a bit tricky since the dependent variable is the hazard rate. A coefficient with a positive sign indicates that a one-unit shift in the independent variables *increases* the hazard rate but *decreases* time until neglect or agency durability.²⁴ I use one-tailed tests since my hypotheses are direction but I include the standard errors for reference. Despite limitations in the data, the models perform well. In each case I can reject the null that the models do not improve the fit over a constant-only model.

Insert Table 1 Here.

Neglect

Table 1 includes estimates of models of presidential neglect as measured by abnormally high levels of agency vacancies. The models provide limited support for the hypotheses generated above. The coefficients on the presence of a new administration are the only variables that are consistently large and significant. The likelihood of substantial vacancies occurring in any EOP agency is substantially higher in the first year of a new administration. This provides some evidence that presidents seek to decrease preference divergence in their staff agencies by removing persons from the old administration. The robustness of this result likely also reflects the difficulty of filling the many positions open at the beginning of any new administration.

A bit more persuasive are the variables accounting for preference change in the White House. While the variable indicating that the president serving is from a different party than the president who created the agency is not significant, the variable which measures presidential preference change is significant in both models. Presidents are increasingly likely to neglect agencies created by their predecessors as their preferences

²² The most recent research on the shape of agency hazards demonstrates a non-monotonic hazard rate for agencies (Carpenter and Lewis 2002). All of their models demonstrate a decreasing, though non-monotonic, hazard rate. The disadvantage of the models estimated by Carpenter and Lewis 2002 is that they cannot accommodate time-varying covariates. As such, I have adopted a Gompertz specification but have replicated the results with Cox Models which make no assumptions about the shape of the hazard.

²³ All models estimated using Stata 7.0 for PC. All data and results are available upon request from the author.

²⁴ The following description given by Tuma (n.d.) is a useful primer on interpreting hazard model coefficients: To interpret the impact of the coefficients on the hazard rate of agency mortality we must remember that $\Theta(x) = \exp(\beta'x) = \prod_j \lambda_j^{x_j}$ where $\lambda_j \equiv \exp(\beta_j)$. A common interpretation of x_j is that

if it has no impact on $h(t)$, then $\beta_j = 0$ and $\lambda_j = 1$. The percentage change in the hazard rate

associated with a unit change in $x_j = 100 * (\lambda_j - 1)$. So, for example, if $\beta_j = 0.25$, then

$\lambda_j = \exp(.25) = 1.28$ and a one unit increase in x_j increases the hazard rate, $h(t)$, by

$100 * (1.28 - 1) = 28\%$.

diverge. In other words, conservative presidents are more likely to neglect agencies created by liberals and liberal presidents are more likely to neglect agencies created by conservatives. Nixon's actions towards the Office of Economic Opportunity and Clinton's actions toward both the Council on Competitiveness and the Office of National Drug Control Policy illustrate this phenomenon.

Model estimates provide very little help in determining whether older agencies have an advantage over younger agencies. The coefficient on the ancillary parameter is positive in some specifications and negative in others. Graphs of the product-limit estimates of the hazard rate actually show a relatively flat hazard rate with a few spikes at the end. Since there are so few cases, it is difficult to determine the actual impact of age on the likelihood of neglect. Models of the likelihood of reorganization and termination provide clearer evidence.

There is some preliminary evidence that the president's ability to monitor agencies determines the likelihood of neglect as well. In the two models that include measures of agency size, the coefficients are positive and marginally significant in one. Increasing the size of the agency increases the percentage of management positions left vacant. This likely reflects the difficulty presidents have taking an active oversight role in large EOP agencies.

Insert Table 2 here.

Reorganization or Termination

Tables 2-3 include model estimates of the likelihood of agency reorganization or termination. They are clearer and more robust than models of presidential neglect. The models estimate the impact of the different independent variables on $h(t)$, the hazard rate of significant organizational change (transfer, split, reorganization, abolition) as defined by Relyea 1997. Table 2 contains models estimated without data on agency employment since including employment data reduces the number of cases substantially. Table 3 includes models estimated with employment data.

Insert Table 3 here.

A number of controls produce interesting results but a full discussion is precluded by the focus of this paper. A few results are worth noting, however. First, the size of government actually *increases* the hazard rate of EOP agencies. The coefficient on executive branch employment is positive and significant in 3 out of 4 models. As the number of executive branch employees grows, the risk to EOP agencies also grows. Contrary to the expectations of past research, growth in the size of government, as measured by employment, decreases the stability and durability of EOP agencies. This suggests that the growth of government decreases the institutionalization of the presidency. It is possible that the increasing size of government has increased monitoring problems for the president government-wide and this has increased the hazard rate slightly for all administrative agencies, including those in the EOP.²⁵

Second, economic and foreign crises increase bureaucratic reshuffling in the EOP. The coefficient on unemployment rate is significant at the .10 level in 3 of 4 models and the coefficient on the war indicator is significant in all four models. Increasing unemployment by one standard deviation above the mean almost triples the hazard rate of organizational change. The hazard rate for EOP agencies quadruples during wars. In order to respond to domestic and international crises, presidents make organizational

²⁵ I thank Larry Bartels for pointing this out to me.

changes to facilitate their control. In war presidents have created and terminated agencies like the Office of Defense Mobilization and the Office for Emergency Management and in economic crisis they have created and terminated agencies like Federal Energy Office and the President's Economic Policy Board.

Insert Figure 1 Here.

As expected, the hazard rate of reorganization or termination is decreasing over time. Figure 1 graphs the raw product-limit estimates of the hazard rate. Although the estimates jump around some, the hazard rate appears to be decreasing over time. The decrease may not be monotonic, however. It may take a while for presidents to learn the defection and failure proclivities of individual units (Carpenter and Lewis 2002). Once they do, however, the hazard rate definitely decreases over time. This is confirmed by the estimated ancillary parameter coefficient in Table 1. It is negative and significantly less than 1, indicating a decreasing hazard rate. Figure 2 graphs the model estimated hazard rate. These results demonstrate that EOP agencies are more stable and durable over time. The longer an EOP agency has lived, the more likely it is to continue. EOP agencies develop expertise that makes them attractive to presidents and costly to terminate or change substantially (Hecl 1975).²⁶

Insert Figure 2 Here.

Importantly, all three measures of loyalty and responsiveness are significant in the expected direction. The closer an agency's preferences to those of the president, the more durable it is. Figure 3 graphs the impact of career service percentage on agency hazards. The relationship appears to have the expected parabolic shape. Agencies with no careerists have a higher hazard rate than those with a moderate percentage. Agencies with a high percentage of careerists also have a higher hazard rate than those agencies with a moderate percentage. This confirms both my expectation that there is an optimal level of career/non-career personnel, reflecting a balance between the president's competing priorities for both loyalty and competence, and Moe's (1985) original argument that desires for responsive competence drive presidential politicization of the executive branch.

Insert Figure 3 Here.

The chances of substantial organizational change also increase during the first year of a new president's term. For the same reason that presidents do not keep the staff of previous presidents, presidents seek to reorganize the EOP to facilitate their own control. Presidents want staff support that is loyal to them primarily not the past president and his programs. The hazard rate is 3 times higher during the first year of a new president's term.

Those agencies created by a president from the opposite party are particularly at risk. In fact, estimates suggest that agencies created by presidents from the opposite party have a hazard rate that is 6 times higher than agencies created by presidents from their own party. Agencies created by presidents from the opposite party are substantially more likely to have preferences that diverge from those of the current president. Figure 4 graphs the hazard rate of EOP agencies over time by whether the president in office is of

²⁶ Another explanation for the decreasing hazard rate is that these agencies increasingly develop relationships with clientele or patrons in Congress that protect them over time. This is truer for agencies outside the EOP than agencies inside the EOP since agencies inside the EOP ostensibly owe their loyalty to the president. That said, there may be cases like the Council on Environmental Quality where this is true.

the same party as the president that created an agency. At the beginning, there is a large disparity between the hazard rates of agencies created by presidents from the opposite party and presidents from the same party. Over time, however, this gap lessens, indicating that the party of the originating president matters less and less over time.

Insert Figure 4 Here.

Divergent preferences can come from a variety of sources, the percentage of employees that are career, loyalty to a past president, or policy preferences embedded in the organization. All three sources of divergent preferences make agencies less attractive to presidents and more at risk. The president's ability to monitor agencies can mitigate the impact of these divergent preferences. In Table 2, I reestimate the models from Table 1 using employment data from a subsample of the agencies. The coefficients are all positive and 3 are significant at the .10 level or better. This suggests that larger agencies are at greater risk than smaller agencies. Presidents have a more difficult time monitoring larger agencies and presidents cannot reign in divergent preferences when they arise. Figure 5 graphs the survival probabilities of agencies by number of employees. Agencies with employment levels that are one standard deviation below the mean have a significantly higher survival probability over time than those with employment levels that are one standard deviation above the mean.

Insert Figure 5 Here.

While the size of individual agencies increased the hazard rate, the aggregate size of the EOP did not have a consistent impact on the hazard rate. So, the evidence for monitoring difficulties increasing the hazard rate are interesting and suggestive but not conclusive. One possibility is that war agencies with large numbers of employees create this artifact. To test this, I estimated models excluding all such agencies and found the results did not change substantially. The coefficients were still positive and marginally significant. Further research needs to be conducted to investigate this further.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has presented a theory of presidential decision making about whether to use, ignore, reorganize, or discard units in the institutional presidency. It has implications both for debates about whether presidents seek neutral or responsive competence but also the literature on the institutionalization presidency. It shows that presidents pay attention to responsiveness when making decisions about what to do with EOP agencies. This should not surprise us. In order to perform their administrative responsibilities, presidents from Washington forward have relied on personal staff. Their first inclination was to choose on the basis of loyalty.²⁷ Of course, loyal presidential staff is not all that is needed for the exercise of presidential responsibilities. Presidents have sought to balance their need for loyalty with an increasing need for expertise, institutional

²⁷ Presidential staff support traditionally provided clerical assistance, political advice, and managerial oversight of relations with administrative agencies, Congress, and other political actors. In some cases this worked well. In other cases, presidents were disappointed with their staff support. Andrew Johnson's son Robert who filled the post was, according to one author, an "incurable alcoholic and womanizer" whose incompetence not only led to poor administration, but also brought a sex for pardon scandal down on the White House. In contrast, Daniel Lamont, Cleveland's "Assistant President", and George Cortelyou, McKinley's secretary, are widely regarded as having made a substantial positive impact on the administration of each man, serving as clerks, speechwriters, gatekeepers, and political liaisons (Hart 1987).

memory and experience of just the type that Heclo described. This balancing act is reflected in presidential choices to use, neglect, reorganize, or terminate EOP agencies. In sum, the evidence seems to support Terry Moe's description of what presidents want but it also demonstrates the importance presidents place on the competence that Heclo describes.

These findings have implications for our understanding of the institutionalization of the presidency. Two of the key indicators of institutionalization in political institutions are stability and adaptability leading to persistence of the organizational form. Some of the agencies in the Executive Office of the President may fit this description. The White House Office (WHO) and the Bureau of Budget (BOB) were part of the EOP in 1939 and are still part of the president's institutional universe today.²⁸ For every White House Office and BOB, however, there is an Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) that had all the marks of institutional permanence. It was created by statute with the support of a strong coalition in Congress. It had a large staff and large budget and was the nerve center of a constellation of Great Society social programs. Yet, it met its demise in the Nixon Administration.

Perhaps the fate of the OEO and other EOP units is not a fair comparison because some units in the EOP like the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Administration, and the National Security Council seem to perform "core" functions and others like the OEO, the Office of Consumer Affairs, and the Council on Environmental Quality are agenda-specific agencies. Yet, virtually every agency one might consider a "core" presidential agency was at one time an agenda agency. The Bureau of the Budget was part of a congressional agenda in the 1920s to promote economy and efficiency in administration (Arnold 1998). The National Security Council was part of the management agenda of the Republican Congress in 1947-8 and it was forced into the EOP partly in response to the personal diplomacy and informal decision making practices of Roosevelt and Truman. In addition, many "core" agencies like the Liaison Office for Personnel Management, the Office of Government Reports, and the Office of Intergovernmental Relations all had short lifespans in the EOP.

The empirical evidence demonstrates substantial volatility in the EOP. Forty-two of the 54 agencies that have been in the EOP have been abolished or substantially changed. Divergent preferences, competence and expertise, and ease of monitoring help explain this volatility. While idiosyncratic factors and unique historical sequences play a role in the creation and history of each agency, there are larger institutional incentives across presidencies that shape how all presidents view staff support. Like any relationship where a principal controls some aspect of pay, tenure, jurisdiction, and prestige, losses of efficiency arise because of divergent preferences, incompetence, and monitoring problems.²⁹ These factors shape the stability and durability of EOP units and, thus the "institutionalization" of the presidency.

²⁸ It should be noted that the White House Office itself has undergone substantial internal changes apart from a growth of staff, resources, and organization. As the closure of the AIDS Office, the Office of Women's Initiatives, and the President's Initiative for One America show, the WHO has substantial internal instability. President Bush recently added the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives and the Freedom Corps Office to its number. The BOB underwent a substantial reorganization in 1970. While these units can be pointed to as stable and durable, they have had their own moments of institutional fluctuation.

²⁹ I did not make the connection between the president's relation to his staff and a business person's connection to their employee precisely until I read Dickinson 1997 which is where this idea comes from.

Table 1. Gompertz PH Models of EOP Agency Neglect, 1939-2002

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Preference Divergence and Competence</i>				
New Administration (0,1)	0.65** (0.24)	0.78** (0.30)	0.65** (0.29)	0.75** (0.25)
Change in Party in White House (0,1) ¹	-0.07 (0.26)	0.64** (0.37)	0.49* (0.36)	0.06 (0.27)
<i>Monitoring</i>				
Ln(Agency Employees at Start)	--	0.09 (0.11)	--	0.15* (0.10)
<i>Controls, Constant, and Ancillary Parameter</i>				
Divided Government (0,1)	-0.06 (0.26)	-0.47* (0.31)	-0.25 (0.30)	-0.28 (0.27)
Created by Executive Action (0,1)	-0.29 (0.48)	-0.17 (0.44)	-0.26 (0.39)	-0.17 (0.27)
Ln(Executive Branch Employment)	-0.50 (0.68)	1.46 (1.99)	1.06 (1.84)	-0.24 (0.72)
Constant	1.38 (5.19)	-13.85 (15.26)	-10.51 (14.01)	-1.15 (5.57)
γ	0.01* (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01* (0.01)
Number of Observations	613	406	481	524
Number of Agencies	54	29	45	37
Number of Failures	72	47	52	66
X^2 (5, 6 df)	8.43*	15.76**	10.35**	13.30**

Note: Dependent variable: $h(t)$. *significant at the 0.10 level; **significant at that 0.05 level in one-tailed test of significance. ¹Models 2,3 use absolute difference of Poole common space scores at time agency was created and time of observation instead of change in party in the White House.

Table 2. Gompertz PH Models of EOP Agency Stability, 1939-2002

Variable	Coefficient Estimates			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Loyalty and Competence</i>				
Percent Civil Service	-4.86** (2.39)	--	--	-6.05** (2.57)
Percent Civil Service Squared	5.18** (2.64)	--	--	6.60** (2.89)
New Administration (0,1)	--	1.24** (0.32)	--	1.49** (0.47)
Change in Party in White House (0,1)	--	--	1.59** (0.37)	1.43** (0.52)
<i>Controls, Constant, and Ancillary Parameter</i>				
Ln(Executive Branch Employment)	1.95 (1.56)	2.69** (1.03)	2.33** (1.21)	2.91** (1.69)
Unemployment Rate	0.21* (0.13)	0.02** (0.11)	0.12 (0.10)	0.37** (0.15)
War (0,1)	0.76** (0.46)	0.66** (0.39)	0.69** (0.38)	1.42** (0.54)
Temporary (0,1)	0.44 (0.67)	0.45 (0.43)	0.41 (0.43)	0.40 (0.67)
Created by Executive Action (0,1)	0.63* (0.48)	0.88** (0.34)	1.11** (0.34)	0.83** (0.50)
Constant	-18.81* (12.35)	-25.09** (8.39)	-21.76** (9.55)	-28.55** (13.68)
γ	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.10** (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)
Number of Observations	542	613	613	542
Number of Agencies	35	54	54	35
Number of Terminations	24	42	42	24
X^2 (7,10 df)	13.78**	34.29**	37.41**	36.83**

Note: Dependent variable: $h(t)$. *significant at the 0.10 level; **significant at that 0.05 level in one-tailed test of significance.

Table 3. Gompertz PH Models of EOP Agency Stability With Employment Figures

Variable	Coefficient Estimates			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Loyalty and Competence</i>				
Percent Civil Service	-6.92** (2.94)	--	--	-9.33** (3.33)
Percent Civil Service Squared	6.72** (3.17)	--	--	9.86** (3.65)
New Administration (0,1)	--	1.01** (0.42)	--	1.07** (0.51)
Change in Party in White House (0,1)	--	--	1.34** (0.49)	1.83** (0.64)
<i>Information Asymmetry and Monitoring</i>				
Ln(Agency Employees at Start)	0.37* (0.23)	0.21** (0.12)	0.16* (0.12)	0.25 (0.23)
<i>Controls, Constant, and Ancillary Parameter</i>				
Ln(Executive Branch Employment)	2.68* (1.79)	4.10** (1.50)	3.82** (1.68)	3.67** (1.92)
Unemployment Rate	0.25** (0.14)	0.27** (0.14)	0.19* (0.13)	0.39** (0.16)
War (0,1)	0.63 (0.50)	0.82* (0.53)	0.78* (0.51)	1.28** (0.58)
Temporary (0,1)	0.49 (0.67)	0.66 (0.57)	0.62 (0.58)	0.23 (0.68)
Created by Executive Action (0,1)	1.14** (0.56)	1.03** (0.48)	1.12** (0.48)	1.39** (0.60)
Constant	-26.17** (14.17)	-37.43** (12.34)	-34.52** (13.45)	-35.42** (15.56)
γ	-0.04* (0.03)	-0.05** (0.03)	-0.09** (0.04)	-0.08** (0.04)
Number of Observations	509	524	524	509
Number of Agencies	31	37	37	31
Number of Terminations	20	25	25	20
χ^2 (8,11 df)	17.91**	24.84**	26.82**	35.32**

Note: Dependent variable: h(t). *significant at the 0.10 level; **significant at that 0.05 level in one-tailed test of significance.

Figure 1. Product-Limit Estimates of Hazard Rate

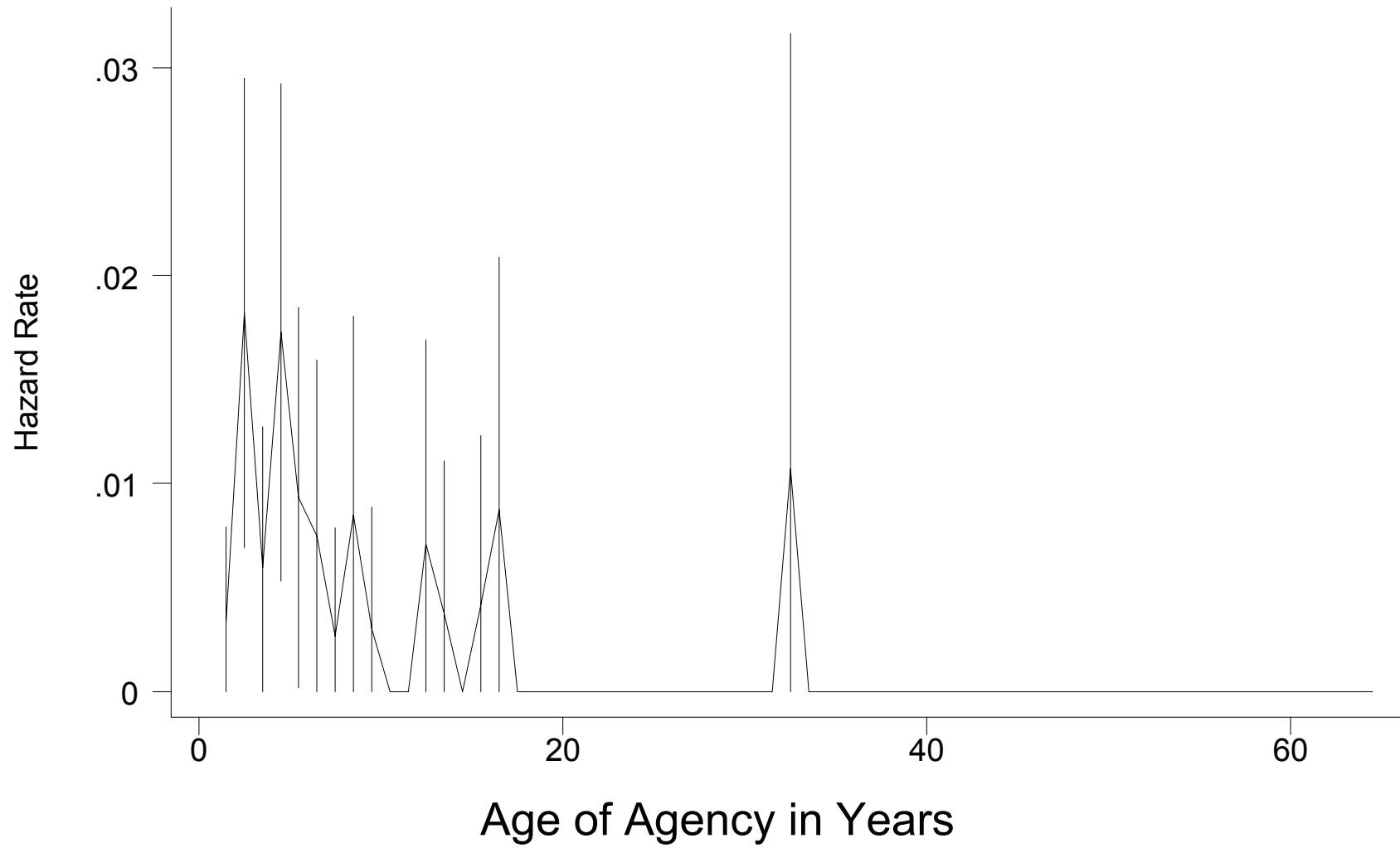


Figure 2. Estimates of Hazard Rate from Gompertz PH Model

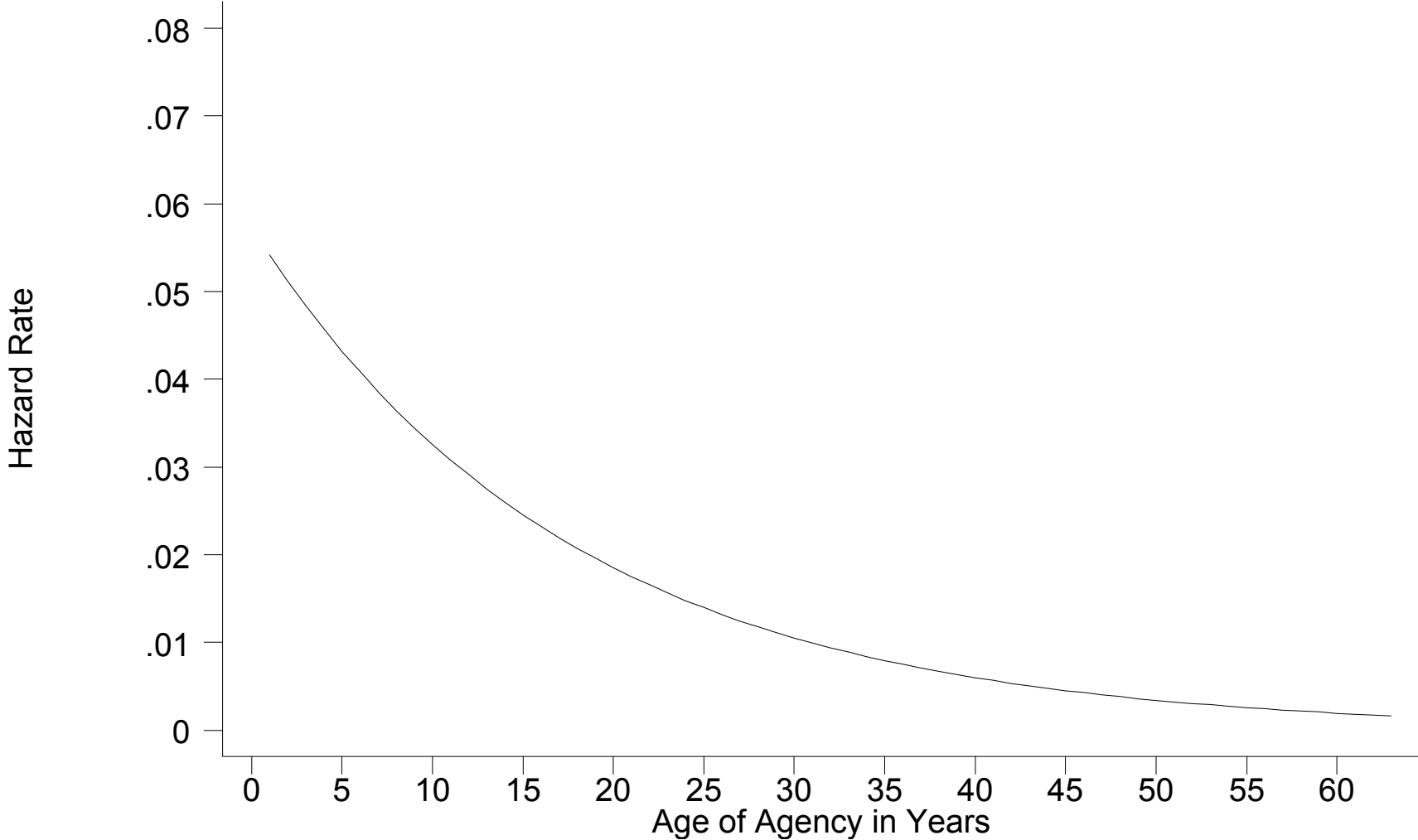


Figure 3. Hazard Rate for EOP Agencies by Percent Civil Service

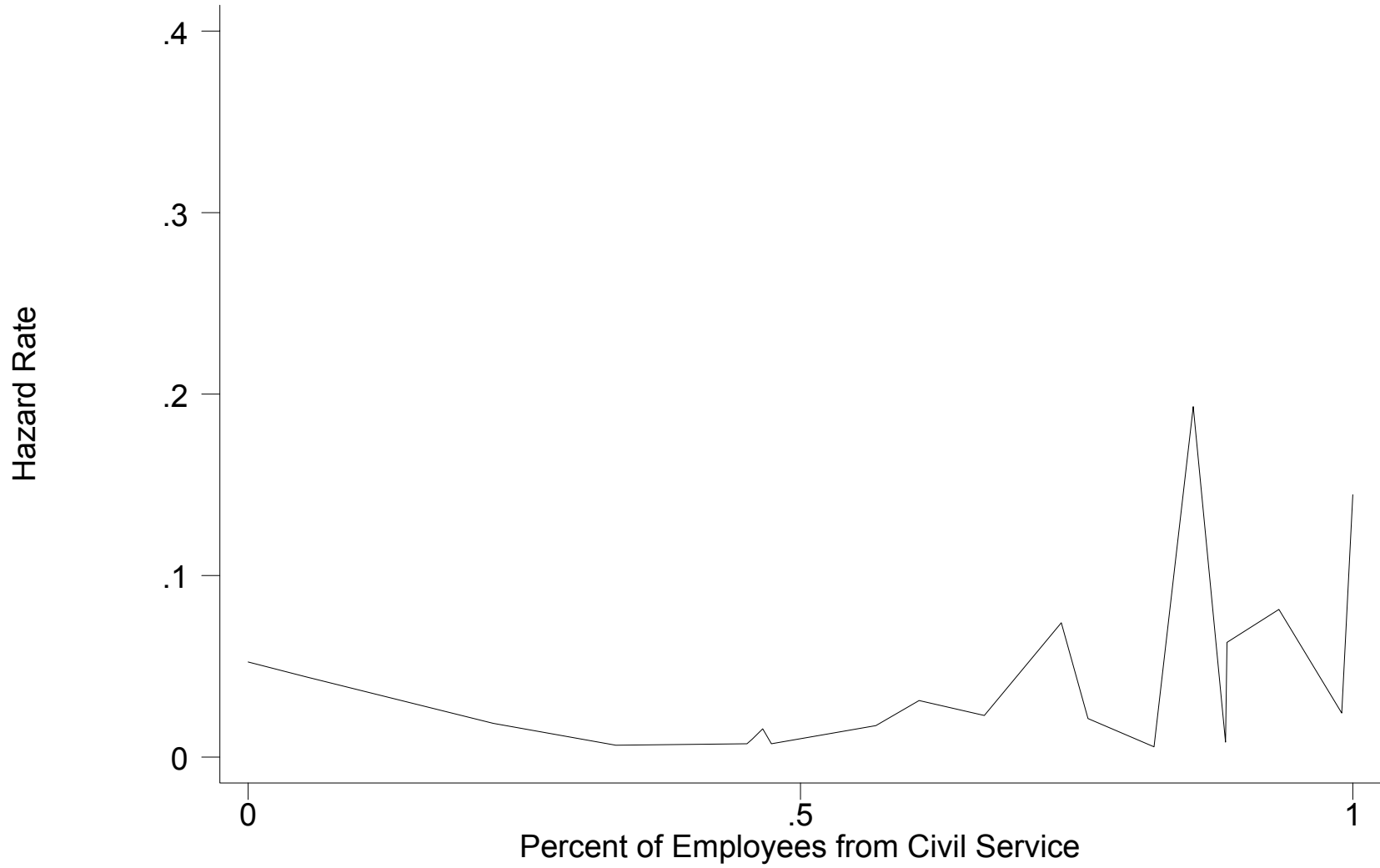


Figure 4. Hazard Rate With Party Change in Presidency

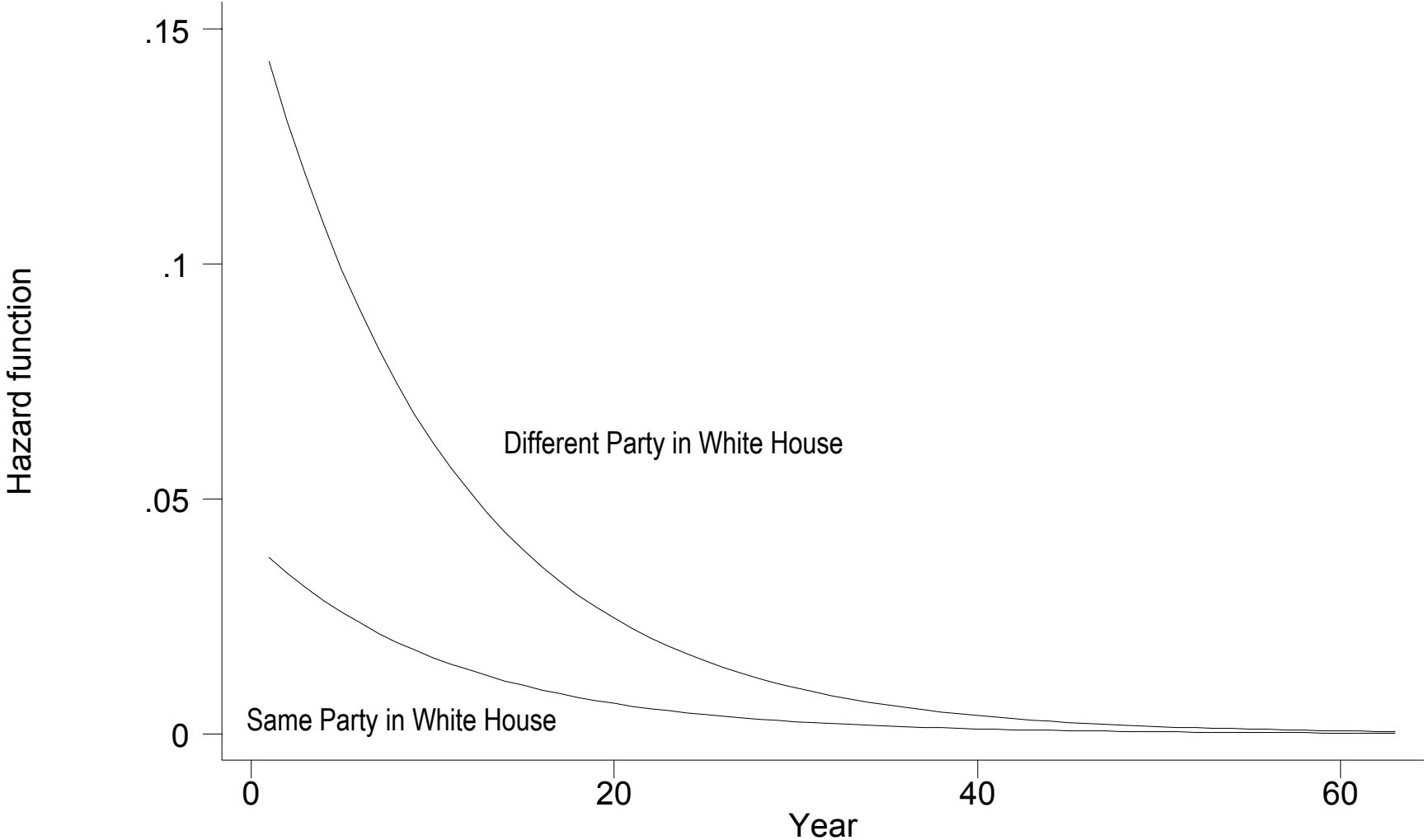
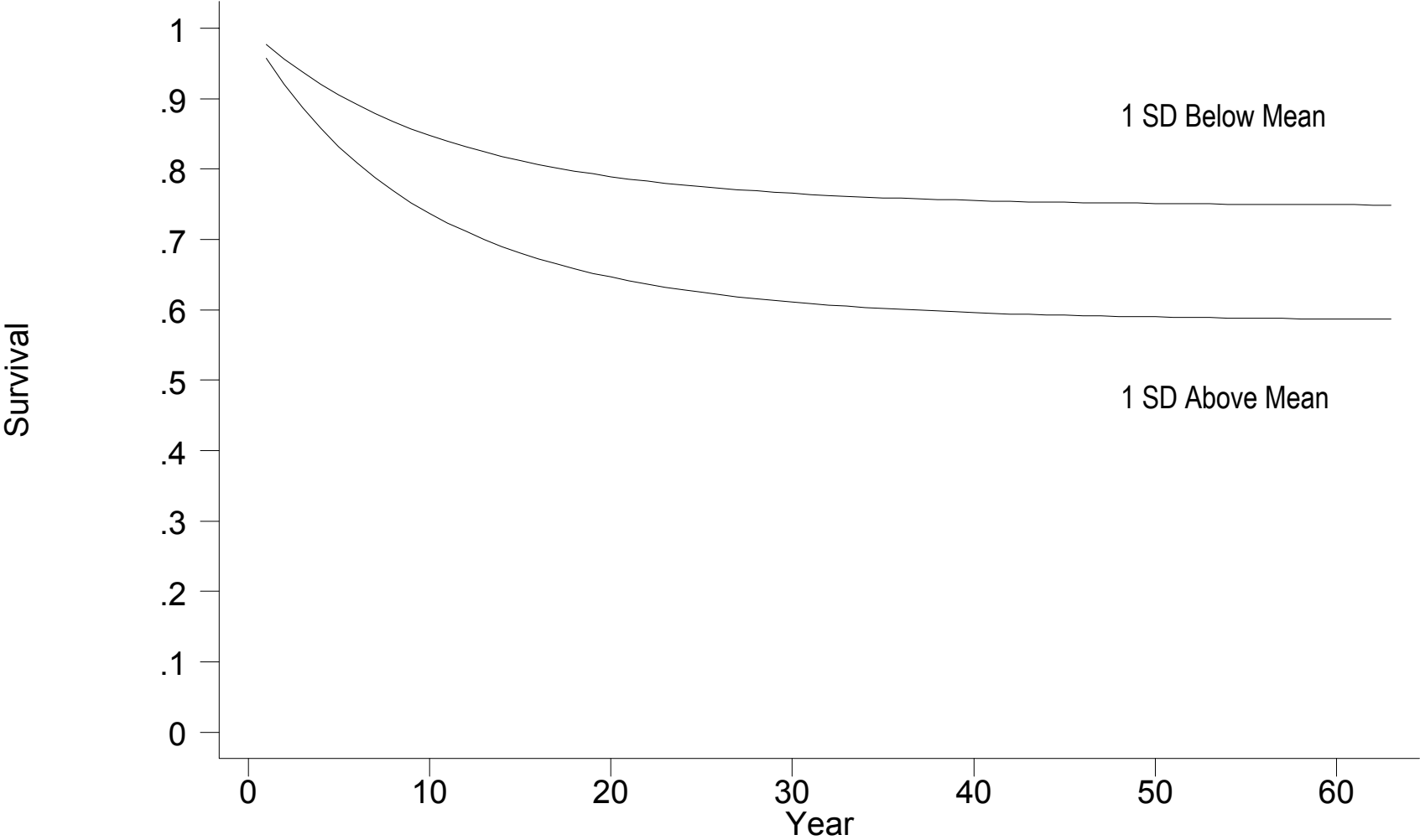


Figure 5. Survival Probabilities By Number of Employees



Appendix A. EOP Agencies, 1939-2002

Name	StartYear	EndYear	Duration	Budget	Employees
Bureau of the Budget	1939	1970	31	480710	102.7
Liaison Office for Personnel Management	1939	1953	14		
National Resources Planning Board	1939	1943	4	750000	102.9
Office of Government Reports	1939	1942	3	850000	172
White House Office	1939	2002	63	213160	37
Office for Emergency Management	1940	1943	3	1000048	2355
Committee for Congested Production Areas	1943	1944	1	669000	30.7
War Refugee Board	1944	1945	1	2305909	5.6
Council of Economic Advisers	1946	2002	56	275000	30
Office of Government Reports	1946	1948	2	230000	156
National Security Council	1949	2002	53	112637	31
National Security Resources Board	1949	1953	4	2474930	280
Office of Defense Mobilization	1950	1953	3	2750000	384
Mutual Security Agency	1951	1953	2		
Telecommunications Adviser to the President	1951	1953	2		
Office of Defense Mobilization	1953	1958	5		
Operations Coordinating Board	1953	1961	8	700194	
National Aeronautics and Space Council	1958	1973	15	500000	
Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization	1958	1961	3	66046000	1494
Office of Emergency Planning	1961	1973	12	9066000	
Office of Science and Technology	1962	1973	11	930000	50
Office of the Special Representative for Trade Negotiations	1963	2002	39	562000	30
National Council on the Arts	1964	1965	1	25000	
Office of Economic Opportunity	1964	1975	11	211234000	2478
National Council on Marine Resources and Engineering Development	1966	1971	5	1100000	25
Council for Rural Affairs	1969	1970	1		
Council for Urban Affairs	1969	1970	1		
Council on Environmental Quality	1969	2002	33	1378000	54
Office of Intergovernmental Relations	1969	1972	3	154000	9
Domestic Council	1970	1977	7	945000	52
Office of Consumer Affairs	1970	1973	3	693000	35
Office of Management and Budget	1970	2002	32	11676000	653
Office of Telecommunications Policy	1970	1977	7	1817000	48
Council on International Economic Policy	1971	1977	6	658000	29
Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention	1971	1975	4	1079000	172
Council on Economic Policy	1973	1974	1		
Energy Policy Office	1973	1974	1		23
Federal Energy Office	1973	1974	1	8892000	1040
Federal Property Council	1973	1977	4		
National Energy Office	1973	1973	0		
Council on Wage and Price Stability	1974	1981	7	494000	41
Energy Resources Council	1974	1977	3		
Presidential Clemency Board	1974	1975	1		9
President's Economic Policy Board	1974	1977	3		
Federal Energy Office	1976	1976	0		
Office of Drug Abuse Policy	1976	1977	1	250000	0
Office of Science and Technology Policy	1976	2002	26	1811000	22
Domestic Policy Staff	1977	1992	15	1501000	40
Office of Administration	1977	2002	25	2954000	149

National Critical Materials Council	1984	1993	9	71000	3
National Space Council	1988	1993	5	727000	7
Office of National Drug Control Policy	1988	2002	14	198000	40
Office of Policy Development	1993	2002	9	3308000	39
Office of Homeland Security	2001	2002	1		100

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