

University of Hamburg
Department of Social and Economic Sciences
Political Science
24-103.23 Themen der Vergleichenden Regierungslehre (A)
Dr. Verena Fetscher

Topics in Comparative Politics

Syllabus Spring 2022

TIME DATE ONLINE

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Course Outline

The course introduces students to central topics in comparative politics and has three main parts. Part I focuses on one key element of democracies: elections. We will discuss different aspects of electoral systems and how they influence party systems and government responsiveness. Part II evaluates different regime types. We discuss central theories related to democratization, democratic consolidation and dictatorship. Part III assesses current societal challenges from a comparative politics perspective. Our interests will lie in questions on economic inequality and redistribution, climate change and migration.

Requirements

Readings. You must read the assigned literature thoroughly before class. Readings are diverse and cover a wide span of topics. Learning takes place through a critical and active engagement with the course material.

When you read the literature, answer the following questions (if applicable):

- What is the political phenomena that the author is interested in?
- What is the research question?
- What are the central concepts?
- What is the theoretical argument?
- Which hypotheses do(es) the author(s) propose?

- How are the central concepts operationalized?
- Which research design do(es) the author(s) use in order to test the hypotheses empirically?
- Do the results support the hypothesis?
- Which conclusions do the authors draw?

All required readings are available on **OpenOlat**. Here you also find several reading questions for each session. I expect you to work on these questions. Aim to add at least two answers (or responses to existing comments) each week. Non-participation means that you will not pass the seminar.

Analytical Summary. Assess the main structure of the readings and respond to the questions above. Work with all the required readings and at least one recommended reading. Each student submits **two analytical summaries** to the instructor during the course of the seminar. Each analytical summary should not be longer than 3-4 pages (double spaced, 12pt font, justified text, header specifying university, course, lecturer, your name and date, title) and focus on the required class readings. Analytical summaries should should a) motivate the topic and identify the overarching research question (from the readings) in the introduction, b) assess the key literature and discuss similarities and differences between the readings, and c) elaborate on weaknesses or blind spots of the literature and discuss why it matters for the research question (focus on one central point and strictly avoid opinion statements). Analytical summaries end with a brief conclusion.

Analytical summaries are structured along the following points:

- Introduction (1 point)
 - Motivate the topic with a current example (e.g. news report or public debate)
 - Identify the research question(s) in the literature
 - Overview
- Assessment and contextualization of the key literature (2 points)
 - What are the most important approaches on the topic?
 - How do the (course) papers relate to each other (focus on key concepts)?
 - Do they criticize, complement, affirm each other?
- Discussion (2 points)
 - E.g.:

- * Do the arguments resonate with what you know about reality?
 - * Are there other interpretations of the findings?
 - * Are the concepts properly defined?
 - * Problems with how theoretical concepts are measured empirically (operationalization)?
 - * Data considerations? E.g. case selection? Does the time period under investigation matter?
 - * Theoretical or empirical implications of the argument that have not been assessed?
- Conclusion (1 point)
 - Summarize your main points
 - Anticipate possible weaknesses your audience might raise

The summaries are to be uploaded on OpenOlat no later than Friday, 5pm, **before** the respective session. The document title is in the format

Lastname_Firstname_Essay_Number and is being submitted as a PDF. I accept summaries in English and German.

Absences: You are expected to attend every class. Please inform the instructor in advance if you will not be able to attend a session. The class is organized in a cumulative manner, it is necessary for you to catch up with the material in case of missing a session.

Plagiarism: The University's minimum penalty for plagiarism is to fail the course. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion (Exmatrikulation) from the University.

Suggestions: Suggestions for improvement are welcome at any time.

Grading

I will evaluate your analytical summaries with respect to three criteria: a) frame (introduction and conclusion), b) assessment and contextualization of the key literature, c) discussion. For each criterion you can receive 2 points. I deduct 2 points from your total score if structure, form and style do not meet the criteria. Additionally, I award 2 points for actively taking part in the course. The maximum total points you can receive for this course is 14.

Schedule

April 4	Introduction
April 11	Electoral Institutions: Party Systems
April 18	No Class (Easter)
April 25	Electoral Institutions: Government Responsiveness
May 2	Electoral Institutions: Quotas
May 9	Democratization and Modernization I
May 16	Democratization and Modernization II
May 23	No Class (Break)
May 30	Dictatorship
June 6	No Class (Pentecost)
June 13	Welfare States Politics
June 20	Populism and Radical Right Support
June 27	Sustainability and Climate Policy
July 4	Immigration and Integration
July 11	Final Discussion

1. Introduction

Recommended:

- P. Hall and R. Taylor. “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms”. *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 936–957

2. Electoral Institutions: Party Systems

Required:

- Pippa Norris. *Electoral Engineering. Voting Rules and Political Behavior*. Cambridge University Press, Apr. 18, 2009, Ch. 2, 4, 5

Recommended:

- Octavio Amorim Neto and Gary W. Cox. “Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties”. *American Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 1 (1997): 149–174

- William Roberts Clark and Matt Golder. “Rehabilitating Duverger’s Theory: Testing the mechanical and strategic modifying effects of electoral laws”. *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 6 (2006): 679–708
- Thomas Fujiwara. “A Regression Discontinuity Test of Strategic Voting and Duverger’s Law”. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6, numbers 3-4 (2011): 197–233

3. Electoral Institutions: Government Responsiveness

Required:

- Matt Golder and Benjamin Ferland. “Electoral systems and citizen-elite ideological congruence”. In *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*, ed. by Erik S. Herron, Robert J. Pekkanen, and Matthew S. Shugart. Oxford University Press, 2018
- Matt Golder and Jacek Stramski. “Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions”. *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 1 (2010): 90–106

Recommended:

- Michael Becher and Irene Menéndez González. “Electoral Reform and Trade-Offs in Representation”. *American Political Science Review* 113, no. 3 (2019): 694–709
- André Blais and Marc André Bodet. “Does Proportional Representation Foster Closer Congruence Between Citizens and Policy Makers?” *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 10 (2006): 1243–1262

4. Electoral Institutions: Quotas

Required:

- Pippa Norris. *Electoral Engineering. Voting Rules and Political Behavior*. Cambridge University Press, Apr. 18, 2009, Ch. 8, 9
- Mona Lena Krook. “Electoral systems and women’s representation”. In *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*, ed. by E. S. Herron, R. J. Pekkanen, and M. S. Shugart, 175. Oxford University Press, 2018

Recommended:

- Diana Z. O’Brien and Johanna Rickne. “Gender Quotas and Women’s Political Leadership”. *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 1 (2016): 112–126
- Rafaela M. Dancygier et al. “Why Are Immigrants Underrepresented in Politics? Evidence from Sweden”. *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 04 (2015): 703–

- Rikhil R. Bhavnani. “Do Electoral Quotas Work after They Are Withdrawn? Evidence from a Natural Experiment in India”. *American Political Science Review* 103, no. 01 (2009): 23–35

5. Democratization and Modernization I

Required:

- Barbara Geddes. “What Causes Democratization”. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. by Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes. Oxford University Press, 2009
- Seymour Martin Lipset. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy”. *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (1959): 69–105

Recommended:

- Ben W. Ansell and David J. Samuels. *Inequality and Democratization: An Elite-Competition Approach*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2014
- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006
- Carles Boix. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003
- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi. “Modernization: Theories and Facts”. *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (1997): 155–183

6. Democratization and Modernization II

Required:

- Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel. “Changing Mass Priorities: The Link between Modernization and Democracy”. *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 2 (2010): 551–567
- Larry Diamond. “Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation”. *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 3 (1994): 4–17

Recommended:

- Gabriel A Almond and Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963, Ch.

1, 15

- Robert Putnam. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993

7. Dictatorship

Required:

- Milan W. Svobik. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. Cambridge University Press, 2009, Ch. 1, 2, 3 (feel free to ignore section 3.2.)
- Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. “Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism”. *Journal of democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51–65

Recommended:

- Jennifer Gandhi. “Dictatorial Institutions and their Impact on Economic Growth”. *European Journal of Sociology* 49, no. 1 (2008): 3–30
- Jennifer Gandhi. *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*. Cambridge University Press, 2008

8. Welfare State Politics

Required:

- Philipp Rehm. “The Future of Welfare State Politics”. *Political Science Research and Methods* 8, no. 2 (2020): 386–390
- Walter Korpi and Joakim Palme. “The Paradox of Redistribution and Strategies of Equality: Welfare State Institutions, Inequality, and Poverty in the Western Countries”. *American Sociological Review* 63, no. 5 (1998): 661–687

Recommended:

- Pablo Beramendi and Philipp Rehm. “Who Gives, Who Gains? Progressivity and Preferences”. *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 4 (2016): 529–563
- Peter A. Hall and David W. Soskice. *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford Scholarship Online. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 *Introduction*
- Margarita Estevez-Abe, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice. “Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State”. In *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, ed. by Peter A. Hall and David Soskice, 145:145–183. 2001

- Gø sta Esping-Andersen. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990

9. Populism and Radical Right Support

Required:

- Sarah Engler and David Weisstanner. “The Threat of Social Decline: Income Inequality and Radical Right Support”. *Journal of European Public Policy* 28, no. 2 (2021): 153–173
- Noam Gidron and Peter A. Hall. “Populism as a Problem of Social Integration”. *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 7 (2019): 1027–1059

Recommended:

- Pippa Norris. “Measuring Populism Worldwide”. *Party Politics* 26, no. 6 (2020): 697–717
- Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig. “The Trade Origins of Economic Nationalism: Import Competition and Voting Behavior in Western Europe”. *American Journal of Political Science* 62, no. 4 (2018): 936–953
- Luigi Guiso et al. “Populism: Demand and Supply”. *Working Paper* (2017)

10. Sustainability and Climate Policy

Required:

- Matto Mildemberger and Dustin Tingley. “Beliefs about Climate Beliefs: The Importance of Second-Order Opinions for Climate Politics”. *British Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 4 (2019): 1279–1307
- Michael M Bechtel and Kenneth F Scheve. “Mass support for global climate agreements depends on institutional design”. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 110, no. 34 (2013): 13763–13768

Recommended:

- Henning Finseraas, Bjørn Høyland, and Martin G. Søyland. “Climate Politics in Hard Times: How Local Economic Shocks Influence MPs Attention to Climate Change”. *European Journal of Political Research* n/a, no. n/a (Aug. 7, 2020)
- Leah C. Stokes. “Electoral Backlash against Climate Policy: A Natural Experiment on Retrospective Voting and Local Resistance to Public Policy”. *American Journal of Political Science* 60, no. 4 (2015): 958–974

- Dustin Tingley and Michael Tomz. “Conditional Cooperation and Climate Change”. *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 3 (2013): 344–368
- Thomas Bernauer. “Climate Change Politics”. *Annual Review of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (2013): 421–448
- Kathryn Harrison and Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom. “The Comparative Politics of Climate Change”. *Global Environmental Politics* 7, no. 4 (2007): 1–18

11. Immigration and Integration

Required:

- Henning Finseraas and Andreas Kotsadam. “Does Personal Contact with Ethnic Minorities Affect Anti-immigrant Sentiments? Evidence from a Field Experiment”. *European Journal of Political Research* 56, no. 3 (2017): 703–722
- Rafaela M. Dancygier. *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010 Ch. 2 and Ch. 9

Recommended:

- Dominik Hangartner et al. “Does Exposure to the Refugee Crisis Make Natives More Hostile?” *American Political Science Review* 113, no. 2 (2019): 442–455
- Sergi Pardos-Prado and Carla Xena. “Skill Specificity and Attitudes toward Immigration”. *American Journal of Political Science* 63, no. 2 (2019): 286–304
- Alberto Alesina, Armando Miano, and Stefanie Stantcheva. *Immigration and Redistribution*. 0898-2937. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2018

12. Final Discussion