

University of Hamburg
Chair of Comparative Politics
Prof. Dr. Vera Eva Troeger
Instructor: Verena Fetscher
Fall 2019

Political Representation and Economic Inequality

Syllabus

Monday, 14 October 2019 - 27 January 2020, 10.15pm - 11.45pm

VMP 5; WiWi 0079

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Course Outline

The seminar introduces students to empirical research on political representation and economic inequality. The theoretical idea that the interest of each person is given equal consideration in political decision-making stands at the very core of democratic governance. By now, there is strong evidence that policy-making in some democracies is biased towards the wealthy and better-off parts of society, and unequal representation has been found for legislators, party platforms, national policy and state policy. To complicate the situation even further, research also shows that the gap in political participation keeps widening.

In the course of the seminar, we will assess some of the most relevant research in the field. Who are the underrepresented? Why are they underrepresented? What role do political institutions play? How does economic inequality come in? Finally, how can we link the literature on political representation to the current rise in populism across advanced democracies? Students will become familiar with the theoretical background of equal representation, and they will critically evaluate analytical approaches, research strategies and methodology in the seminar readings.

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 is the theoretical argument?
- Which hypotheses do(es) the author(s) propose?
- How are the central concepts operationalized?
- Which methodological approach do(es) the author(s) use in order to test the hypotheses empirically?
- How is the empirical model estimated?
- What are the empirical results?
- Do the results support the hypothesis?
- Which conclusions do the authors draw?
- Are you convinced that the empirical tests prove the theory? Why, why not?

Analytical summary. Assess the main structure of the readings (marked with *) and give answers to the questions above. Each student submits 3 analytical summaries to the instructor during the course of the seminar. Analytical summaries are structured along the following points:

- Phenomena of interest
- Research question
- Theoretical argument
- Hypotheses
- Operationalization
- Method
- Empirical model
- Results
- Assessment

Analytical summaries should be no longer than 2-3 pages (1,5 spaced, Times New Roman 12pt, formatted as justified text) and be sent to the instructor no later than Friday, 5pm, before the respective session.

Criticism. Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the readings. Be prepared to discuss at least two points of criticism in class.

Presentation. Each student will give a presentation of one of the seminar readings (marked with *). Guidelines:

- Introduction
 - Motivate the topic with a current example
 - Provide the research question
 - Summarize the argument
- Methodology
 - How are the theoretical concepts operationalized
 - Which data is being used
 - What are the results
- Discussion
 - What is the contribution of the reading
 - What are the core weaknesses (discuss one or two points)
 - Suggestions for further research

Presentations should take no longer than 15-20 minutes. Please send the slides to the instructor one week in advance (Tuesday morning the latest) and incorporate feedback.

Term Paper. The term paper is due on Friday, 28 February, 10am. We will discuss further details in the course of the term.

Please note that the fulfillment of the previous requirements, as well as regular attendance, is necessary in order to be accepted to take the term paper.

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.

Cheating. 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.

Office hours. Tuesdays, 10.00 am - 12.00 am. By appointment.

Schedule

October 14	Introduction
October 21	Unequal Participation
October 28	Unequal Democracy
November 4	Descriptive Representation
November 11	Organized Interests
November 18	Inequality and Political Participation
November 25	Comparative Perspective
December 2	Legitimacy and Beliefs
December 9	Preferences and Fairness
December 16	Perceptions and Information

December 23	Christmas Break
December 30	Christmas Break

January 6	Income Mobility
January 13	Identity and Ethnicity
January 20	Research Workshop
January 27	Discussion

Session 1: Introduction

Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, *Ch.1*

Robert A. Dahl. 2006. *On Political Equality*. New Haven, UNITED STATES: Yale University Press, *Ch. 1*

Session 2: Unequal Participation

H. E. Brady, S. Verba, and K. L. Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89 (2): 271–294

- * Frederick Solt. 2008. "Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement." *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (1): 48–60

Session 3: Unequal Democracy

Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Unequal Democracy*. 2nd ed. Princeton University Press, *Ch1, Ch.3*

- * Martin Gilens. 2012. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press and New York : Russell Sage Foundation, *Ch.3*

Session 4: Descriptive Representation

Rafaela M. Dancygier et al. 2015. "Why Are Immigrants Underrepresented in Politics? Evidence from Sweden." *American Political Science Review* 109 (04): 703–724

- * Jane Mansbridge. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent" Yes"." *The Journal of politics* 61 (3): 628–657

Session 5: Organized Interests

Michael Becher, Daniel Stegmueller, and Konstantin Käppner. 2018. "Local Union Organization and Law Making in the US Congress." *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 2 (February): 539–554

- * Sung Eun Kim and Yotam Margalit. 2017. "Informed Preferences? The Impact of Unions on Workers' Policy Views." *American Journal of Political Science* 61, no. 3 (July): 728–743

Session 6: Inequality and Political Polarization

Nolan M. McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2016. *Polarized America : The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. Second. Walras-Pareto Lectures. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, *Ch.2, Ch.3*

- * Morris P. Fiorina and Samuel J. Abrams. 2008. "Political Polarization in the American Public." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11, no. 1 (May): 563–588

Session 7: Comparative Perspective

Larry M Bartels. 2017. "Political Inequality in Affluent Democracies: The Social Welfare Deficit." In *4th Conference in Political Economy & Political Science (Assessing Democratic Institutions)*, Toulouse, March, 23–24

- * Nathalie Giger, Jan Rosset, and Julian Bernauer. 2012. "The Poor Political Representation of the Poor in Comparative Perspective." *Representation* 48, no. 1 (April): 47–61

Session 8: Legitimacy and Beliefs

Kris-Stella Trump. 2018. "Income Inequality Influences Perceptions of Legitimate Income Differences." *British Journal of Political Science* 48 (4): 929–952

- * Jonathan JB Mijs. 2019. "The Paradox of Inequality: Income Inequality and Belief in Meritocracy Go Hand in Hand." *Socio-Economic Review*

Session 9: Preferences and Fairness

Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Unequal Democracy*. 2nd ed. Princeton University Press, Ch.5

- * Ingvild Almås, Alexander W. Cappelen, and Bertil Tungodden. 2019. "Cutthroat Capitalism versus Cuddly Socialism: Are Americans More Meritocratic and Efficiency-Seeking than Scandinavians?" *Journal of Political Economy* (July)

Session 10: Perceptions and Information

Vladimir Gimpelson and Daniel Treisman. 2018. "Misperceiving Inequality." *Economics & Politics* 30 (1): 27–54

- * Ilyana Kuziemko et al. 2015. "How Elastic Are Preferences for Redistribution? Evidence from Randomized Survey Experiments." *American Economic Review* 105 (4): 1478–1508

Session 11: Income Mobility and Future Expectations

David Rueda and Daniel Stegmueller. 2019. *Who Wants What?: Redistribution Preferences in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Ch.2, Ch.3

- * Alberto Alesina, Stefanie Stantcheva, and Edoardo Teso. 2018. "Intergenerational Mobility and Preferences for Redistribution." *American Economic Review* 108 (2): 521–54

Session 12: Identity and Ethnicity

David Rueda. 2018. "Food Comes First, Then Morals: Redistribution Preferences, Parochial Altruism, and Immigration in Western Europe." *The Journal of Politics* 80 (1): 225–239

- * Martin Gilens. 2003. "How the Poor Became Black The Racialization of American Poverty in the Mass Media." In *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*, edited by Sanford F. Schram, Joe Brian Soss, and Richard Carl Fording, 101–130. Ann Arbor, US: University of Michigan Press

Session 13: Research Workshop

What explains the rise of populism? How does it connect to this seminar's topics?

Session 14: Discussion