

17.515. Comparative Electoral Politics

Spring 2009

Professor Orit Kedar

Monday, Wednesday, 9:30-11:00

Room E51-390

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Office hours: Wednesday, 3-4 or by appointment

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Course site: <http://stellar.mit.edu/S/course/17/sp08/17.515/>

Course description

The course discusses classic issues and current topics in electoral politics. The focus is thematic, but the issues addressed will be discussed in the context of particular case studies. Examples of the topics discussed are: party systems, old and new political cleavages, representation, electoral politics in divided societies, voter attitudes, immigration, the extreme right, and electoral politics in multi-level governance systems.

Books and reading materials

The following book is on reserve and available for purchase at the COOP:

Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair. 2005. *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments*. New York: McGraw-Hill Fourth edition.

In addition to this book, students will have to subscribe to the *Financial Times*. Although our class discussions will not be chats about politics, students will be expected to keep up with current events, which we will incorporate into our discussions. The *Financial Times* (see also: www.ft.com) offers an excellent coverage of world politics. It does so in a concise and analytic fashion. If you are taking this class, you can get a student rate for either the on-line or the paper edition by filling out the form at: <http://news.ft.com/Education/Portal/docs/EJJ68X0-SEMESTER.pdf>

Assignments

Attendance and participation: attendance, participation, and contribution to the discussions are an important part of the course requirements. You are expected to attend the session having done the readings and reflected upon them and to contribute to the discussion. *Please let me know ahead of time if you have to miss a session.*

Midterm exam. In-class mid-term exam on March 18th. Details to follow.

Two short response papers. Two short response papers (about two pages each), developing a theme in the relevant readings. Papers are due on Wednesday, April 22th, and Wednesday, April 29th at the beginning of class.

Outline of research paper: By Friday, April 10 at 4PM please hand in one page of

preliminary research about the topic of your research paper.

Final research paper: a research paper, due on May 13th, the last day of class.

Grading

The grade will be a combination of attendance and participation (10%), mid-term exam (25%), response papers (20%), paper outline (10%), and final paper (35%).

Additional resources:

The following resources helpful for following international politics and recent elections:

- The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/>
- International Herald Tribune: <http://www.iht.com/pages/index.php>
- EU Observer: <http://euobserver.com/>
- Lijphart's elections archive: <http://dodgson.ucsd.edu/lij/>
- Parliamentary elections around the world: <http://www.electionworld.org/>

The *European Journal of Political Research* publishes political data about elections from various democracies in its last issue every year. The journal's webpage is: <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0304-4130>

Wednesday, February 4 Introduction

Electoral regimes and electoral laws

Monday, February 9 **Parliamentary and presidential democracy**

GLM, Chapters 2,3

Wednesday, February 11 **Executives, governments, cabinets, and coalitions**

GLM, Chapter 12

Monday, February 16 President Day, no class.

Tuesday February 17 **Electoral systems I**

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 8 (Pp. 142-170)

In class:

Analysis of principles/cases:
The UK

The Netherlands

Wednesday, February 18 **Electoral systems II**

In class:

Analysis of principles/cases:

Germany

Ireland

Switzerland

Conclusion

Representation and party systems

Monday, February 23 **Electoral rules and representation**

Powell, G. Bingham Jr., and Georg S. Vanberg. 2000. "Election Laws, Disproportionality and Median Correspondence: Implications for Two Visions of Democracy." *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 30: 383-411.

Samuels, David and Richard Snyder. 2001. "The Value of a Vote: Malapportionment in Comparative Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 31: 651-671.

Wednesday, February 25 **Parties and party systems I**

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 5 (Pp. 62-89)

Amorim Neto, Octavio, and Gary W. Cox. 1997. "Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 41(1): 149-174.

Monday, March 2 **Parties and party systems II**

Kirchheimer, Otto. "The Catch-All Party." In *The West European Party System*. Peter Mair, Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 50-60.

GLM chapter 7 – selected pages

GLM chapter 8 – selected pages

GLM chapter 10

Voter behavior

Wednesday, March 4

Social class and the economy

Nadeau, Richard, and Michael Lewis-Beck. 2001. "National Economic Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections." *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 63 (1): 159-181/

In class: comparative evidence.

Class voting in the UK. TBA

Monday, March 9

Party attachment

Niemi, Richard G., and M. Kent Jennings. 1991. "Issues and Inheritance in the Formation of Party Identification." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 35 (4): 970-988.

In class – comparative evidence

Wednesday, March 11

Cleavage structure, voting patterns and partisan change I

GLM, Chapter 9

Dalton, Russell J. 2002. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. New York: Chatham House, Chapters 5, 8.

Monday, March 16

Cleavage structure, voting patterns and partisan change II

Inglehart, Ronald. "The Nature of Value Change." In *The West European Party System*. Peter Mair, Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp: 247-252.

Flanagan, Scott C. 1982. "Changing Values in Advanced Industrial Societies." *Comparative Political Studies* 14(4): 403-444.

In class: analysis of attitudes of young Americans

Wednesday, March 18	In-class midterm exam
Monday, March 23	Spring break
Wednesday, March 25	Spring break
Monday, March 30	TBA
Wednesday, April 1	Voting and divided government
	Fiorina, Morris. 1992. <i>Divided Government</i> . Allyn and Bacon. Chapter 5.
	Lohman, Suzanne, David W. Brady, and Doug Rivers. 1997. "Party Identification, Retrospective Voting, and Moderating Elections in A Federal System: West Germany, 1961-1989." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> Vol. 30 (4): 420-449.
	<i>In class:</i> The US and other presidential democracies.

Elections, participation, and society

Monday, April 6	Immigration, elections, and the extreme right I
	Van der Brug, Wouter, and Meindert Fennema, and J. Tillie. 2000. "Anti-Immigrant Parties in Europe: Ideological or Protest Vote?" <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , Vol. 37: 77-102.
	Joel S. Fetzer. 2000. <i>Public Attitudes toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany</i> . Chapters 8-9, pp. 123-154. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wednesday, April 8	Immigration, elections, and the extreme right II
	Schain, Martin S. 2000. "The National Front and the Legislative Elections of 1997." In <i>How France Votes</i> , Michael S. Lewis-Beck, ed. Pp. 70-86. New York: Chatham House Publishers, Seven Bridges Press.
	<i>In class:</i> Case study analysis: France/Switzerland/Austria

Monday, April 13

Referendums and participation

The Economist. 1999. "Politics brief: The people's voice." August 14, 1999.

Hug, Simon, and Pascal Sciarini. 2000. "Referendums on European Integration: Do Institutions Matter in the Voter's Decision?" *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 33(1): 3-36.

Wednesday, April 15

Turnout: who votes? Does it matter?

Powell, Bingham, Jr. 1986. "American voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 80 (1): 17-43.

Colomer, Joseph M., 2001. *Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.

Monday, April 20

Patriots Day

Wednesday, April 22

Elections for the European Parliament I

GLM, Chapter 5

Cees van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin. 1996. *Choosing Europe?* The University of Michigan Press. Chapter 2

Monday, April 27

Elections for the European Parliament II

Reif, Karlheinz, and Hermann Schmitt. 1980. "Nine 2nd-Order National Elections – A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results." *European Journal of Political Research* Vol. 8(1): 3-44.

In class:
analyzing the last EP elections

Wednesday, April 29

Elections in divided societies

Lijphart, Arend. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 15(2): 96-109.

Reilly, Benjamin. 2002. "Electoral Systems for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13(2): 156-170.

In class:

Case study: Belgium

Monday, May 4

Elections in divided societies – case study

Fraenkel, Jon, and Bernard Grofman. 2006. "Does The Alternative Vote Foster Moderation in Ethnically Divided Societies?" *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39(5): 623-651.

Response:

Horowitz, Donald L. 2006. "Strategy Takes a Holiday." *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39(5): 652-662.

Rejoinder:

Fraenkel, Jon, and Bernard Grofman. 2006. "The Failure of The Alternative Vote As A Tool for Ethnic Moderation in Fiji" *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39(5): 663-666.

Wednesday, May 6

Electoral Reform

Shugart, Matthew Soberg. 2001. "Electoral "Efficiency" and the Move to Mixed-Member Systems." *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 20: 173-193.

The UK: *The Jenkins Commission Report*. Selected sections.

Monday, May 11

Redistricting

Toobin, Jeffrey. "The Great Election Grab Annals of Law." *The New Yorker*, December 8, 2003. Vol. 79(38).

Wednesday, May 13

TBA