

University of Rochester – PSC/IR 253/253W
Spring 2016
Tuesdays 2-4:40 p.m.

Comparative Political Parties

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Course Description

The purpose of this seminar is to familiarize students with the political instrument at the heart of representative democracy – the political party. We begin with the premise that most observant participants in democratic political systems have some idea about the role and functioning of the political party. But beyond this working knowledge of parties as election-time competitors, how much does one know about this political actor? What differentiates a party from other social groups? What are the different motivations for party formation? Why do certain parties emerge “naturally”, whereas other preference groups find party formation and success difficult? From this starting point, we will explore the historical development of parties and their role in agenda-setting, policy making and institution building in democracies around the world. Our discussions will raise questions about the influence of sociological, economic and institutional factors in shaping party organization, the policy and issue positions they advocate and their interaction in the political arena. We will also examine the recent changes in party structures and party systems to decide whether these developments signify a transformation in party politics.

In this seminar, we will be reading the seminal texts and theories on parties and party systems. Through the readings and in-class discussions, we will be applying these theories to contemporary party examples in democracies around the world, including the United States and countries in Western and Eastern Europe and Africa. By the end of the semester, students will have arrived at their own informed conclusions as to why, for instance, party politics in the United Kingdom is beginning to resemble that seen in India, how third parties, such as the US Green Party, have been successful without gaining office, and how the strategies of liberal parties can be linked to the rise of right-wing nationalist parties.

Requirements

This advanced seminar is open to those students who have already taken other comparative or American political science courses, or by permission of the instructor.

However, no prior coursework on party politics or political systems is required to take this course.

Informed participation in class: Students are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings. This seminar places an emphasis on discussion and debate, and thus, active participation is essential and expected. Many of the readings are challenging, and therefore, students should carefully read and take notes on the readings prior to attending class.

**Because concentration and group connection is needed for successful discussion, laptops and other electronic devices will not be permitted to be used in the classroom.

Two 5-7 Page Papers: Students will be asked to respond to a specific question about the various themes of the course. No outside research should be undertaken for these assignments. However, students are encouraged to think critically about the theories in light of the case studies presented in class.

**Barring extraordinary circumstances, late papers will be marked down a third of a grade (for ex. A to A-) for each 24 hour period after they are due. Thus, if a paper is turned in any time during the first 24 hours after it is due, it is penalized a third of a grade. Any paper not turned in within a week of the assigned due date will automatically receive a zero.

Final Exam: A cumulative final exam will be administered during exam period. According to the Registrar's website (https://www.rochester.edu/registrar/assets/pdf/FinalExams_spr2016.pdf), the exam is currently scheduled for Friday, May 6 at 4pm. *Given that the Registrar's schedule is still tentative, do not arrange to leave town before the end of final exam period.*

For Students pursuing the "W" Option, there is an additional requirement.

Thirteen to Fifteen page Research Paper: Students should write a well-documented and researched paper on a topic of their choice within the field of party politics, using the theoretical frameworks we have discussed in the course. A review of secondary literature is not sufficient; students should draw on primary resources (surveys, newspapers, etc.). **The paper is due April 29 by noon.** Students taking the W option are required to submit a detailed 1 page outline of their research projects in class on **March 15** and meet with me during that week to discuss their proposed paper topics. The first draft of the paper is due **April 15** to my office. Failure to satisfactorily meet either the outline or draft deadline can result in removal from the W section.

Grading for the course will be determined as follows:***For 253 Students:***

Participation:	20%
2 5-7 page papers:	40% total
Final Exam:	40%

For 253W Students:

Participation:	20%
2 5-7 page papers:	30% total
Final Exam	25%
13-15 page research paper:	25%

Academic Honesty Policy

All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

In this course, the following additional requirements are in effect:

You are encouraged to discuss course readings with your fellow students. However, all written work must be done independently and not in collaboration with another. I encourage you to consult with me and with the College Writing Center for help with your papers.

Readings

In this course, we will read mainly book chapters and journal articles. Journal articles and chapters in edited volumes are available on-line through Blackboard.

The books listed below are available for purchase from the Bookstore. A copy of each book is also on reserve at Rush Rhees Library.

Downs, Anthony. An Economic Theory of Democracy. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.

Mair, Peter, (ed) The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

Meguid, Bonnie. Party Competition between Unequals. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. (also available as an electronic copy from the library)

Recommended for an Overview of the Parties Literature:

Ware, Alan. Political Parties and Party Systems. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

Part I. Foundations: Function and Form

What is a party? What differentiates it from other political actors, such as social movements and interest groups? What are the advantages and the limitations of the definitions offered by different theories? What are the implications of these different conceptions for party interaction?

Week One: Introduction and Course Overview (Tuesday, 19 January)

Week Two: Theoretical Foundations (26 Jan.)

Downs, Anthony. An Economic Theory of Democracy. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. Chapter 2.

Schlesinger, J. "On the Theory of Party Organization." Journal of Politics. 46.2 (1984): 369-400.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. The Communist Manifesto. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998 (1888).

Part II. Party Origins: Theories and Applications

How and why do parties come about? Are some types of parties more "natural" than others? Do we see a change in the reasons behind party formation or are the roots of modern parties firmly established in the past? Are Western theories of party formation valid across non-Western cases? How do we rectify recently emerged parties with the claims of older theories? How are the issue preferences behind party formation manifested in different countries?

Week Three: Theories of Party Formation (2 Feb.)

Lipset, Seymour and Stein Rokkan. "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction." In Peter Mair (ed) The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 91-138.

Aldrich, John. Why Parties? Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Chapters 1-2.

Przeworski, Adam and John Sprague. Paper Stones. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Week Four: “Natural” Parties?: Center-Periphery Cleavage Examples from around the World (9 Feb.)

Isaacs, Harold. “Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe,” in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, eds, Ethnicity: Theory and Experience, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1975. 29-52.

Bates, Robert H. “Modernization, Ethnic Competition and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa.” In State versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas. Eds. Donald Rothchild and Victor Olorunsola. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983. 152-171.

Laitin, David. “Hegemony and Religious Conflict.” In Bringing the State Back In. Ed. R.B. Evans, D. Rueschmeyer, and T. Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985. 285-316.

Week Five: New Issue Cleavages or a Passing Fad? (16 Feb.)

Inglehart, Ronald. “The Nature of Value Change.” In Peter Mair (ed), The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990: 247-252

Kitschelt, Herbert. “Left-Libertarian Parties: Explaining Innovation in Competitive Party Systems.” World Politics. 40.2(1988): 194-234.

Rohrschneider, Robert, “New Parties versus Old Left Realignments: Environmental Attitudes, Party Policies, and Partisan Affiliations in Four West European Countries,” The Journal of Politics, 55(1993): 682-701.

Spoon, Jae-Jae. “Holding Their Own: Explaining the Persistence of Green Parties in France and the UK.” Party Politics. 15.5 (2009): 615-34.

Week Six: Reactions to Post-Materialism: The Rise (or return) of the Radical Right (23 Feb.)

Ignazi, P. “The Silent Counter Revolution.” European Journal of Political Research. 22(1992): 3-34.

Kitschelt, Herbert. The Radical Right in Western Europe. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1995. 1-45.

Art, David. “Reacting to the Radical Right.” Party Politics. 13.3(2007): 331-49.

Week Seven: When Parties Fail or Fail to Form (1 Mar.)

First 5-7 page paper handed out. Due by 3 p.m. on Friday, March 18.

Meguid, Bonnie. Party Competition between Unequals. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. Chapters 1, 5 and pages 257-72

Przeworski, Adam and John Sprague. Paper Stones. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. 29-96.

No class, March 8: Spring Break

Part III: Structure and Constraints of the Party System

On what basis are party systems classified? What factors, in addition to social cleavages, affect the structure (number, competitiveness) of the party system? How does the organization of the party system affect the prospects for party success?

Week Eight: Competing Models of Parties and Party Systems: Their Causes and Outcomes (15 Mar.)

For W students, one page research paper outline due. Individual meetings to discuss research paper topic this week.

Sartori, Giovanni. "A Typology of Party Systems," In Peter Mair (ed), The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990: 316-349.

Amorim Neto, Octavio and Gary Cox. "Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures and the Number of Parties." American Journal of Political Science. 41.1(1997): 149-174.

Rosenstone, Steven, Roy L. Behr and Edward H. Lazarus. Third Parties in America. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996. Chapters 1 and 2

Friday, March 18: First 5-7 page paper due by 3 p.m. to 306 Harkness

Part IV. Parameters of Political Debate

Which issues get debated in the political arena? How does the ideological content of the political agenda change? Why do parties choose certain ideological positions over others? What drives their position-taking: vote-maximization, constituent representation, or personal ideologies and the values of party leaders? Is this an elite-driven or a mass-driven process?

Week Nine: Setting the Ideological Agenda (22 Mar.)

Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. "The Dynamics of Issue Evolution: the United States," in Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies. Eds. Russell Dalton, Scott Flanagan and Paul Beck. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984. 134-158.

Riker, William. Liberalism against Populism. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 1982. 197-232.

Budge, Ian and Dennis Farlie. "Party Competition- Selective Emphasis or Direct Confrontation?" in Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change. Eds. Hans Daalder and Peter Mair. London: Sage Publications, 1983. 267-306.

Week Ten: Party Issue Positions: Competing Models (29 Mar.)

Downs, Anthony. An Economic Theory of Democracy. New York: Harper and Row, 1957. Chapters 7-8.

Rabinowitz, George and Stuart MacDonald. "A Directional Theory of Issue Voting." American Political Science Review. 83.1(1989): 93-121.

Kitschelt, Herbert. The Transformation of European Social Democracy. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. Ch 4 (except for pages 160-175 and 190-197)

Meguid, Bonnie. Party Competition between Unequals. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. Chapter 2.

Week Eleven: Institutional Forms of Party Strategy (5 Apr.)

Second 5-7 Paper Topic handed out. Due by 3pm on April 12.

Boix, Carles. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game." *American Political Science Review*. 93(3).

Helmke, Gretchen and Bonnie M. Meguid. 2010. "Endogenous Institutions: The Origins of Compulsory Voting Laws." Manuscript.

Meguid, Bonnie M. 2015. "Multi-Level Elections and Party Fortunes: The Electoral Impact of Decentralization in Western Europe." *Comparative Politics*. 47.4 (July 2015): 379-98.

No class April 12 – Second 5-7 page paper due by 3pm to 306 Harkness.

**April 15: For W students, first draft of the W paper due by 3pm to 306 Harkness*

V. Recent Developments: Temporary Shifts or a True Transformation?

Do recent claims about changes in party systems and party organizations signify temporary shifts or the rearrangement of party politics? Are these trends restricted to

advanced industrial democracies or are they occurring in other regions? What are the ramifications of a possible partisan dealignment for the health of democracies? Does party professionalization spell the end of representative political systems? Do empirical facts support these theoretical conclusions?

Week Twelve: Changes in Party System (19 Apr.)

Rose, Richard and Derek Urwin, "Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems, 1945-69." In Peter Mair (ed), The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990: 185-194.

Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg (eds). Parties without Partisans. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

Week Twelve: Changing Models of Party Organizations and Course Wrap-Up (26 Apr.)

Kirchheimer, Otto. "The Catch-All Party." In Peter Mair (ed) The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 50-59.

Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy." Party Politics 1.1(1995): 5-18.

Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg (eds). Parties without Partisans. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Ch 5.

*****Research papers for the W students due April 29 by noon.**

*****Cumulative final exam for all students, tentatively set for Friday, May 6 at 4pm. See Registrar's website closer to the time for a finalized date.**