

PSC/IR 250 COMPARATIVE DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

Professor Bing Powell Office; Harkness 313

Fall 2018

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T/R 11:05-12:20 Mel 205

This course introduces the concept and practice of political representation in contemporary democracies, focusing on the developed world. After discussing goals of representation, it traces representation from the values and electoral behavior of citizens through the formation of legislatures and executives to the implementation of public policies. It compares the consequences of different institutional arrangements and party systems for party and policy congruence, and considers other benefits and costs as well.

We shall begin by developing concepts of democracy and of good representation through democratic elections that we shall be using throughout the course. We apply these concepts by discussing some of the important recent and upcoming democratic elections of 2016-2018 in the US, the Netherlands, Britain, Sweden and Germany. Because of the systematic inattention of citizens and the complexity of policies and institutions, some political scientists are doubtful that elections can serve to connect citizens, their interests, and their governments in a meaningful and substantive way. We shall try to understand their concerns and conditions that may at least sometimes ease them. The first half of the course focuses on the roles that citizens play in representation through elections.

In the second half of the course we shall turn to the institutions and processes that take place after citizens' cast their votes (although citizens may anticipate them through sophisticated voting.) We begin with how the election rules translate votes into legislative representation. Then, we examine theories and evidence on selecting and coordinating policymakers, especially in parliamentary cabinet governments. Do election outcomes merely provide symbolic voice, or shape the policies actually adopted by those governments and their presidential counterparts? What conditions obscure or facilitate those connections? In the end, what can we say about how well or how badly elections serve to create connections of **good** representation in democracies in developed countries?

The Tuesday sessions will usually present lecture material with some discussion. Thursday will primarily emphasize discussion of the readings for the week. We shall try to develop our understanding of elections in comparative representation through examples of the (often quite different) roles that specific elections played in shaping policymaking and through theories and comparative evidence. All students are expected to invest time in learning about at least one specific election beyond those we discuss collectively. (This may be done as a group project.)

Grades will be based on a midterm exam on Thursday October 25 (40%) and a second examination, covering primarily the second half of the course (40%), scheduled by the Registrar on Thursday, December 20, 1600, with an additional 20% for class participation. Students may also choose as an option to write an original essay applying the concepts of the course to some aspect of political representation in an economically developed country (current or historic) that is not among the five that we are examining collectively. These essays should be about 3000 words long and are due our last class day, December 11. For these students, the grades will be based on the midterm 25%, second exam 25%, essay 30%, and class discussion 20%. Requirements and evaluation for students taking the PSC/IR 250W sections are described on p. 4 below.

REQUIRED READINGS

The works listed with a star (*) are available for purchase in the bookstore. Other articles and book chapters will be on electronic reserve and can be accessed through the electronic version of the syllabus (under Course Resources and Reserves, IR/PSC 250).

* Achen, Christopher and Larry Bartels. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton, 2016.

Bartels, Larry. 2014. "Ideology and Retrospection in Electoral Responses to the Great Recession" in Nancy Bermeo and Larry M. Bartels, eds. *Mass Politics in Tough Times*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press, pp. 185-223.

Clarke, Goodwin & Whiteley. 2017. "Why Britain Voted for Brexit," *Parliamentary Affairs* 70:439-464.

* Dalton, Russell, Farrell and McAllister. *Political Parties and Democratic Linkages*. Oxford, 2011.

Dahl, Robert. *Democracy and Its Critics*. Yale University Press 1989, Ch. 15.

Downs, Anthony. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. 1957, Ch. 7, 8. (Recommended.)

Fortunato, David. 2017. "The Electoral Implications of Coalition Policy Making." *British Journal of Political Science* (Recommended.)

Fortunato, David, Randolph Stevenson and Greg Vonnahme. 2016. "Context and Political Knowledge." *Journal of Politics*. 78 (4): October 1211-1228.

Gallagher, Michael, Laver and Mair. 2011. 5th ed. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*. NY: McGraw-Hill. Ch. 7 and Ch. 8.

Golder, Matt and Stramski, 2010. "Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions," *American Journal of Political Science* 54:90-106.

* LeDuc, Lawrence, Niemi and Norris. *Comparing Democracies 4*. Sage, 2014.

Mansbridge, Jane. 2003. "Rethinking Representation," *American Political Science Review* 97:515-528.

Pitkin, Hannah. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley 1967. Ch. 10.

Powell, G. Bingham. Forthcoming 2019. *Ideological Representation--Achieved and Astray*. NY: Cambridge University Press. Not yet in print; chapters will be linked to syllabus.

Rohrschneider and Whitefield. 2012. *The Strain of Representation: How Parties Represent Diverse Voters*. Oxford:Oxford University Press. Ch. 4-5. (Recommended.)

Schedler, Andreas. 2002. "The Menu of Manipulation." *Journal of Democracy* April 2002.

Shugart, Matthew S. "Comparative Electoral System Research," in Gallagher & Mitchell, eds, *The Politics of Electoral Systems*. Oxford 2009, Chapter 2. (Recommended.)

Thomson, Robert; et al. 2017. "The Fulfillment of Parties' Election Pledges: A Comparative Study on the Impact of Power-Sharing," *American Journal of Political Science* 61: 527-542.

Warwick; Best, Budge, McDonald; Powell. Symposium, "Ideological Congruence: Illusion or Imperfection." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. February 2018.

PSC/IR250 SYLLABUS

Fall 2018

<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Topics</u>	<u>Discussion Topics</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
Sept.4 Schedler 2002; Mansbridge 2003	Democracy and Representation	What is democracy; what is good representation?	Dahl, Ch.15; Pitkin Ch.10;
Sept.11 articles TBA 2019 ch 1	Elections and Representation	Elections of 2016-18; Stages of Representation	Selected Powell, "Ideo Rep"
Sept.18 ch.1-3;	Policymaking By the people	Experiences with Referenda	Achen/Bartels, Clarke, et al.2017

"Brexit"

Sept.25 Voters and Ideological short-cuts; Dalton et al. (DFM)
ch. 1-6
"Left & Right" Multi-dimensionality Wlezien (LeDuc
ch 5)
[Rec: Fortunato, et
al. 2016.]

Oct. 2 Parties & Party Party families, Gallagher et al.
ch. 7, 8
Systems Party System Polarization Powell "Ideo
Rep," ch. 2,3
[Rec:
Rohrscheider Ch 4,5]

Oct. 9 Valence Competence, Betrayal, Achen & Bartels,
Ch. 4-9; Voting Leaders, Partisanship Kayser
(LeDuc Ch 7); Bartels 2014

Oct. 16 Choosing Voter Ideology, Error, Powell, "Ideo
Rep" ch. 4;
Fall Break. Thur Only Strategy, Valence Leduc and Niemi
(LeDuc 8;)
Kitschelt (LeDuc 3)

Oct. 23 Review for Midterm MIDTERM EXAM Thursday October 25

Representation & Stage 1

Oct.30 Votes into Legislators: Election Rules and Gallagher
(LeDuc ch. 2);
The Distorted Mirror Winning Offices Powell "Ideo
Rep" Ch. 5;
Golder &
Stramski 2010

Nov. 6 Building Parliamentary Forming Governments: DFM ch. 7;
Powell,
Governments How? Which Parties? Ideo Rep,"
ch. 6 (1,2)

Nov. 13 Governments: Time perspectives; Minority Warwick et
al. 2018;
Complexities governments; Veto Players Powell, "Ideo
Rep" ch 7

Nov. 20 Thanksgiving Week Tuesday open discussion only. No
Thursday class.

Nov. 27 Making Policies General Directions; Keeping DFM Ch 8;
Specific Promises Thomson et
al. 2017

Dec. 4 Does It Work? Standards and Trade-offs; Mansbridge
2003 (again); "Democracy for Realists;"
Achen & Bartels ch 1 11.

Rep") chs.8,9

Dec. 11 Comparative Democratic Representation: Review. Tuesday only.

FINAL EXAM IS Thursday December 20 at 1600 IN OUR USUAL CLASSROOM

Exam will cover Stages II and III; material since midterm

NOTE: PSC/IR 250W REQUIREMENTS Students taking the course as PSC/IR 250W are required to write original essays. The PSC/IR 250W course fulfills the University and departmental writing requirement; its essays must take the following form:

1. Two distinct essays.
2. Each essay at least 500 words.
3. One essay revised after correction and criticism.
4. Total essays add up to minimum of 3500 words.

Substantively, the essays should choose an economically developed country that is not Germany, (which we are discussing collectively as a continuing example) and some specific elections in that country. These could be recent or longer ago. I expect that you will use both qualitative accounts of these elections in such sources as the journals *Electoral Studies*, *West European Politics*, *Scandinavian Political Studies* and quantitative information from surveys or manifestos and/or from the tables and figures in Dalton, Farrell and McAllister (2011) and/or Powell 2019. (I am glad to help you locate the former data; the quantitative information can be descriptive and need not involve sophisticated statistics.) Early in the course, I would like you to commit yourself to your country and its elections and start reading about it. I'll pass around a sign up sheet asking for that commitment. I can probably give you some help on sources and can also help with the design of your essays.

I. Essay I should be brief, 500-1000 words, explaining why you have chosen your country, some of its politically interesting features, and what you will write about in your subsequent essay. **This essay is due no later than Thursday, Oct. 18.** (Thursday after Fall break.)

II. Essay II should discuss several elections in your chosen country, evaluating the degree to which the election connected the preferences of the citizens to the policies of the government formed after the election. If you wish, you may focus on only one of the major stages (parties/voters; rules; government formation/policy) in the representation process. You may also focus on particular emergent problems (unique to your country or typical of its institutions) or on a broad overview. You may emphasize one-dimensional or multidimensional representation. But you should always be trying to compare the electoral representation in these elections with issues and experiences in democratic representation generally. The paper should be at least 2500 words long. **This essay is due by Thursday, November 8.** I shall correct and return it with comments within two weeks. The revised version is due on our last class, **Tuesday, December 11.**

THE TWO ESSAYS TOGETHER MUST TOTAL 3500 WORDS. The essays will be weighted by their relative length and will collectively count for 25% of the course grade, averaged at the end. For Essay II the final grade depends on the writing as well as the substantive quality of the revised essay.

Please be aware of the issue of plagiarism; be sure your essays are original and appropriately document your sources.

