

Government 301: Comparative Political Parties

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Office hours: Mon 10:00 – 12:00

Class meetings: 2:40 – 4:00; Fisk 116

Course overview

This course is an introduction to the study of political parties and party systems. E. E. Schattsneider, (of the Schattschneider lounge and one of the foremost scholars of political parties) once wrote: “Modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties.” Parties are the main way that citizens in most democracies have to communicate with their governments. They are a critical component of politics in a democracy. But what exactly *are* political parties anyway? Where do they come from? What kinds of parties are there? How do they interact with each other and with society? This course covers a variety of issues concerning both parties and party systems. We examine topics such as the evolution and importance of internal party organization, the importance of party membership, and how parties change. We will also investigate whether parties in new democracies differ from parties in established democracies. Finally, we ask whether parties are in decline and whether it matters if they are.

The political science literature on political parties is vast. Our focus here is on some of the classic texts as well as some of the most recent research. We will concentrate on the advanced industrial democracies because that is where most of the scholarship is to be found.

Course Requirements

Two 6-8 page papers (25% each)	50%
Final exam	30%
Group country assignments	10%
Participation	10%

Course Readings

The readings for this course complement classroom discussion; neither can substitute for the other. You will learn the most from this class if you do the reading on each topic **before** coming to class.

The readings are available through on-line reserve. All readings, including the books, are also available on reserve at Olin. One book is available for purchase at Broad St. Books:

Mair (ed.). 1990. *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Papers

This course requires two papers. The paper will be on pre-assigned topics though if you really want to write on something different, we can work something out. In that case, you must discuss your topic with me ahead of time. Each paper should be 6 to 8 pages long. You must submit a paper copy of your paper by 4pm on the paper's due date. Papers should be turned in to the course mailbox outside the Government Department office. **The first paper is due October 3rd. The second paper is due November 26th.** There will be no class the day before papers are due. Instead, I will meet with students about students individually on those days.

Final Exam

The final exam will cover readings and class materials. There will be a variety of types of questions on the exam, including, but not limited to identification questions, short answer questions, and essay questions. The exam will be cumulative and will take place at the time assigned by the registrar for this course.

Group country assignments

During the first week of the class, we will create country groups. Each group of 2-3 students will become experts in the parties and politics of their country. I will suggest countries, but I'm open to others, selected in consultation with me. Every two weeks or so, you will be asked (as a group) to complete an assignment on your country. Usually these assignments will take the form of investigating empirical information for your country for theories we have studied in class. Completion of the group country assignments will require outside research. See the list of sources below to get started. The results of the group country assignments will become a reference resource for the class. These assignments should be submitted on Blackboard using a Wiki. Due dates for group country assignments are in the syllabus, but I reserve the right to change them as the semester progresses. Group country assignments are due by midnight on the day assigned. Please include bibliographic information.

Sources

For source material for the group country assignments, consider textbooks or history books in the library that focus on your country. It's also worth looking in recent journals such as *Electoral Studies* and the "Political Data Yearbook" of *European Journal of Political Research*. Your friendly reference librarian can speed your research along.

The following websites may also be useful. Don't limit yourself to this list. Find out what else you can discover. If you find something good, share it with the class!

<http://dodgson.ucsd.edu/lij/> [Lijphart Elections Archive]

<http://janda.org/icpp> [International Comparative Political Parties Project]

<http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.htm> [Elections and Electoral Systems Around the World]

<http://www.democ.uci.edu/resources/archive.php> [Center for the Study of Democracy]

<http://www.fairvote.org> [Center for Voting and Democracy]

A note on Wikipedia. Wikipedia is an incredibly useful source for getting an overview of a particular topic or for an initial orientation to a country or sometimes even a particular political party. HOWEVER, do not depend on Wikipedia for the group country assignments. Some of the information on Wikipedia is simply wrong. You'll want to cross-check anything you find on Wikipedia with a more reliable source.

Participation

Attendance and active participation count for 10% of your final grade. You should come to class having done the readings and prepared to talk about the material. Because discussion is critical to the course, attendance is required. Students are allowed two absences. Absences exceeding two will result in a deduction of your participation grade. Attendance alone, however, does not guarantee a good participation grade. You must also engage in class discussion.

Office Hours

I will have office hours on Monday in my office, PAC 409. If you have a class conflict at that time, we can arrange a different time to meet. If you find you are struggling with the readings or having difficulty speaking up in class, please come to office hours. Feel free also to stop by just to introduce yourself!

Course Policies

Students are required to complete all readings and attend each class period prepared to talk about the readings. Extensions and incompletes will not be granted under any circumstances other than significant and verifiable personal emergencies (e.g., serious illness, death in family). **Late work will be penalized one full grade per day.**

All work that you submit must be your own. You must cite all sources used in completing the assignments using a standard form of citation. If you are unsure how to use proper citation form, please ask me. Failure to use proper citation is plagiarism. Taking materials off the internet without citing them is plagiarism. You must adhere to all aspects of the honor code. Please write on each assignment: "No aid. No violation." Please sign your name next to that statement.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

POLITICAL PARTIES: TYPES AND ORIGINS

Sept 2 **Introduction**

Sept 4 **What is a Party?**

Readings: Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1991. *Political Parties and the Winning of Office*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, Ch. 1, pp. 1-31

Morse, Anson D. 1896. "What is a Party?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 68-81.

Sept 9-11 **Political Parties in the United States**

Reading: Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Part 2 (Chs. 3-5), pp. 65-156.

*****Country Assignment due September 13th:**

Find a map of your country. Post it to your Wiki. Also post the name and party of the Prime Minister/President.

Sept 16 **Parties and Ideology**

Reading: Downs, Anthony. 1957. "The Statics and Dynamics of Party Ideologies," in: Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Collins, ch. 8, pp. 114-141.

Sept 18 **Parties and Ideology**

Reading: Ware, Alan. 1996. "Parties and Ideology," in: Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, ch. 1, Section A, pp. 17-49.

*****Country Assignment due September 20th:**

Which types of parties are present in your country? List the names of the parties and tell us what party family each of them belongs to.

Sept 23 **Where Do Parties Come From?**

Reading: Lipset, Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan. 1990 (originally 1967). "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 91-139.

Sept 25 **Where Do Parties Come From?**

Reading: Arend Lijphart. 1999. "Electoral Systems: Majority and Plurality Methods Versus Proportional Representation," in Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 143-170.

Kenworthy, L., and M. Malami. 1999. "Gender inequality in political representation: A worldwide comparative analysis." *Social Forces* 78 (1):235-68.

*****Country Assignment due September 27th:**

Describe the electoral system in your country.

Sept 30 **In-class Debate**

Oct 2 **NO CLASS! PAPER MEETINGS**

*****PAPER #1 DUE ON OCTOBER 3TH*****

PARTY SYSTEMS AND PARTY SYSTEM CHANGE

Oct 7 **Party Systems**

Reading: Duverger, Maurice. 1990 (originally 1954). "The Two-Party System and the Multiparty System," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 285-295

Blondel, Jean. 1990 (originally 1968). "Types of Party System," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 302-310.

Oct 9 **Party Systems and Party System Change**

Reading: Sartori, Giovanni. 1990 (originally 1976). "A Typology of Party Systems," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 316-349.

Scheiner, Ethan. 2008. "Does electoral system reform work? Electoral system lessons from reforms of the 1990s," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 11, pp. 161-181.

*****Country Assignment Due October 12th:**

Tell us about the party system in your country. Which typology do you find most useful for describing it and why?

Oct 14 **Party System Change: Issue Competition**

Reading: Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, chs. 1-2, pp. 3-58.

Oct 16 **Party System Change: Changes in Values**

Reading: Inglehart, Ronald. 1990 (originally 1977). "The Nature of Value Change," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 247-252.

Inglehart, Ronald. 1990 (originally 1987). "From Class-Based to Value-Based Politics," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 266-282.

Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4, pp. 73-100.

Oct 21 **Party System Change: How Much Change? Dealignment?**

Reading: Mair, Peter, Wolfgang C. Müller, and Fritz Plasser. 2004. *Political Parties and Electoral Change*. London: Sage. Chap 1, Chap 10.

Dalton, Russell J., Ian McAllister, and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2000. "The Consequences of Partisan Dealignment," in Russell J. Dalton and Martin P. Wattenberg (eds.), *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrialized Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 37-63.

Oct 23 **In-class Debate**

*****Country Assignment Due October 31st:**

How has the party system in your country changed (if at all) since 1980. Have new parties or new issues emerged? Have voting patterns undergone significant change?

Which theoretical approach do you find most useful when considering party system change in your country and why?

Oct 28: **NO CLASS *** FALL BREAK**

THE INTERNAL LIFE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Oct 30 **Party Organization**

Readings: Duverger, Maurice. 1990 (originally 1954). "Caucus and Branch, Cadre Parties and Mass Parties," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 37-45.

Neumann, Sigmund. 1990 (originally 1956). "The Party of Democratic Integration," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 46-49.

Kirchheimer, Otto. 1990 (originally 1966). "The Catch-all Party," in Peter Mair (ed.) *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 50-60.

Nov 4 **Party Organization**

Readings: Katz, Richard and Peter Mair. 1995. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 5-28.

Wiliarty, Sarah. Unpublished manuscript. "The Corporatist Catch-all Party".

Nov 6 **Party Membership**

Readings: May, J. 1973. "Opinion Structure of Political Parties: The Special Law of Curvilinear Disparity," *Political Studies*, Vol. 21, pp. 135-151.

Kitschelt, Herbert. 1989. "The Internal Politics of Parties: The Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited," *Political Studies*, Vol. 37, pp. 400-421.

Nov 11 **Party Membership**

Readings: Seyd, Patrick and Paul Whiteley. 2004. "British Party Members: An Overview," *Party Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 355-366.

Saglie, Jo and Knut Heidar. 2004. "Democracy within Norwegian Political Parties: Complacency or Pressure for Change?" *Party Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 385-405.

Kennedy, Fiachra, Pat Lyons, and Peter Fitzgerald. 2006. "Pragmatists, Ideologues and the General Law of Curvilinear Disparity: The Case of the Irish Labour Party," *Political Studies*, Vol. 54, pp. 786-805.

*****Country Assignment Due November 14th:**

Select a party in your country and investigate its internal political life. How many members does it have? Is membership declining or increasing? Is party decision making quite centralized or more diffuse?

PARTIES IN NEW DEMOCRACIES – DIFFERENT OR THE SAME?

Nov 13 **Parties in New Democracies**

Reading: Mainwaring, S. and E. Zoco. 2007. "Political sequences and the stabilization of interparty competition – Electoral volatility in old and new democracies," *Party Politics*, Vol. 13, Issue 2, pp. 155-178.

McAllister, I. and S. White. 2007. "Political parties and democratic consolidation in post-communist societies," *Party Politics*, Vol. 13, Issue 2, pp. 197-216.

Nov 18 **Participation in New Democracies**

Reading: Karp, J. A. and S. A. Banducci. 2007. "Party mobilization and political participation in new and old democracies," *Party Politics*, Vol. 13, Issue 2, pp. 217-234.

Nov 20 **Party Systems in New Democracies**

Readings: Reilly, B. 2007. "Electoral systems and party systems in East Asia," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp. 185-202.

Tavits. 2008. "Party systems in the making: The emergence and success of new parties in new democracies," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 28, pp. 113-133.

Nov 25 **NO CLASS! PAPER MEETINGS**

*****PAPER #2 DUE ON NOVEMBER 26TH*****

PARTY DECLINE – DO PARTIES STILL MATTER?

Dec 2 **Party Decline**

Reading: Drummond, Andrew J. 2006. “Electoral Volatility and Party Decline in Western Democracies: 1970-1995,” *Political Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 628-647.

Dec 4 **(How) Do Parties Matter?**

Reading: Dalton, Russell J. and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2000. “Partisan Change and the Democratic Process,” in Russell J. Dalton and Martin P. Wattenberg (eds.), *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrialized Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 261-284.