

Honors Seminar in Comparative Politics: European Electoral Politics

Political Science 183.001
University of Iowa • Fall 2011

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Office Hours: Mon. and Weds. 2-3:15pm, or by appointment in 375 SH

Course Description

We will spend the semester looking at European electoral politics from both the voters' and the parties' perspectives. We will look at what explains voting patterns, how both voters and parties navigate these, the evolution of party systems and what this means for voters and parties, and the influence of electoral systems. The course will be run as seminar, which means I will do some lecturing at the beginning of class, but most of the class time will be spent discussing the issues and topics at hand. One student will be assigned to lead the discussion each week and to bring in questions to get things started. This format will give us the opportunity to make the most of a small class setting. Through readings, discussions, and written work, you will gain a thorough understanding of electoral politics in Europe.

I expect you to have some background in European and/or electoral politics. If you do not, I encourage to read the recommended book listed below so that you can keep up with the class.

Reading Materials

1) The majority of the readings for the course are in an on-demand coursepack available at Zephyr Printing.

2) There is also one required book for this course. It is available at Prairie Lights and on-line. The library has a copy on reserve and it is also available as an e-book through the library.

Pippa Norris. 2004. *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

3) Recommended if you need some basics on European politics—

Gallagher, Laver, and Mair. 2006. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*. 4th ed. McGraw Hill. (Available on reserve at the library or on-line.)

4) You should stay on top of developments in European politics throughout the semester. Good English sources for European news are—*The New York Times* (www.nyt.com), *The Economist* (www.economist.com), *The Financial Times* (www.ft.com), the BBC (www.bbc.co.uk), *Der Spiegel* (on-line international version--<http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international>).

You can sign-up for a 12-week *Economist* subscription for \$19.95 at—
<https://www.economistsubscriptions.com/ecom26/global/index.php?newverify=1>. Click on 'Student Subscriptions'. The print subscription also gives you digital access

5) I have set up a course website on ICON. I will post handouts, some outlines, links, and other materials. Please check the site regularly, especially if you are absent from class.

Evaluation

Your grade in this course will be comprised of the following. Grades will be calculated on a scale of A-F, including +/-.

2 Exams	30% (15% each)
Discussion	20% (5% discussion leader)
Paper	50%

Important Info & Policies

- In general, I will not allow extensions on assignments or alternate exam dates. However, should you find yourself in a situation where you will not be able to turn an assignment in on-time or be present for an exam, please advise me of this as soon as you can, and not the day the assignment is due or the day of the exam or afterwards. We will work together to come up with a solution.
- A late assignment will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day it is late. After 1 week, I will no longer accept it.
- You are allowed 1 unexcused absence. After this, 3 points will be deducted from your final grade for each additional unexcused absence. In case of illness, family emergency, religious observance, or authorized University activity, please inform me as soon as possible and provide documentation.
- Grade appeals must be in writing. You will need to explain why you believe you deserve a grade different than what you received.

Syllabus

Aug. 23: Introduction and Preliminaries: Parties, Voters, and Elections—An Overview

No readings.

Aug. 30: Vote Choice 1: Party Attachment

Richardson, Bradley, M. 1991. "European Party Loyalty Revisited." *American Political Science Review*. 85.3: 751-775.

Harold Clarke and Marianne Stewart. 1998. "The Decline of Parties in the Minds of Citizens." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 1: 357-378.

Paul Webb. 2002. "Political Parties in Britain: Secular Decline or Adaptive Resilience?" in Paul Webb, David Farrell, Ian Holliday, eds. *Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. New York: Oxford UP. Chapter 2.

Matthew Saltmarsh. 2011. "Young Survivors Find Their Faith in Norway's System Is Even Stronger." *NYT*. July 27.

Sept. 6: Political Science Research (Meet in 21 SH—Political Science ITC)

Janet Buttolph Johnson and H.T. Reynolds. 2008. *Political Science Research Methods*, 6th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. Chapters 2-3, 6.

Barbara Geddes. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis*. 2: 131-150.

Sept. 13: Vote Choice 2: Issue Voting

Anthony Downs. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Voting*. Boston: Harper Collins. Chapters 7-8.

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

Orit Kedar. 2005. "When Moderate Voters Prefer Extreme Parties: Policy Balancing in Parliamentary Elections." *American Political Science Review*. 99.2: 185-199.

Sept. 20: Vote Choice 3: Economic Voting

G. Bingham Powell and Guy Whitten. 1993. "A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting: Taking Account of the Political Context." *American Journal of Political Science*. 73.2: 391-414.

Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Richard Nadeau. 2000. "French Electoral Institutions and the Economic Vote." *Electoral Studies*. 19.2-3: 171-182.

Richard Nadeau, Richard Niemi, and Antoine Yoshinaka. 2002. "A Cross-National Study of Economic Voting: Taking Account of the Political Context across Time and Nations." *Electoral Studies*. 21.3: 403-423.

Sept. 27: The Impact of New Issues on Voters

G. Blakeley. 2004. "It's Politics Stupid! The Spanish General Election of 2004." *Parliamentary Affairs*. 59.2: 331-349.

Van der Brug, Wouter, and Meindert Fennema, and J. Tillie. 2000. "Anti-Immigrant Parties in Europe: Ideological or Protest Vote?" *European Journal of Political Research*, 37: 77-102.

Anthony Heath, et. al. 1999. "British National Sentiment." *British Journal of Political Science*. 29.1: 155-175.

Oct. 4: The Impact of New Issues on Parties

Heller, William B. "Regional Parties and National Politics in Europe." 2002. *Comparative Political Studies*. 35.6: 657-685.

Meguid, Bonnie. 2005. "Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success." *American Political Science Review*. 99: 347-359.

Golder, Matthew. 2003. "Explaining Variation in the Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe." *Comparative Political Studies*. 36.4: 432-466.

****EXAM 1—OCTOBER 11****

Oct. 18: European Parliament Elections

Karlheinz Reif and Hermann Schmitt. 1980. "Nine Second Order National Elections—A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results." *European Journal of Political Research*. 8.1: 3-44.

Wouter van der Brug and Cees van der Eijk, eds. 2007. *European Elections and Domestic Politics: Lessons from the Past and Scenarios for the Future*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame UP. Chapters 2 and 3.

Sara Binzer Hobolt, Jae-Jae Spoon, James Tilley. 2009. "A Vote Against Europe: Explaining Defection in the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament Elections." *British Journal of Political Science*. 39:93-115.

2009 EP Election results: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/archive/elections2009>

Oct. 25: Referenda on Europe

Sara Binzer Hobolt. 2009. *Europe in Question: Referendums on European Integration*. New York: Oxford UP. Chapters 3, 6-8.

Eric Pfanner and Sarah Lyall. 2008. "Ireland Backs Treaty to Streamline E.U." *New York Times*. Oct. 4.

Nov. 1: Electoral Systems 1: Do Rules Matter?

If you aren't familiar with Duverger's Law and Hypothesis, please read— Maurice Duverger. 1951. *Political Parties*. Excerpts on Duverger's Law and Hypothesis (I will provide copies).

Norris, chapters 1-3

Boix, Carles. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Industrial Democracies." *American Political Science Review*. 93.3: 609-624.

"All Change: Britain is on the Verge of Constitutional Upheaval." 2011. *The Economist*. April 28.

Nov. 8: Electoral Systems 2: Consequences for Voting Behavior

Norris, chapters 4-7

Thomas Gschwend. 2007. "Ticket-Splitting and Strategic Voting under Mixed Electoral Rules: Evidence from Germany." *European Journal of Political Research*. 46: 1-23.

Nov. 15: Electoral Systems 3: Consequences for Political Representation

Norris, chapters 8-11

Rainbow Murray. 2004. "Why Didn't Parity Work: A Closer Examination of the 2002 Election Results." *French Politics*. 2: 347-362.

"Quotas: Women Rising." 2008. *The Economist*. Sept. 18.

Dates for the rest of the semester:

Nov. 22—Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 29—Exam 2

Dec 6th and 14th—Student Paper Presentations

Papers due Dec. 16th at noon in 375 SH

Teaching Policies & Procedures

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS [Student Academic Handbook](#).

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (*Operations Manual*, [III.15.2](#). Scroll down to k.11.)

Accommodations for Disabilities

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences expects all students to do their own work, as stated in the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#). Instructors fail any assignment that shows evidence of plagiarism or other forms of cheating, also reporting the student's name to the College. A student reported to the College for cheating is placed on disciplinary probation; a student reported twice is suspended or expelled.

CLAS Final Examination Policies

Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS [Student Academic Handbook](#).

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment](#) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety [web site](#).

Student Resources: The Writing Center www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/ and the Campus Information Center's Tutor Referral Services <http://imu.uiowa.edu/cic/> at the IMU.

*These CLAS policy and procedural statements have been summarized from the web pages of the [College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#) and The University of Iowa [Operations Manual](#).