Course Description

This course will introduce students to the study of comparative politics in advanced industrialized democracies. We will address politics in a specific subset of countries; however, our focus will be thematic rather than regional in nature. The countries classified as “advanced industrialized democracies” share similar historical experiences, levels of economic development, social and employment structures, political trajectories and experience with democracy. At the same time, there is enough variation across countries to draw inferences and test theories about political outcomes, and many of our theories about democratic politics are derived from the study of advanced industrialized democracies. Consequently, this course will primarily be a study of democratic politics, drawing on what we know (and don’t know) about advanced industrialized democracies. The topics we will examine include the following: societies and cleavage structures, political parties and party systems, electoral systems, electoral competition, voting behavior, political participation, government formation, and governmental accountability. At the end of the course we will also devote a class session to discussion of the European Union.

Course Requirements

Class Participation: This course demands a large degree of student involvement and participation. Students are expected to attend all class meetings having thoroughly read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Students should be prepared to pose general questions for discussion and participate in more detailed discussions about the ideas, theory, research design, and evidence presented in the readings. Class participation constitutes 30% of the course grade.

Critical Review Papers: Throughout the duration of the course students will write six, 3-5 page (typed, double spaced, normal margins, 12-point font) critical review papers. Critical review papers should provide an informed assessment and critique of the week’s readings. Are there theoretical or empirical deficiencies in the readings? Which reading presents the best argument and why? Which reading presents the worst argument and why? How do the readings relate to one another – are any of their propositions inherently incompatible? What could be done to improve the theories, hypotheses, and research design of the readings? Critical review papers should NOT be a summary of the week’s readings. Instead, they should bring to light new insights, ideas, or problems regarding the specific readings and the topic more generally. When writing the critical review papers students are encouraged (but not required) to bring in material from previous weeks or from the recommended reading list.
The lowest grade on a critical review paper will be dropped. Each of the remaining five critical review papers will constitute 7% of the grade for the course (35% total). Papers should be circulated via email to me and all other students in the course by 12:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before the class session. Students are strongly encouraged to read each other’s critical review papers and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Students are also responsible for presenting the main points of their papers in class. The in-class discussion of the paper will count toward the student’s grade on the paper.

Seminar Leader:
Each student will serve as seminar leader once during the semester. In addition to the regular reading list for the week, the seminar leader is responsible for one additional article or book chapter from the week’s list of recommended readings. The seminar leader(s) will come to class prepared to present (1) a very brief review of the main points of the readings, (2) critical commentary on the readings, and (3) questions for discussion. Furthermore, the student will be responsible for guiding the class discussion during the seminar. A student’s performance as seminar leader constitutes 5% of the grade for the course.

Research Design Paper:
Finally, students will write a research design paper. Papers should be in the 15-20 page range and formatted as a professional conference paper. Research design papers must identify a research question that has been insufficiently addressed by the course readings and propose a new or modified answer to the question. The paper should review the literature in the area, describe the new theory and how it relates to existing research, introduce a testable hypothesis, and describe in detail a proper research design to test the hypothesis. The research design proposed in the paper should be feasible (i.e. something that is possible to complete within the next couple of years) and, if possible, should present some preliminary findings. In short, the research design paper should be a research paper without the analysis section. During the last two weeks of class, students will each give a 10-12 minute presentation of their research design paper, which will be followed by a 15-minute question and answer period. Research design papers (including the presentation) constitute 30% of the grade for the course.

Readings

*Readings marked with ^ have been placed on reserve at Ellis Library.

We will be reading most – if not all - of the following books. These are available at the MU bookstore.


We will be reading substantial portions of the following books. Copies of these are also available for purchase at the MU bookstore.


The following is a good (textbook) introduction to European politics, which is also available for purchase at the MU bookstore. If you have little background in the subject area, I highly recommend picking up a copy and completing the weekly readings marked with an asterisk in the schedule.


Other Matters

**Academic Dishonesty.** Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards such breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.

**Special Accommodations.** If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information that I should be aware of, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class, or in my office. To request academic accommodations (e.g. a note-taker or extra time on exams), students must register with the Office of Disability Services, [http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu](http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu), S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696. It is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on “Disability Resources” on the MU homepage.
Week 1: January 19\textsuperscript{th}

\textit{Introduction to the Study of Advanced Industrialized Democracies}

\textbf{Readings:}
Dalton – Introduction
Dalton and Wattenberg – Introduction
LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Introduction
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Introduction

Week 2: January 26\textsuperscript{th}

\textit{Democratic Institutions and the Goals of Democratic Governance}

\textbf{Readings:}
Lijphart – Chapters 1-4
McDonald and Budge – Chapters 1-4
\hspace{1cm} Chapter 1.
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapters 2 and 3

\textbf{Recommended:}

Week 3: February 2\textsuperscript{nd}

\textit{Societies and Social Cleavages}

\textbf{Readings:}
Dalton – Chapters 7& 8
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapter 9

\textbf{Recommended:}

**Week 4: February 9th**

**Electoral Institutions**

**Readings:**
LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Chapter 2
Lijphart – Chapter 8
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapter 11*

**Recommended:**


Week 5: February 16th
Political Parties and Party Systems

Readings:
Dalton and Wattenberg – Chapter 5
LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Chapters 3 and 4
Lijphart – Chapter 5

*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapters 7, 8, and 10

Recommended:
Dalton and Wattenberg – Chapter 7

Week 6: February 23rd
Electoral Competition I: Party Policy Positions

Readings:
McDonald and Budge – Chapter 5

**Recommended:**

**Week 7: March 2**

**Electoral Competition II: Elections and Party Support**

**Readings:**


**Recommended:**


LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Chapters 5 & 6

McDonald and Budge – Chapter 6.


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**Week 8: March 9th**

**Voting Behavior**

**Readings:**


Dalton – Chapters 9 &10


**Recommended:**


**Week 9: March 16th**

*Participation and Voter Turnout*

**Readings:**
Dalton – Chapters 2-4
LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Chapter 8
Dalton and Wattenberg – Chapter 4

**Recommended:**


Fisher, Stephen D. 2007. “(Change in) Turnout and (Change in) the Left Share of the Vote.” *Electoral Studies* 26: 598-611.


Week 10: March 23rd

Governments

Readings:
Dalton and Wattenberg – Chapters 9 & 11
Lijphart – Chapter 6
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapter 12

Recommended:
McDonald and Budge – Chapter 7

Week 11: March 30th

Spring Break – No Class
Week 12: April 6th

**Representation and Accountability**

**Readings:**
LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris – Chapters 9 & 11
McDonald and Budge – Chapters 9, 10 & 13

**Recommended:**
Week 13: April 13th
The European Union

Readings:
*Gallagher, Laver, and Mair – Chapter 5*

Recommended:

Week 14: April 20th
Presentations

Week 15: April 27th
Presentations

Week 16: May 4th
No class

*Research design papers due by 12:00 p.m., Friday, May 6th*