

PSC 558: Comparative Parties and Elections

Fall 2012

Tuesdays 2 - 4:40pm

Harkness 329

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Office Hours: Mondays 1-3pm

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How and why do political parties emerge? What determines party success and failure? What are the causes and consequences of adopting different electoral rules? Under what conditions does strategic voting occur? What role do the economy, ideology, and partisan identification play in shaping the choices voters make? The goal of this seminar is to examine the classic and contemporary literature on political parties, electoral systems, and voting in comparative politics. We consider multiple methodological approaches to these topics and compare the dynamics of parties, elections, and voting across a range of empirical contexts, including the United States, Western and Eastern Europe, India, Africa, and Latin America.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course is a seminar. Students are thus expected to actively contribute to the discussion each and every week. This necessitates a careful reading of the material prior to the class. In preparing for class, students should think carefully about both the substantive and methodological aspects of each reading individually and in comparison with each other. Student responsibilities include leading discussion of one of the readings in **each** seminar, drawing the class into describing and comparing the readings substantively and methodologically. (There will be some flexibility about this depending on the size of the class and the readings for the week.) A one page handout of notes should be provided. Grades will be based on these presentations and general class discussion (33%); the take-home “midterm,” (33%); and a take-home “final” (33%), covering the 2nd half of the course.

**Barring extraordinary circumstances, late exams will be marked down a third of a grade (for ex. A to A-) for each 24
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Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman. 2004. *The Formation of National Party Systems: Federalism and Party Competition in Canada, Great Britain, India, and the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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

Lijphart, Arend. 1994. *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Meguid, Bonnie M. 2008. *Party Competition between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

-----s and Party Systems

Meguid, Bonnie M. 2008. *Party Competition between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. Chapters 1-4 plus 1 case study chapter (either ch 5, 6 or 7)

Adams, James, et al. 2006. "Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976-1998." *American Journal of Political Science*. 50 (3): 513-29.

Ezrow, Lawrence. "On the Inverse Relationship between Votes and Proximity for Niche Parties." *European Journal of Political Research*. 47(2): 206-20.

October 23: New Parties and Political Challenges

***Take-Home Midterm handed out in class. Due October 30 by 5pm.*

Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair. 1995. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy." *Party Politics* 1(1): 5-18.

Response by Koole, Ruud. 1996. "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?" *Party Politics*. 2(4): 507-523.

Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg (eds). 2000. *Parties without Partisans*. Oxford: Oxford UP. Chapters 3-6, 11.

October 30: no class; Midterm Exam due by 5 pm

November 6: Voting I: Issue and Partisan Voting

Rabinowitz, George and Elaine Macdonald. 1989. "A Directional Theory of Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 83(1): 93-121.

Iversen, Torben. 1994. "Political Leadership and Representation in Western European Democracies: A Test of Three Models of Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 38(1): 45-74

Petrocik, John R. 1996. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study." *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 825-50

Additional Readings (tba)

Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. Chapters 1-4, 6, 8-10 (p. 3-83, 106-129, 155-212).

Lewis-Beck, Michael S. and Mary Stegmaier. 2000. "Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 3: 183-219.

Samuels, David. 2004. "Presidentialism and Accountability for the Economy in Comparative Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 98(3): 425-436.

Kayser, Mark Andreas and Christopher Wlezien. 2011. "Performance Pressure: Patterns of Partisanship and the Economic Vote."

Shugart, Matthew S. 1995. "The Electoral Cycle and Institutional Sources of Divided Government." *American Political Science Review* 89(2): 327-343.

Shugart, Matthew S. and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2001. *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 10, 20.

December 11: Electoral Aggregation

****Take-Home Final Exam handed out in class. Due MONDAY, December 17 by noon.**

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 10-11.

Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman. 2004. *The Formation of National Party Systems: Federalism and Party Competition in Canada, Great Britain, India, and the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.