PSC/IR 250COMPARATIVE DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATIONProfessor Bing PowellOffice; Harkness 313Fall 2018E-Mail gb.powell@rochester.eduT/R 11:05-12:20Mel 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

REQUIRED READINGS

Rep") chs.8,9

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

FINAL EXAM IS <u>Thursday December 20 at 1600</u> 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 <u>not</u> 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