

University of Rochester – PSCI/INTR 253/253W  
Fall 2021  
Mondays 2-4:40pm  
Virtual, via zoom

## **Comparative Political Parties**

Professor Meguid  
Office: 306 Harkness Hall  
Email: [bonnie.meguid@rochester.edu](mailto:bonnie.meguid@rochester.edu)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 4-6pm, via office hour zoom link (contact Prof to get it)

## Requirements

This advanced seminar is open to those students who have already taken other comparative or American political science courses, or by permission of the instructor. However, no prior coursework on party politics or political systems is required to take this course.

**Informed participation in class:** Students are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings. This seminar places an emphasis on discussion and debate, and thus, active participation is essential and expected. In order to facilitate group interaction and discussion, students are required to keep their cameras on during class time.

Many of the readings are challenging, and therefore, students should carefully read and take notes on the readings prior to attending class.

Please note that if you need to miss class due to illness, please notify me via email prior to the class. If you miss more than one class during the semester, a doctor's note will be required.

**Two 5-7 Page Papers:** Students will be asked to respond to a specific question about the various themes of the course. No outside research should be undertaken for these assignments. However, students are encouraged to think critically about the theories in light of the case studies presented in class.

\*\*Barring extraordinary circumstances, late papers will be marked down a third

W option are required to submit a detailed 1 page outline of their research projects on **November 1 by 5 pm** and meet with me during that week to discuss their proposed paper topics. The first draft of the paper is due **November 29 by 5pm**. Failure to satisfactorily meet either the outline or draft deadline will result in removal from the W section.

**Grading for the course will be determined as follows:**

*For 253 Students:*

Participation:	25%
2 5-7 page papers:	50% total
Final Exam:	25%

*For 253W Students:*

Participation:	25%
2 5-7 page papers:	35% total
Final Exam	20%

Mair, Peter, (ed) The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

We also are reading multiple chapters in the Meguid (2008) book. Rush Rhee has electronic copies. Alternatively, you can purchase it wherever you get new or used books.

## **Part I. Foundations: Function and Form**

What is a party? What differentiates it from other political actors, such as social movements and interest groups? What are the advantages and the limitations of the definitions offered by different theories? What are the implications of these different conceptions for party interaction?

### **Week One: Introduction and Theoretical Foundations (Aug. 30)**

Downs, Anthony. An Economic Theory of Democracy. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. Chapter 2. [LINK](#)

Schlesinger, J. "On the Theory of Party Organization." Journal of Politics. 46.2 (1984): 369-400. [LINK](#)

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. The Communist Manifesto. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998 (1888). Parts I, II, and IV. [LINK](#)

*No Class, Sept. 6 Labor Day*

## **Part II. Party Origins: Theories and Applications**

How and why do parties come about? Are some types of parties more "natural" than others? Do we see a change in the reasons behind party formation or are the roots of modern parties firmly established in the past? Are Western theories of party formation valid across non-Western cases? How do we rectify recently emerged parties with the claims of older theories? How are the issue preferences behind party formation manifested in different countries?

### **Week Two: Theories of Party Formation (Sept. 13)**

Lipset, Seymour and Stein Rokkan. "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction." In Peter Mair (ed) The West European Party System. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 91-138.

Aldrich, John. Why Parties? Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Chapters 1-2. [LINK](#)

Przeworski, Adam and John Sprague. Paper Stones. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Prologue and Chapter 1. [LINK](#)

*Sept 20. Video to be announced with a class-time writing assignment*



### **Week Eight: Institutional Forms of Party Strategy (Apr. 6)**

*Second 5-7 Paper Topic handed out. Due by 5pm on Nov. 22.*

Boix, Carles. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game." *American Political Science Review*. 93(3). [LINK](#)

Helmke, Gretchen and Bonnie M. Meguid. 2012. "Endogenous Institutions: The Origins of Compulsory Voting Laws." Manuscript. [LINK](#)

Catalano Weeks, Ana. 2018. "Why Are Gender Quota Laws Adopted by Men? The Role of Inter- and Intraparty Competition." *Comparative Political Studies*. 51 (14): 1935-73. [LINK](#)

*No Class, Nov 22 2<sup>nd</sup> paper due by 5pm*

### **IV. Recent Developments: Temporary Shifts or a True Transformation?**

Do recent claims about changes in party systems and party organizations signify temporary shifts or the rearrangement of party politics? Are these trends restricted to advanced industrial democracies or are they occurring in other regions? Does party professionalization spell the end of representative political systems? Do empirical facts support these theoretical conclusions?

### **Week Nine: Changes in Party System (Nov. 29)**

*For W students, first draft of the W paper due by 5pm*

Rose, Richard and Derek Urwin, "Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems, 1945-69." In Peter Mair (ed), *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990: 185-194.

Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg (eds). *Parties without Partisans*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Chapters 2, 3 and 4. [LINK](#)

Abramowitz, Alan I. and Kyle L. Saunders. "Is Polarization a Myth?" *Journal of Politics*. 70.2 (2008): 542-55. [LINK](#)

### **Week Ten: Political Party Challenges for Democracy and Representation (Dec. 6)**

Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy." *Party Politics* 1.1(1995): 5-28. [LINK](#)

Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown. Chapters 1 and 2. <https://tinyurl.com/yxdj5sbo>

Taub, Amanda and Max Fisher. "Facebook fueled anti-refugee attacks in Germany, new research suggests." *New York Times*. 8/21/2018. [LINK](#)

***\*\*\*Research papers for the W students due Dec. 10 by 5pm.***

*\*\*\*Cumulative final exam for all students held during Exam Period. See Regis website closer to the time for a finalized date.*