
Washington University in St. Louis
Department of Political Science

PS 4281. Comparative Political Parties.

Fall 2011
T Th 10:00-11:30
Seigle Hall 305

Instructor

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Office hours: M 13:30-15:00

Course description

Political parties pattern and organize many aspects of public life in democratic regimes, yet they are constantly derided as a source of corruption, bad government, and political paralysis. The idea of “party” is so ingrained in public life that many non-democratic regimes mimic their organization, even when they fail to replicate their spirit. Parties, in short, are ubiquitous in modern politics. This fact has not escaped unnoticed by scholars and commentators, who have endeavored since early in the XIXth century to understand how political parties originate, the conditions under which they thrive and decline in the electoral arena, and the various ways in which they aggregate societal preferences into public policy in the legislative realm.

This course aims to provide students with a panoramic view of received social scientific theorizing about political parties and party systems. The comparative focus of the course means two things: First, students are expected to develop a good working knowledge of political parties in countries other than the United States. In particular, we will focus mostly on the experiences of West European and Latin American polities. Second, we resort to the comparative method in order to validate hypotheses about the causes and consequences of political parties and party systems. In this latter meaning, American parties provide “data points” or observations that we consider along with the experiences of other countries in an effort to develop valid descriptive and causal inferences. More importantly, the scholarly literature

that focuses exclusively on American parties advances many theoretical propositions of interest, and is consequently a good starting point to understand party politics in other countries. Throughout the course, we will peruse some of this theoretical literature and bring it to bear on our analysis of parties and party systems in the rest of the world.

Requirements and Evaluation

Please read this section carefully: Registration in this course implies that you agree with *all* elements of evaluation.

I intend to run this class as an advanced seminar, rather than as a lecture, which means that active class participation is encouraged and very much expected. Indeed, your ability to contribute to our discussions will determine an important fraction of your final grade (20%). *I will award your participation score based mostly on my evaluation of your contribution to our debates in class.* Needless to say, you will only be able to participate knowledgeably if you read *all* the required material in advance. I have scheduled one midterm exam on October 20 (30%). A final research paper (around 20 pages long) should be turned in by the official final exam date. You can choose to write a co-authored final paper with one other class participant. Along with a 20-minute in-class presentation during the last week of class (December 6–8), the research paper will count for 30% of your final grade; throughout the semester, we will set up additional opportunities to discuss your paper topic (more details in class). The remainder of your grade (20%) will hinge on writing one reaction paper and one book review throughout the semester. I will make every effort to accommodate your preferences for particular weeks, subject to the constraint that no more than two people write reaction papers/book reviews for any one particular class. Please take note of the following policies and grading scale:

Attendance: Since class discussion is such an important component of this class, regular attendance is of paramount importance and will be monitored.

Late assignments: Late assignments are penalized with a drop in a full letter grade each passing day. Even an excellent paper will receive a failing grade if it is not handed in by the fourth day.

Extra Credit: Extra credit can be obtained by volunteering to write reaction papers for no more than two additional weeks. The “best” two among the set of regular and extra reaction papers will be considered for a grade.

Testing your knowledge about any subject-matter is, at best, an exercise in futility. If you know the material well, you will ace any test, regardless of its design; you will also flunk any exam if you have not mastered the material. In between these two extremes, tests and exams are per force imprecise ways to gauge your

knowledge and ability. I will make every effort to grade your exams fairly and in a timely manner. If you consider that I have made a consequential mistake in grading any exam or quiz, you should respectfully address your concerns to me, by [e-mail](#), within three days of receiving your grade. Finally, note that I adhere to the following number-to-letter grade conversion chart:

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 100-97=A+ | 87-89=B+ | 77-79=C+ | 67-69=D+ |
| 93-96=A | 83-86=B | 73-76=C | 63-66=D |
| 90-92=A- | 80-82=B- | 70-72=C- | 60-62=D- |

Students who take this class under the Pass/Fail option must receive a grade of B- or better in order to obtain a Pass on their final grade. Students who take the Pass/Fail option should be aware that only courses taken for a letter grade count toward a major or minor. The College of Arts and Sciences will handle issues pertaining to academic integrity. The academic integrity policy is available [here](#).

Course Schedule

Why parties? (Aug. 30–Sept. 1)

Aldrich, John. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago Studies in American Politics Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. University of Chicago Press.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1998. “From Pulpit to Party: Party Formation and the Christian Democratic Phenomenon.” *Comparative Politics* 30(3):293–312.

Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1984. “On the Theory of Party Organization.” *Journal of Politics* 46(2):369–400.

Cross-national variation in party systems and the sociological approach (Sept. 6–8)

Chhibber, Pradeep and Mariano Torcal. 1997. “Elite Strategy, Social Cleavages, and Party Systems in a New Democracy. Spain.” *Comparative Political Studies* 30(1):27–54.

Lipset, Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan. 1967. Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments. In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan. The Free Press chapter 1, pp. 1–64.

Mair, Peter. 2000. The Freezing Hypothesis. An Evaluation. In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited*, ed. Lauri Karvonen and Stein Kuhnle. Routledge pp. 27–44.

Przeworski, Adam and John Sprague. 1986. *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The Impact of Electoral Rules on Party Systems (Sept. 13–15)

Amorim Neto, Octavio and Gary W. Cox. 1997. “Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties.” *American Journal of Political Science* 41(1):149–174.

Carey, John M. and Matthew S. Shugart. 1995. “Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote.” *Electoral Studies* 14(4):417–439.

Taagepera, Rein. 2007a. Electoral Systems. In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes. The Oxford Handbooks of Political Science Oxford: Oxford University Press chapter 28, pp. 678–702.

Taagepera, Rein. 2007b. *Predicting Party Sizes: The Logic of Simple Electoral Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The Impact of Electoral Rules on Party Systems (Sept. 20–22)

Boix, Carles. 1999. “Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies.” *American Political Science Review* 93(3):609–624.

Boix, Carles. 2010. “Electoral Markets, Party Strategies, and Proportional Representation.” *American Political Science Review* 104(2):404–413.

Calvo, Ernesto. 2009. “The Competitive Road to Proportional Representation: Partisan Biases and Electoral Regime Change under Increasing Party Competition.” *World Politics* 61(2):254–295.

Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count. Strategic Coordination in the World’s Electoral Systems*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.

Cusack, Thomas, Torben Iversen and David Soskice. 2010. “Coevolution of Capitalism and Political Representation: The Choice of Electoral Systems.” *American Political Science Review* 104(2):393–403.

Spatial Theories of Party Competition (Sept. 27–29)

- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Addison Wesley.
- Hinich, Melvin J. and Michael C. Munger. 1992. “A Spatial Theory of Ideology.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 4(1):31–52.
- Huber, John D. and Matthew Gabel. 2000. “Putting Parties in their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Manifestos Data.” *American Journal of Political Science* 44(1):94–103.
- Kedar, Orit. 2005. “When Moderate Voters Prefer Extreme Parties: Policy Balancing in Parliamentary Elections.” *American Political Science Review* 99:185–199.
- Stokes, Donald E. 1963. “Spatial Models of Party Competition.” *American Political Science Review* 57(2):368–377.

Programs vs. Patronage (Oct. 4–6)

- Carroll, Royce and Henry A. Kim. 2010. “Party Government and the “Cohesive Power of Public Plunder”.” *American Journal of Political Science* 54(1):34–44.
- Hagopian, Frances, Carlos Gervasoni and Juan Andres Moraes. 2009. “From Patronage to Program: The Emergence of Party-Oriented Legislators in Brazil.” *Comparative Political Studies* 42(3):360–391.
- Innes, Abby. 2002. “Party Competition in Postcommunist Europe. The Great Electoral Lottery.” *Comparative Politics* 35(1):85–104.
- Kitschelt, Herbert and Steven Wilkinson. 2007. *Patrons or Policies*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Szwarcberg, Mariela. 2011. “The Microfoundations of Political Clientelism: Lessons from the Argentine Case.” Kellogg Institute for International Studies Working Paper 377.

Nationalization of party systems (Oct. 11–13)

- Brancati, Dawn. 2007. “The Origins and Strengths of Regional Parties.” *British Journal of Political Science* 38:135–159.
- Cheibub, Jose Antonio, Argelina Figueiredo and Fernando Limongi. 2009. “Political Parties and Governors as Determinants of Legislative Behavior in Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies, 1988-2006.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 51(1):1–30.

Chhibber, Pradeep K. 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.

Morgenstern, Scott and Stephen M. Swindle. 2005. "Are Politics Local? An Analysis of Voting Patterns in 23 Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 38(2):143–170.

Review and Midterm Exam (Oct. 18–20)

Political geography (Oct. 25–27)

Flint, Colin. 2001. "A TimeSpace for Electoral Geography: Economic Restructuring, Political Agency and the Rise of the Nazi Party." *Political Geography* 20(3):301–329.

Johnston, Ron and Charles Pattie. 2006. *Putting Voters in their Place. Geography and Elections in Great Britain*. Oxford Geographical and Environmental Studies Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Perepechko, Alexander S., Vladimir A. Kolosov and Craig ZumBrunnen. 2007. "Re-measuring and Rethinking Social Cleavages in Russia: Continuity and Changes in Electoral Geography, 1917-1995." *Political Geography* 26(2):179–208.

Rodden, Jonathan and Chris Warshaw. 2009. "Why the Democrats Need Boll Weevils and Blue Dogs: The Distribution of Political Preferences across U.S. House Districts." Stanford University, unpublished manuscript.

Parties in Government (Nov. 1–3)

Iversen, Torben and David Soskice. 2006. "Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More Than Others." *American Political Science Review* 100(2):165–81.

Johnson, Gregg B. and Brian F. Crisp. 2002. "Mandates, Powers, and Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(1):127–141.

Strom, Kaare. 2000. Parties at the Core of Government. In *Parties Without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, ed. Russell J. Dalton and Martin P. Wattenberg. Oxford University Press pp. 180–207.

Tavits, Margit. 2008. "The Role of Parties' Past Behavior in Coalition Formation." *American Political Science Review* 102(4):495–507.

Parties in the Electorate (Nov. 8–10)

- Adams, James. 2009. “Moderate Now, Win Votes Later: The Electoral Consequences of Parties’ Policy Shifts in 25 Postwar Democracies.” *Journal of Politics* 71:678–692.
- Clarke, Harold D. and Marianne C. Stewart. 1998. “The Decline of Parties in the Minds of Citizens.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:357–378.
- Ezrow, Lawrence. 2007. “The Variance Matters: How Party Systems Represent the Preferences of Voters.” *Journal of Politics* 69:182–192.
- Powell, G. Bingham Jr. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Thies, Michael F. 2000. On the Primacy of Party in Government. Why Legislative Parties Can Survive Party Decline in the Electorate. In *Parties Without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, ed. Russell J. Dalton and Martin P. Wattenberg. Oxford University Press pp. 238–257.

Parties as Organizations: Candidate Selection Procedures, Political Recruitment, and Mobilization Efforts (Nov. 15–17)

- Bawn, Kathleen, Marty Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel and John Zaller. 2006. “A Theory of Political Parties.”
- Hazan, Reuven Y. and Gideon Rahat. 2006. “The influence of candidate selection methods on legislatures and legislators: Theoretical propositions, methodological suggestions and empirical evidence.” *Journal of Legislative Studies* 12(3-4):366–385.
- Jones, Mark P., Sebastián Saiegh, Pablo T. Spiller and Mariano Tommasi. 2002. “Amateur Legislators–Professional Politicians: The Consequences of Party Centered Electoral Rules in a Federal System.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3):656–669.
- Katz, Richard S. 2001. “The Problem of Candidate Selection and Models of Party Democracy.” *Party Politics* 7(3):277–296.
- Koger, Gregory, Seth Masket and Hans Noel. 2010. “Cooperative Party Factions in American Politics.” *American Politics Research* 38(1):33–53.

Thanksgiving week. Meetings to discuss papers (Nov. 22–24)

Dominant and niche parties (Nov. 29–Dec. 1)

Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow and Garrett Glasgow. 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):513–529.

Greene, Kenneth F. 2008. “Dominant Party Strategy and Democratization.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1):16–31.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge University Press.

Meguid, Bonnie. 2005. “Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success.” *American Political Science Review* 99(3):347–349.

Final presentations (Dec. 6–8)