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Party Systems in Europe
Office Hours in Turlington Hall, 3326C: tba

Description

Is there a European party system model? This course shall make sense of the genesis and the evolution of the interplay of political parties in Europe. In doing so, different approaches to the explanation of the shape of party systems shall be covered. In more detail, students shall get to know cleavage and other sociological theories, institutional theories and actor-centered approaches. All relevant families of parties shall be included in the empirical part of the course, including socialists/social democrats, conservatives/Christian democrats, liberals, greens as well as far left and far right parties. In terms of countries, the focus will be on the systematic comparison of all relevant nation states in Europe. The course shall conclude with a reflection on contemporary changes in the European party systems in terms of electoral successes and decrease of membership numbers.

Requirements

Attendance (10% of grade).

Two unexcused absences over the course of the semester are allowed; after that, unexcused absences count against your attendance grade. Excused absences do not count against your grade, but these require prior consultation with the instructor. According to the Office of the University Registrar, “acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.” For further information about the University of Florida’s attendance policy, please see the current Undergraduate Catalog (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>).

Active participation (10% of grade)

Students are expected to attend class and participate actively, share their opinions and questions and take part in discussions. Required texts will be addressed in the discussions and their reading is mandatory. Student participation is a very important component of this course and any form of verbal involvement in class contributes to its grade. Full and active engagement with the readings, lectures, and discussions in the class is expected. In the interests of fairness, there will be no individual extra credit assignments.

Tuesday Quizzes (15% of grade)

Short quizzes are taking place weekly on Tuesdays except for weeks where short essays are conducted (see below), testing student's knowledge about the mandatory readings for each week, which are going to be discussed in the Wednesday sessions. The aim of the quizzes is for students to encourage reading and to self-check on their knowledge. Tuesday Quizzes start in Week 2.

Oral presentation (20% of grade)

The idea of oral presentations is to provide additional thoughts on the topic of each week. Each student shall give an oral presentation on a subject related to the overall topic of the respective week, starting week 2. Presentations will take place on Friday (or Monday/Wednesday if there is no regular class on Wednesday/Friday) and must take approx. 10-15 minutes per student. Depending on class size, some presentations may likely be done in pairs or groups, which might affect the duration of individual presentations. Presentations will address major questions on the topic that was discussed during the week and shall provide further research, different perspectives, and inspire discussions in class. Working with research is a crucial part of the presentation. This means that content-wise, oral presentations may build upon the required text(s) of the respective week but must go beyond it based on further academic research. To stay on track, it is therefore highly recommended to talk about your ideas during the office hours, where also additional texts for the presentation can be provided. The grade of the presentation is composed as follows: (1) content: 35%; (2) appropriate use of research: 35%; (3) structure and conduct of the presentation: 30%.

Midterm essay (15% of grade)

The aim of the midterm paper is to demonstrate academic skills, namely the development and discussion of a precise research question by utilizing research and, if applicable, empirical data. The paper is due by Sunday, March 6, 11:59 pm. It shall consist of 5 to 6 pages (double-spaced), Times New Roman size 12, plus 1 page of bibliography, citing at least five different academic sources. Discussing the idea of the final paper in the office hours is not required but highly advisable. The grade of the paper is composed as follows: (1) content: 45%; (2) appropriate use of research: 35%; (3) structure and language: 20%. Final exam (30% of grade).

Final exam (30% of grade)

Format and scope of exam will be discussed in class prior to the exam; terms sections will be demonstrated with hypothetical questions. All exam questions can be answered with the content of the lectures given in class and the required texts.

Office hours

Unless announced otherwise, office hours take place MWF 2-3 pm and by appointment via email. Open door principle applies. No further registration or heads-up is needed.

Policy on Exam Make-Ups

I will only schedule exam make-ups for students who contact me by email at least one hour before the exam and who can provide official documentation why they were physically unable to take the exam.

Grading Scale

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

Texts

The required texts and most other readings will be available on-line through CANVAS. The required texts are to be read at each course week. All further readings are optional. The reading schedule below is subject to change depending on the pace of progress and unforeseen scheduling changes. Please refer to the online syllabus for the latest version.

** indicates required readings for each week.*

PART I THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO PARTY SYSTEMS

Week 1: Introduction (Jan 5, 7)

J Blondel (1968), Party Systems and Patterns of Government in Western Democracies. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1 (2): 180-203.

G Smith (1989), A system perspective on party system change. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1 (3): 349-364.

Week 2: Measuring party systems (Jan 10, 12, 14)

M Laakso and R Taagepera (1979), 'Effective' Number of Parties. A Measure with Application to West Europe. *Comparative Political Studies* 12 (1): S. 3-27.

* MN Pedersen (1979), The Dynamics of European Party Systems: Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility. *European Journal of Political Research* 7 (1): 1-26.

Week 3: Ideology and polarization in party systems (Jan 19, 21)

* RJ Dalton (2008), The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems Party System Polarization, Its Measurement, and Its Consequences. *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (7): 899-920.

ST Franzmann and A Kaiser (2006), Locating Political Parties in Policy Space. A Reanalysis of Party Manifesto Data. *Party Politics* 12 (2): 163-188.

Week 4: The social foundations of party systems I (Jan 24, 26, 28)

* FC Bértoa (2014), Party systems and cleavage structures revisited: A sociological explanation of party system institutionalization in East Central Europe. *Party Politics* 20 (1): 16-36.

S Bornschier (2009), Cleavage Politics in Old and New Democracies. *Living Reviews in Democracy* 1 (1): S. 1-13.

A von Schoultz (2017), Party Systems and Voter Alignments. In: K Arzheimer, J Evans and MS Lewis-Beck (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Electoral Behaviour*. London.

Week 5: The concept of party identification (Jan 31, Feb 2, 4)

K Arzheimer (2006), Dead Men Walking? Party Identification in Germany, 1977-2002. *Electoral Studies* 25 (4): 791-807.

* M Kroh and P Selb (2009), Inheritance and the Dynamics of Party Identification. *Political Behavior* 31 (4), S. 559-574.

Week 6: The social foundations of party systems II (Feb 7, 9, 11)

* Z Enyedi (2008), The social and attitudinal basis of political parties: Cleavage politics revisited. *European Review* 16 (3): 287-304.

N Sitter (2002), Cleavages, Party Strategy and Party System Change in Europe, East and West. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 3 (3): 425-451.

Week 7: Spatial theories of party competition (Feb 14, 16, 18)

* A Downs (1957), An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy. *Journal of Political Economy* 65 (2): 135-150.

C van der Eijk, H Schmitt and T Binder (2005), Left-Right Orientations and Party Choice. In: J Thomassen, (ed.), *The European Voter: A Comparative Study Of Modern Democracies*. Oxford, pp. 166-190.

DE Stokes (1963), Spatial models of party competition. *American Political Science Review* 57 (2): 368-377.

Week 8: Strategic goals of political parties (Feb 21, 23, 25)

* K Strøm (1990), A Behavioural Theory of Competitive Political Parties. *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (2), S. 565-598.

K Strøm and WC Müller (1999), Political Parties and Hard Choices. In: WC Müller and K Strøm (eds.), *Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, Cambridge, pp. 1-35.

PART II

PARTY SYSTEMS IN EUROPEAN COMPARISON

Week 9: West European party systems (Feb 28, Mar 2, 4)

* JE Lane and S Ersson (2007), Party System Instability in Europe: Persistent Differences in Volatility between West and East? *Democratization* 14 (1): 92-110.

G Smith (1979), Western European party systems: On the trail of a typology. *West European Politics* 2 (1): 128-143.

SB Wolinetz (1979), The transformation of Western European party systems revisited. *West European Politics* 2 (1): 4-28.

Week 10: Party systems in Central and Eastern Europe (Mar 14, 16, 18)

N Sitter (2002), Cleavages, party strategy and party system change in Europe, east and west. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 3 (3): 425-451.

* M Tavits (2008), On the linkage between electoral volatility and party system instability in Central and Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Political Research* 47 (5): 537-555.

Week 11: Southern European party systems (Mar 21, 23, 25)

L Morlino (1995), Consolidation and Party Government in Southern Europe. *International Political Science Review* 16 (2): 145-167.

* S Yardımcı-Geyikçi (2015), Party institutionalization and democratic consolidation: Turkey and Southern Europe in comparative perspective. *Party Politics* 21 (4): 527-538.

PART III

PROBLEMS OF PARTY DEMOCRACY

Week 12: Niche parties (Mar 28, 30, Apr 1)

* B Meguid (2005), Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *American Political Science Review* 99 (3): 347-359.

M Wagner (2011), Defining and Measuring Niche Parties. *Party Politics* 18 (6): 845-864.

Week 13: Extremist parties (Apr 4, 6, 8)

* L Ezrow, M Tavits and J Homola (2013), Voter Polarization, Strength of Partisanship, and Support for Extremist Parties. *Comparative Political Studies* 47 (11): 1558-1583.

S Berman (2008), Taming Extremist Parties: Lessons from Europe. *Journal of Democracy* 19 (1): 5-18.

Week 14: European parties in decline? (Apr 11, 13, 15)

* I van Biezen, P Mair and T Poguntke (2012), Going, going, ... gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Political Research* 51: 24-56.

AK Kölln (2016), Party membership in Europe: Testing party-level explanations of decline. *Party Politics* 22 (4): 465-477.

Week 15: Final reflections (Apr 18, 20)

No readings

Final Notes

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/.

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#)

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

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University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

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Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: counseling.ufl.edu/cwc

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Academic Resources

[E-learning technical support](#)

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

[Career Resource Center](#)

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

[Library Support](#)

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints Campus

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

On-Line Students Complaints