

14335.0023: Seminar - Vergleichende Analyse Politischer Institutionen

“The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany”

Summer term 2016

Wednesdays, 14.00 – 15.30

103 Philosophikum

Room: S 93

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Course description

This seminar is an introduction to the comparative analysis of political institutions exemplified by the case of the Federal Republic of Germany. We will devote the single sessions to explore how formal and informal institutions influence the behavior of actors within a political system. The syllabus covers **four major subject areas**.

To begin with, we spend some time on **electoral systems and voting behavior (I)**. Amongst other questions, we will examine how and why different electoral systems evolve. In the second part, dedicated to **interest aggregation and representation (II)**, we take a closer look at political parties, interest groups and the media and their relationship with state actors. Coalition and veto player theories are subjects to the third block where we look at political actors **governing between conflict and consensus (III)**. Here we apply the veto player approach to discuss and explain policy evolution and change. Furthermore, we compare and contrast theories on coalition building and assess, for example, how well they can predict coalition outcomes of national elections. The last part of the seminar, **multi-level governance (IV)**, focusses on interdependences between different levels of political systems. Particularly, we highlight the mechanisms and effects of federal systems.

The aim of the seminar is to gain deeper understanding about essential processes, structures and the behavior of actors within political systems by means of general theories.

Course Requirements

The course concept relies on active participation and in-class discussions. Therefore, I expect you to read and prepare the required literature prior to every session and to come to class ready to contribute. During the semester each student gives an oral presentation (various modes are possible). At the end of the seminar the students hand in a written term paper. The final grade is based on the presentation in class and the term paper.

Please submit an electronic version of your term paper (PDF) **no later than August 26** (to my email address). This version will be checked for plagiarism. As well, you should hand in a printed copy of your paper at the CCCP-secretary during the week the paper is

due (please, be aware of the opening hours!). The printed version must contain following signed statement:

http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/wiso_fak/cccp/Lehre/ErklaerungzuArbeiten.pdf

The general course language will be English. You should be ready to understand and make yourself understood. This does not mean that your English needs to be perfect!

Literature

I will upload parts of the literature on ILIAS. The students are expected to access online articles from academic journals via the University Library.

Basic literature recommendations

- Blum, S. & Schubert, K. (Eds.) (2013). *Policy Analysis in Germany*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Newton, K. & van Deth, J. (2005). *Foundations of Comparative Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Padgett, S., Paterson, W. & Zohlnhöfer, R. (Eds.) (2014). *Developments in German Politics Four*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Roberts, G. (2016). *German politics today (3rd edition)*. Manchester University Press.
- Schmidt, M. (2009). *Political institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Please register for the course via KLIPS, or send me an email in case you cannot access KLIPS!

***** Preliminary Syllabus *****

Session 1 (13.04.2016)

Introduction (course content and academic writing)

Minkoff, S. L. (2011). A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science.

http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/864938/19785442/1344544487103/min_koff_researchpaper_guide_v4.pdf?token=UxHfYUapzB6T6Fvphx%2F7ewNXMLQ%3D

Leaflet: „[Informationen zum Verfassen einer Haus- und Abschlussarbeit](#)“ (only available in German language, please contact me in case of questions)

I Electoral Systems and Voting Behavior

Session 2 (20.04.2016)

Social cleavages and voting behavior

Arzheimer, K. & Falter, J. (2008). Voter Behavior. In: Kaid, L. & Holtz-Bacha, C. (Eds.). *Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. London: SAGE Publications.

Dalton, R. (2012). Apartisans and the changing German electorate. *Electoral Studies*, 48, pp. 35-45.

Session 3 (27.04.2016)

The emergence of the German electoral system

Bawn, K. (1993). The Logic of Institutional Preferences: German Electoral Law as a Social Choice Outcome. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(4), pp. 965-989.

Session 4 (04.05.2016)

The effects of the German electoral system

Klingemann, H.-D. & Wessels, B. (2001). Political Consequences of Germany's Mixed-Member System: Personalization at the Grass Roots? In: Shugart, M. & Wattenberg, M. (Eds.), *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems. The Best of Both Worlds?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 279-296.

II Interest aggregation and representation

Session 5 (11.05.2015)

Parties and party systems

Poguntke, T. (2014). Towards a new party system: The vanishing hold of the catch-all parties in Germany. *Party Politics*, 20(6), pp. 950-963.

Doerschler, P. (2015). Die Linke: Still an Eastern Cultural Icon? *German Politics*, 24(3), pp. 377-401.

No session on 18.05.2016 - Pfingstferien

Session 6 (25.05.2016)

Interest groups, unions and the state

Trampusch, C. (2005). From Interest Groups to Parties: The Change in the Career Patterns of the Legislative Elite in German Social Policy. *German Politics*, 14(1), pp. 14-32.

Klüver, H. (2013). Interest Groups in the German Bundestag: Exploring the Issue Linkage between Citizens and Interest Groups. *German Politics*, 24(2), pp. 137-153.

Session 7 (01.06.2016)

The media's role

Schmitt-Beck, R. & Mackenrodt, C. (2009). Mass media at the 2005 German parliamentary election: Intensity of usage and influences on attitudes and electoral behavior. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 42, pp. 415-446.

Zittel, T. (2015). Do Candidates Seek Personal Votes on the Internet? Constituency Candidates in the 2009 German Federal Elections. *German Politics*, 42(4), pp. 435-450.

III Governing between conflict and consensus

Session 8 (08.06.2016)

Exercise and control of political power

Lupia, A. (2003). Delegation and its Perils. In: Strøm, K., Müller, W.C. & Bergman, T. (Eds.), *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 33-54.

Saalfeld, T. (2003). Germany: Multiple Veto Points, Informal Coordination, and Problems of Hidden Action. In: Strøm, K., Müller, W.C. & Bergman, T. (Eds.), *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 347-375.

Session 9 (15.06.2016)

Government formation

Müller, W. (2009). Government Formation. In: Landman, T. & Robinson, N. (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*. SAGE, pp. 227-236.

Debus, M. & Müller, J. (2013). Do Voters' Coalition Preferences Affect Government Formation? *West European Politics*, 36(5), pp. 1007-1028.

Session 10 (22.06.2016)

The Federal Constitutional Court

Vanberg, G. (2001). Legislative-Judicial Relations: A Game-Theoretic Approach to Constitutional Review. *American Journal of Political Science*, 45(2), pp. 346-361.

Session 11 (29.06.2016)

Direct Democracy

Scarrow, S. (2001). Direct Democracy and Institutional Change: A Comparative Investigation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(6), pp. 651-665.

Eder, C., Vatter, A. & Freitag, M. (2009). Institutional Design and the Use of Direct Democracy: Evidence from the German Länder. *West European Politics*, 32(3), pp. 611-633.

IV Multi-level governance

Session 12 (06.07.2016)

Joint decision-making

Benz, A. (2015). Making Democracy Work in a Federal System. *German Politics*, 24(1), pp. 8-25.

Manow, P. & Burkhart, S. (2007). Legislative Self-Restraint Under Divided Government in Germany, 1976-2002. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 32(2), pp. 167-191.

Session 13 (13.07.2016)

German federalism within the European Union

Wonka, A. & Rittberger, B. (2013). The Ties that Bind? Intra-party Information Exchanges of German MPs in EU Multi-level Politics. *West European Politics*, 37(3), pp. 624-643.

Session 14 (20.07.2016)

Revision, feedback and discussion of term papers