

Parliaments as an Objective of Analysis in Political Science

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Office Hours: please send us an email if you want to meet individually.

Course Outline

Parliaments are a fundamental component of democratic systems. Nevertheless, some of these institutions differ considerably between countries and over time. These differences and their consequences for the political system in a country are the focus of this seminar.

The aim of this course is to give the participants an insight into some basic features and fundamental questions of political science in the field of legislative politics. One focus is on the theoretical foundations of legislative politics: In the first block of the seminar, we address relevant actors, namely parties, governments and the opposition. We then turn to relevant processes in and around parliament. In addition to party competition, we will discuss the process of policy-making and the analysis of speeches in parliaments. In a final part, we will then turn to more specific fields of parliamentary research, looking at the representation of different groups in parliament, as well as the communication and use of social media by parliamentarians.

A second focus is on getting to know relevant data sets in parliamentary research and simple ways of analysing them. We would like to give you the opportunity to do your first own analyses with the help of the software R. This will enable us to check some of the questions and relationships that we have discussed theoretically before. In addition, this should enable you to start developing your own ideas and questions, which you can use in later papers and theses.

Prerequisites: The seminar is designed for the Bachelor's programme in Social Sciences (Sozialwissenschaften). In general, no specific prior knowledge is required. Since the seminar is held in English, participants should be able to understand and articulate themselves in English as this will be the general classroom language. Of course, perfection is not required but you should be able to make yourself understood. Since we will analyse data with the software R in some sessions, it is necessary that you bring a laptop with you to the corresponding sessions. A previous knowledge of R can be helpful, but is not a prerequisite.

Assignments and Grading:

- Term paper (70%), Presentation (30%).
- Each participant should prepare and present one of the core readings as a presentation of approximately 15 minutes. The topics/papers will be distributed within the first two weeks of classes. Presentation slides have to be sent to instructors via email a day before the presentation. The slides can also be shared with classmates via ILIAS but it is not a must.
- At the end of the semester, each student is to submit a term paper of 10-12 pages. The paper should critically review one of the compulsory readings. Simple re-telling of the paper is not considered a critical review. The paper should be analyzed against the context of the seminar topic at large and critically discussed. Further research is encouraged but not needed. The term paper and presentation can be on the same topic but do not have to be. When doing both on the same topic, we expect that the term paper is not an exact copy of the presentation but rather a further development and analysis of a given topic.
- Bonus points: Bonus points can be achieved by sending in discussion questions before the seminar. These must be sent to us by mail by Wednesday evening at the latest. Further details will follow in the first session.

Important Dates:

Examination registration End of the second week of
classes
Term paper topic confirmation 15. January 2020
Submission of the term paper 18. February 2020

Class Participation and Plagiarism

- Participation: Students are expected to read the assigned texts as well as actively participate during each session. Bonus points will be distributed for class participation.
- Assignments and plagiarism: The assignments are to be done individually. Plagiarized works are not accepted and will be subject to the university regulations on plagiarism. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism.

Schedule and Literature

Week 1: No Seminar - We start with a double session in week 2!!

Week 2: Introduction - October 17th, 2019

Literature

- Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm. Introduction. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 1–25. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014
- Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair. *Representative Government in Modern Europe. Institutions, Parties, and Government*. McGraw-Hill, New York, 2006, Chapter 3

Additional Literature

- Amie Kreppel. Typologies and classifications. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 82–100. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014
- Michael Laver. Legislatures and parliaments in comparative context. pages 121–140, 2006

Week 3: Parliaments and Parties I - October 24th, 2019

Literature

- Markku Laakso and Rein Taagepera. “effective” number of parties: A measure with application to west europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 12(1):3–27, 1979

Additional Literature

- Arend Lijphart. *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performances in Thirty-Six Countries*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1999, Chapter 5
- Thomas Saalfeld and Kaare W. Strøm. Political parties and legislators. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 371–398. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014

Week 4: Parliaments and Parties II - October 31st , 2019

Data

- [The ParlGov data set](#)
- [Party Facts](#)

Week 5: Government and Opposition I - November 7th, 2019

Literature

- Tom Louwerse, Simon Otjes, David M Willumsen, and Patrik Öhberg. Reaching across the aisle: Explaining government–opposition voting in parliament. *Party Politics*, 23(6):746–759, 2017

Additional Literature

- Robert A. Dahl. *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1966
- Kaare Strøm. *Minority Government and Majority Rule*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990
- Rudy B. Anderweg. Parties in parliament: The blurring of opposition. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Hanne Marthe Naurud, editors, *Party Governance and Party Democracy*, pages 99–114. Springer, New York, 2013

Week 6: Government and Opposition II - November 14th, 2019

Data

- [The ParlGov data set](#)

Week 7: Party Competition and Elections - November 21th, 2019

Literature

- Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver. *Party Policy in Modern Democracy*. Routledge, London, 2006, Chapter 2
- G. Bingham Powell Jr. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000, Chapter 1

Additional Literature

- James F Adams, Samuel Merrill III, and Bernard Grofman. *A unified theory of party competition: A cross-national analysis integrating spatial and behavioral factors*. Cambridge University Press, 2005, Chapter 1

Week 8: Policy-Making, Agenda-Setting and Voting I - November 28th, 2019

Literature

- Bjørn Rasch. Institutional foundations of legislative agenda-setting. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 455–480. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014
- Georg Tsebelis. *Veto Players. How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2002, Chapter 4

Additional Literature

- Christoph Knill and Jale Tosun. Policy-making. In Danielle Caramani, editor, *Comparative Politics*, pages 349–362. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017
- Thomas Romer and Howard Rosenthal. Political resource allocation, controlled agendas, and the status quo. *Public choice*, 33(4):27–43, 1978

Week 9: Policy-Making, Agenda-Setting and Voting II - December 5th, 2019

Data

- [The Comparative Agendas Project](#)

Additional Literature

- Fabrizio Gilardi, Charles R Shipan, and Bruno Wueest. Policy diffusion: The issue-definition stage. *University of Zurich and University of Michigan*, 2017

Week 10: Debates and Parliamentary Speech I - December 12th, 2019

Literature

- Sven-Oliver Proksch and Jonathan B. Slapin. Institutional foundations of legislative speech. *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(3):520–537, 2012
- Daniela Giannetti and Andrea Pedrazzani. Rules and speeches: How parliamentary rules affect legislators' speech-making behavior. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 41(3):771–800, 2016

Additional Literature

- Jonathan B. Slapin and Sven-Oliver Proksch. A scaling model for estimating time-series party positions from texts. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(3):705–722, 2008

Week 11: Debates and Parliamentary Speech II - December 19th, 2019

Data

- [The ParlSpeech data set](#)

Week 12: Representation - January 9th, 2020

Literature

- Daniel Stockemer. Women's descriptive representation in developed and developing countries. *International Political Science Review*, 36(4):393–408, 2015

Additional Literature

- Jane Mansbridge. Rethinking representation. *American Political Science Review*, 97(4):515–528, 2003

Week 13: Communication, Social Media I - January 23rd, 2020

Literature

- Sharon E Jarvis. Political messages and partisanship. In Kate Kenski and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*, pages 133–164. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017
- Daniela V Dimitrova and Jörg Matthes. Social media in political campaigning around the world: Theoretical and methodological challenges, 2018

Additional Literature

- Kate Kenski and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. *The Oxford handbook of political communication*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017, Chapters 1, 3, 11, 12
- Andrew Chadwick. *The hybrid media system: Politics and power*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017, Chapter 1
- Sebastian Stier, Arnim Bleier, Haiko Lietz, and Markus Strohmaier. Election campaigning on social media: Politicians, audiences, and the mediation of political communication on facebook and twitter. *Political Communication*, 35(1):50–74, 2018

Week 14: Communication, Social Media II - January 30th, 2020

Data

- [Social Media Data for the German federal elections 2017](#)

Additional Literature

- Pablo Barberá. Birds of the same feather tweet together: Bayesian ideal point estimation using twitter data. *Political Analysis*, 23(1):76–91, 2015

Week 15: Outlook: Parliaments Globally and Concluding Discussion - February 6th, 2020

Literature

- Paul Schuler and Edmund J. Malesky. Authoritarian legislatures. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 676–695. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014
- Claudia Hefftlar and Katjana Gattermann. Interparliamentary cooperation in the european union: Patterns, problems and potential. In Claudia Hefftlar, Christine Neuhold, Olivier Rozenberg, and Julie Smith, editors, *Comparative Politics*, pages 94–115. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015

References

- James F Adams, Samuel Merrill III, and Bernard Grofman. *A unified theory of party competition: A cross-national analysis integrating spatial and behavioral factors*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Rudy B. Anderweg. Parties in parliament: The blurring of opposition. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Hanne Marthe Naurud, editors, *Party Governance and Party Democracy*, pages 99–114. Springer, New York, 2013.
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- Sharon E Jarvis. Political messages and partisanship. In Kate Kenski and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*, pages 133–164. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017.
- G. Bingham Powell Jr. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000.
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- Christoph Knill and Jale Tosun. Policy-making. In Danielle Caramani, editor, *Comparative Politics*, pages 349–362. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017.

- Amie Kreppel. Typologies and classifications. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 82–100. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014.
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- Michael Laver. Legislatures and parliaments in comparative context. pages 121–140, 2006.
- Arend Lijphart. *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performances in Thirty-Six Countries*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1999.
- Tom Louwarse, Simon Otjes, David M Willumsen, and Patrik Öhberg. Reaching across the aisle: Explaining government–opposition voting in parliament. *Party Politics*, 23(6):746–759, 2017.
- Jane Mansbridge. Rethinking representation. *American Political Science Review*, 97(4):515–528, 2003.
- Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm. Introduction. In Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare W. Strøm, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, pages 1–25. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014.
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Georg Tsebelis. *Veto Players. How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2002.