

POSC363 Comparative Elections and Electoral Systems

Spring Semester 2020

Clark Hall 103

MW 12:45-2:00pm

Karen Beckwith, Professor

Office: 223 Mather House

Phone: 216.368.4129

E-mail: karen.beckwith@case.edu

Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30pm, or by appointment

Professor Website: <http://politicalscience.case.edu/people/karen-beckwith/>

COURSE OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS

“Modern democracy depends on the existence of political parties.”

– Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, 2016

“While you can have elections without democracy,
you cannot have democracy without elections.”

– Michael Bratton, 1998

Elections are a signature component of democratic political systems. Elections are also bids, by those who rule, for legitimacy, opportunities at regular (if infrequent) intervals for citizens to express political preferences through means regulated by the state (through law), and by political activists, associating in political parties that help to structure the choices presented to the electorate.

Elections present these organized choices to citizens, and permit citizens, as voters, to register preferences. Through elections for government offices, voters make choices among candidates; through national initiatives and local ballot issues, voters assert legislative preferences; through national referenda, voters confirm policy choices. In this course, we will examine how elections emphasize choice and participation, considering the means of citizen involvement in elections, and how elections structure citizen inclusion (or exclusion) in the electorate (through definitions of citizenship, through election law concerning sex, age, and residency, and voter registration and other requirements).

This course takes a comparative perspective, examining elections and electoral system differences across and within democratic political systems, and discussing how preferred outcomes – and what those preferences are – can be shaped within and outside the electoral process.

The course also focuses on political party systems and how they change (or stay the same). Established democracies in West Europe and the (relatively new) states in Central Europe transitioning to democracy (or not) face challenges to their established party systems from new political parties, as major parties of the left and right are losing vote share. The course will address different types of political parties, including populist parties, nationalist parties, Green parties, and minor parties. The course will give special attention to the 2019 elections in Austria, Canada, India, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Evaluation of Student Performance. POSC363 is a SAGES departmental seminar. Hence, evaluation of student performance in this course is based on the following criteria. First, students will complete two short research papers, each of which is worth 20 percent of the student's course grade. A separate *Guidelines for Short Research Papers* discusses the details of these papers. Each student will also have responsibility for presenting his or her research paper to the class on the report due date; presentation guidelines are provided in the *Guidelines for Short Research Papers*. The *Guidelines* are available on the course Canvas site.

Second, students will complete a final research paper, based on the two previous papers, integrating additional materials and evidence, and stating a clear position in regard to major course research questions (see *Guidelines for Final Research Papers* for details concerning the final paper, available on the course Canvas site). The final paper is worth 25 percent of the course grade. Each student will also have responsibility for presenting his or her final paper results to the class in the last two weeks of the semester. Presentation guidelines are provided in the *Guidelines for Final Paper Presentations* (available on the course Canvas site). The final paper presentation is worth 10 percent of the student's course grade.

The research papers and the final paper are based on a student's choice of a country and its electoral system; we will discuss and confirm these choices in class during the first two weeks of the semester.

Third, each student will have responsibility for facilitating discussion during one class meeting; the student facilitating discussion for the day will also submit a brief summary discussion report. Discussion facilitation is worth 10 percent, and the summary discussion report is worth 5 percent, of the student's course grade. Discussion facilitation is assigned by the professor; *Guidelines for Discussion Facilitation and Report* are available on the course Canvas site.

Fourth, each student is expected to attend class every day and to be prepared for each class meeting by having read, in advance, the materials assigned for that day. Students should be prepared to discuss the material in detail in class every day, including media reports relevant to the course, and all students are expected to participate.

Finally, all students are expected to present themselves in class in a professional manner. Professionalism refers to adherence to standards of behavior and performance expected from political scientists. This includes, but is not limited to, courteous behavior in class; attention to other speakers; engagement with the work at hand; and, of course, adherence to university standards of academic integrity (see below). Students are expected, and obliged, to comport themselves, in class, in a professional manner. Informed participation in class discussion and professionalism, requirements of the course, account for an additional 10 percent of the final grade.

Note that students are required to attend all classes and to complete all course assignments.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of Final Grade
Country Choice Identified	January 27	--
Research Paper #1	February 17	20%
Research Paper #1 Oral Report	As assigned (February 17, 19)	--
Research Paper #2	March 23	20%
Research Paper #2 Oral Report	As assigned (March 23, 25)	--
Final Research Paper Presentation	As assigned (April 20, 22).	10%
Final Research Paper	May 6, 11:00am	25%
Discussion Facilitation	As assigned.	10%
Discussion Report	As assigned.	5%
Participation and Professionalism	Throughout semester.	10%

Two books are required for this course, listed below; they are available for purchase in the University Barnes and Noble Bookstore (and elsewhere):

David Farrell. 2011. *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction* (2nd ed.)

Bonnie Meguid. 2010. *Party Competition between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe* [electronic version online at Kelvin Smith Library]

Also recommended (but not required) are:

Robert G. Moser and Ethan Scheiner. 2012. *Electoral Systems and Political Context: How the Effects of Rules Vary across New and Established Democracies*

Pippa Norris. 2004. *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Electoral Behavior*

Pippa Norris, Richard W. Frank, and Ferran Martinez i Coma, eds. 2015. *Contentious Elections: From Ballots to Barricades*

Additional readings support the required books; these are extensive and provide a deeper understanding and analysis of comparative elections and electoral systems. Additional readings are identified in the **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**, below, and are available on the course Canvas site. Students are encouraged to read a daily national or international newspaper (e.g. the *Financial Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*).

There are also several excellent political science sites and blogs that include a focus on comparative elections and electoral systems, such as the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (<http://www.cses.org/>), Fruits and Votes (<https://fruitsandvotes.wordpress.com/>), the Center for Elections and Democracy (<http://www.fairvote.org/research-and-analysis/elections-worldwide/>), the Electoral Law Depository (<http://www.electorallaw.org/>), the Political Party Database Working Group (<https://www.politicalpartydb.org/about>), the Electoral Integrity Project (<https://www.electoralintegrityproject.com/>), International IDEA (<https://www.idea.int/about-us>), ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (<http://aceproject.org/about-en>), the PARLINE Database of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (<https://data.ipu.org/>), Election Passport (<http://www.electionpassport.com/electoral-systems/>) and the Leibniz Institute for Social Science (<https://www.gesis.org/en/home>). In addition to these, please refer to the *Research Resources* list, provided on the course Canvas site.

Standards of professionalism and academic integrity are integral components of this course. Students are reminded that they are obliged to understand, to uphold, and to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy of the University. A copy of the Code may be found online at <https://community.case.edu/aib/full-academic-integrity-policy/>. Students who do not understand the Academic Integrity Policy after having read it should make an appointment to see me to discuss it; indeed, I welcome this discussion and encourage students to see me in advance of any assignment about which they have doubts or questions. It is a course requirement that students read the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

January 13 **Introduction to the Course**

January 15 **Why Elections? What Do We Want Elections to Achieve?**

READ: Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering*, Chapter 1; David Farrell, *Electoral Systems*, Chapter 1

January 20 **Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday; no class meeting.**

January 22 **Who Should Vote? Defining the Electorate**

READ: Marcus Wagner, David Johann, and Sylvia Kritzinger, "Voting at 16: Turnout and the Quality of Vote Choice," *Electoral Studies*, 31 (2012) 372–383; "Why the Voting Age Should Be Lowered to Sixteen," *The Economist*, February 4, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21716030-young-voters-are-becoming-disillusioned-elections-catch-them-early-and-teach-them-value>; Christopher Uggen and Jeff Manza, "Democratic Contraction? Political Consequences of Felon Disenfranchisement in the United States," *American Sociological Review*, 67 (6), December 2002: 777-803 [all are available on Canvas]

RECOMMENDED: Theodore S. Arrington et al., "Securing Fair Elections," *Scholar Strategy Network*, December 2019 (https://scholars.org/fairelections?utm_campaign=8d52d6d101-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_12_09_05_22_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_source=SSN%20Members&utm_term=0_a9780588d0-8d52d6d101-160642509).

January 27 **How Are Votes Cast? Ballot Structure and Voting Technology**

READ: Chris Bonneau and Eric Loepp, "Getting Things Straight: The Effects of Ballot Design and Electoral Structure on Voter Participation," *Electoral Studies*, 34 (2014): 119-130 [available on Canvas].

DISCUSSION AND CONFIRMATION OF COUNTRY CHOICES DUE IN CLASS

January 29 READ: Eric Chen, Gábor Simonovits, Jon A. Krosnick, and Josh Pasek, "The Impact of Candidate Name Order on Election Outcomes in North Dakota," *Electoral Studies*, 35 (2014): 115-122 [available on Canvas].

February 3 **How Are Votes Counted?**

READ: Adrian Blau, “The Effective Number of Parties at Four Scales: Votes, Seats, Legislative Power and Cabinet Power,” *Party Politics*, 14 (2), 2008: 167-187 [available on Canvas].

February 5 **Electoral Systems**

READ: Simon Hix, Ron Johnston and Iain McLean, with research assistance from Angela Cummine, *Choosing an Electoral System* [available on Canvas].

February 10 **How Are Winners Identified? Converting Votes to Seats**

READ: David M. Farrell, *Electoral Systems*, Chapters 2 and 3

February 12 READ: David M. Farrell, *Electoral Systems*, Chapters 4, 5, and 6

RECOMMENDED: *Electoral System Reform and Design*, IDEA, Charters Change Issues Brief #2, November 2019; and Helen J. Wilson, “The D’Hondt Method Explained” [both available on Canvas].

February 17 **FIRST RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS**

ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SESSION #1

February 19 **ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SESSION #2**

February 24 **Electoral Systems, Party Systems, and Party Types**

READ: Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan. “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction,” in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 91-138 [available on Canvas].

RECOMMENDED: Giovanni Sartori, “A Typology of Party Systems,” in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 316-349 available on Canvas].

February 26 READ: Otto Kirchheimer, “The Catch-All Party,” in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 50-59; and Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy,”

Party Politics 1 (1), 1995: 5-18 [available on Canvas].

March 2 READ: Vincenzo Emanuele and Alessandra Chiaramonte, “A Growing Impact of New Parties: Myth or Reality? Party System Innovation in Western Europe after 1945,” *Party Politics*, 24 (5), 2018: 475-487 [available on Canvas].

March 4 READ: Piero Ignazi, “The Silent Counter Revolution,” *European Journal of Political Research*, 22 (1992): 3-34; and Herbert Kitschelt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1995, pp. 1-45 [available on Canvas].

March 9, 11 SPRING BREAK

March 16 **Niche Parties and Small Party Challenges to Party Systems**

READ: Meguid, *Party Competition between Unequals*, Chapters 1 and 2

March 18 READ: Meguid, *Party Competition between Unequals*, Chapter 3

March 23 SECOND RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS

ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SESSION #1

March 25 ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SESSION #2

March 30 READ: Meguid, *Party Competition between Unequals*, Chapter 5, on the UK Green Party

April 1 READ: Meguid, *Party Competition between Unequals*, Chapter 7, on the Scottish National Party

April 5-8 CLASS MEETINGS CANCELED; PROFESSOR ATTENDING THE POLITICAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

April 6 **Electoral Systems and Their Outcomes: Descriptive Representation**

READ: Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering*, Chapter 8: “Women’s Representation;” and Yann P. Kerevel, Austin S. Matthews, and Katsunori Seki, “Mixed-member Electoral Systems, Best Loser Rules, and the Descriptive Representation of Women, *Electoral Studies*, 57 (2019): 153-162 [available on Canvas].

RECOMMENDED: Sarah John, Haley Smith, and Elizabeth Zack, “The alternative vote: Do changes in single-member voting systems affect descriptive representation of women and minorities?,” *Electoral Studies*, 54 (2018): 90-102.

April 8 READ: Andrew Roberts, Jason Seawright, and Jennifer Cyr, “Do Electoral Laws Affect Women’s Representation,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 46 (12), December 2013: 1555-1581; and Mona Lena Krook and Diana Z. O’Brien, “The Politics of Group Representation: Quotas for Women and Minorities Worldwide,” *Comparative Politics*, 42 (3), 2010: 253-272 [both available on Canvas].

April 13 READ: Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering*, Chapter 9: “Ethnic Minorities;” and Mala Htun, “Is Gender like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups,” *Perspectives on Politics*, 2 (3), 2004: 439-458 [available on Canvas].

April 15 READ: Karen Bird, “Ethnic Quotas and Ethnic Representation Worldwide,” *International Political Science Review*, 35 (1), 2014: 12-26; and David Lublin and Matthew Wright, “Engineering Inclusion: Assessing the Effects of Pro-Minority Representation Policies,” *Electoral Studies*, 32 (4), 2013: 746-755 [both available on Canvas].

April 18 **Suffrage Symposium**

READ: Christina Wolbrecht and J. Kevin Corder, *A Century of Votes for Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Chapter 8: “Women Voters in the New Millennium” [available on Canvas]; and Ashleigh Campi and Jane Junn, “Racial Linked Fate and Gender in US Politics,” *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7 (3), 2019: 654-662 [available on Canvas].

April 20 **Final Paper Presentations**

April 22 **Final Paper Presentations**

April 27 **Conclusion of the Course**

FINAL PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, BY 11:00AM