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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country Choice Identified</td>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper #1</td>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper #1 Oral Report</td>
<td>As assigned (February 17, 19)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper #2</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper Presentation</td>
<td>As assigned (April 20, 22)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
<td>May 6, 11:00am</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Facilitation</td>
<td>As assigned.</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Report</td>
<td>As assigned.</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Professionalism</td>
<td>Throughout semester.</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two books are required for this course, listed below; they are available for purchase in the University Barnes and Noble Bookstore (and elsewhere):


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:


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 Leibnitz 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?


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

January 22  Who Should Vote? Defining the Electorate


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


DISCUSSION AND CONFIRMATION OF COUNTRY CHOICES DUE IN CLASS


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February 3  **How Are Votes Counted?**


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].

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

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


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].

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

**ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SESSION #1**

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

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


March 2

March 4

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**


April 18  **Suffrage Symposium**


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