

University of Cologne
Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences
Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (CCCP)
Fall Term 2015 / 2016

BA Course: "The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany"

Time: 14:00-15:30 on Wednesdays, weekly

Room: IBW-Building - S 101, Herbert-Lewin-Str.2, 2nd floor

Course duration: 21.10.2015 -10.02.2016

Instructor Valeria Smirnova

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Course outline

The purpose of this seminar is to make students interested in comparative political analysis by providing them with underlying theories in this field, basic methodological tools, and exemplary research papers based on the political system of the German Federal Republic. The seminar is divided into four parts. We start analyzing the reasons to establish a certain electoral system and its effects, as well as examining patterns of electoral behavior. The second part of the seminar discusses ways of interest aggregation and representation as indispensable democratic rules. In particular, we address the relationship between the state and political parties, interest groups, and mass media. Within the third part of the seminar we would study different mechanisms responsible for the balance of power in the political system primarily paying attention to the theories of coalition formation and veto players. The fourth section introduces the multi-level analysis considering the federal structure of Germany and Germany in the context of the EU integration. During the last sessions participants have an opportunity to discuss their term papers in class. To make these discussions most useful all the participants are required to prepare a handout with the relevant information for their term papers. Students will be graded only on the quality of their term paper and on the quality of their oral presentation.

Reading of the mandatory literature and active participation in the discussions are required for the attendance of the seminar sessions. Most of the texts are available on the ILIAS website of the course. The password for this ILIAS-course as well as helpful tools for efficient working with the literature will be provided during the first session.

Term paper

The term papers have to be written in English (4.500-6.000 words) and downloaded in the folder "Term papers" in the course folder in ILIAS **latest March 11, 2016 at 17.59 o'clock** (after that time no download will be possible) and **also submitted in a hard copy to the CCCP-Secretariat**. Please do NOT send your term papers per email. We have to check all the submitted papers for plagiarism (<http://www.wiso-it.uni-koeln.de/turnitin.html>).

Presentation

Every student should give an oral presentation of one of the recommended papers within 10 minutes once during the semester. The texts for presentations will be distributed during the first session.

Introductory readings

- The Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany. Available at: https://www.bundestag.de/blob/284870/ce0d03414872b427e57fccb703634dcd/basic_law-data.pdf
- Roberts, G. (2016): German politics today. Manchester University Press; the 3rd new edition, 296 p.
- Schmidt, Manfred G. (2003): Political institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press (Comparative political institutions).
- Blum, Sonja; Schubert, Klaus (Hg.) (2013): Policy analysis in Germany. Bristol: Policy Press (International Library of Policy Analysis).
- Conradt, D.; Langenbacher, E. (2013): The German Polity. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Unger, B. (Hg.) (2015): The German Model - Seen by Its Neighbours. [S.l.]: SE Publishing.

Further readings

For the preparation of your term paper, you may be interested in consulting the following journals

- European Journal of Political Research
- German Politics
- Party Politics
- West European Politics

SEMINAR PLAN AND LITERATURE

Session 1 Introduction

- 21.10.2015 Minkoff, Scott L. (2011): A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science.
Accessible at :
http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/864938/19785442/1344544487103/minkoff_research_paper_guide_v4.pdf?token=RM5DhflZ30TYpE4aUu2f2uKjGS0%3D

I. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND ELECTORAL BEHAVIOR

Session 2 Social cleavages and electoral behavior in Germany

- 28.10.2015 Mandatory literature:
- Garzia, Diego (2013): Changing Parties, Changing Partisans: The Personalization of Partisan Attachments in Western Europe, in: Political Psychology, 34 (1), pp. 67–89.
 - Green, Simon (2013): Societal Transformation and Programmatic Change in the CDU, in: German Politics, 22 (1-2), pp. 46–63.

Session 3 Institutionalization of the German electoral system

- 04.11.2015 Mandatory literature:
Bawn, Kathleen (1993): The Logic of Institutional Preferences: German Electoral Law as a Social Choice Outcome, in: American Journal of Political Science, 37 (4), pp. 965 - 989.

Session 4 Effects of the German electoral system

- 11.11.2015 Mandatory literature:
Klingemann, Hans-Dieter und Bernhard Wessels (2001): Political Consequences of Germany's Mixed-Member System: Personalization at the Grass Roots?, in: Matthew S. Shugart, und Martin P. Wattenberg (Hg.): Mixed-Member Electoral Systems. The Best of Both Worlds? Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 279-296.

II. INTEREST AGGREGATION AND REPRESENTATION

Session 5 Parties and Party system in Germany

18.11.2015 Mandatory literature:

- Kreuzer, Marcus (2009): How Party Systems Form: Path Dependency and the Institutionalization of the Post-War German Party System, in: *British Journal of Political Science*, 39(4), pp. 669-697
- Poguntke, Thomas (2014): Towards a new party system: The vanishing hold of the catch-all parties in Germany, in: *Party Politics*, 20 (6), pp. 950-963.

Session 6 Interest groups in the German politics

25.11.2015 Mandatory literature:

- Trampusch; Ch. (2010): Employers, the State, and the Politics of Institutional Change. Vocational Education and Training in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. In: *European Journal of Political Research* 49(4), 545-573
- Reiser, M. (2014): The universe of group representation in Germany: Analysing formal and informal party rules and quotas in the process of candidate selection, in: *International Political Science Review* 35 (1), pp. 55–66.

Session 7 Mass Media

02.12.2015 Mandatory literature:

- Schulz, W. (2005): Voters in a Changing Media Environment: A Data-Based Retrospective on Consequences of Media Change in Germany, in: *European Journal of Communication* 20 (1), pp. 55–88.
- Holtz-Bacha, C.; Langer, A. I.; Merkle, S. (2014): The personalization of politics in comparative perspective: Campaign coverage in Germany and the United Kingdom, in: *European Journal of Communication* 29 (2), pp. 153–170.

III. GOVERNING WITHIN CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSIES

Session 8 Balance of political powers

09.12.2015 Mandatory literature:

- Saalfeld, Thomas (2003): Germany: Multiple Veto Points, Informal Coordination, and Problems of Hidden Action, in: Kaare Strøm, Wolfgang C. Müller und Torbjörn Bergman (Hg.): *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 347-375.

Session 9 Coalition Formation in Germany

16.12.2015 Mandatory literature:

- Debus, Marc; Jochen Müller (2013): Do Voters' Coalition Preferences Affect Government Formation? In: *West European Politics*, 36 (5), pp. 1007-1028.
- Linhart, Eric. (2013): Does an Appropriate Coalition Theory Exist for Germany? An Overview of Recent Office- and Policy-Oriented Coalition Theories, in: *German Politics*, 22(3), pp. 288-313.

Session 10 Direct democracy

06.01.2016 Mandatory literature:

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

Session 12 German Constitutional Court

20.01.2016 Mandatory literature:

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

IV A MULTI-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Session 11 German Federal System

13.01.2016 Mandatory literature:

- Burkhart, Simone; Manow, Philip; Ziblatt, Daniel (2008): A More Efficient and Accountable Federalism? An Analysis of the Consequences of Germany's 2006 Constitutional Reform. In: *German Politics* 17 (4), S. 522–540.
- Lehnert, Matthias; Linhart, E.; Shikano, S. (2008): Never Say Never Again: Legislative Failure in German Bicameralism, in: *German Politics*, 17 (3), pp. 367-380.

Session 13 Europeanization of the German political system

27.01.2016 Mandatory literature:

- Abels, Gabriele (2013): Adapting to Lisbon: Reforming the Role of German Landesparlamente in EU Affairs, in: *German Politics* 22 (4), pp. 353–378.

Session 14 Discussion of the term papers of the participants

03.02.2016

Session 15 Discussion of the term papers of the participants / a wrap-up session

10.02.2016