

14335.0108: Seminar - Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft

“The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany”

Summer term 2017

Wednesdays, 14.00 – 15.30

211 IBW-Building
Room: [S 101](#) (ground floor)

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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 focus on **electoral systems and voting behavior (I)**. Amongst other questions, we 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)**. We apply the veto player approach to discuss and explain policy evolvment 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 political levels. Particularly, we highlight the mechanisms and effects of federal systems.

The overall 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 political theories.

Course Requirements

The course concept relies on **active participation and in-class discussions**. Therefore, I expect you to complete the reading assignments prior to every session and to come to class prepared and ready to contribute. During the semester each student gives an oral presentation (various modes are possible), which will be graded on a pass-fail basis. At the end of the seminar the students hand in a written term paper (in English language). The final grade is based on the term paper.

Term paper requirements differ with examination regulations:

Bachelor PO 2007: 4 ECTS, 2.500 words, ±10%

Bachelor PO 2015: 6 ECTS, 3.500 words, ±10%

(word count without title page, content page and references!)

Please submit an **electronic version** of your paper (PDF) **no later than Friday 1st Sept 2017** (to my email address). This version will be checked for plagiarism. As well, you must hand in a printed

copy 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 non-plagiarism statement**¹:
http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/wiso_fak/cccp/Lehre/ErklaerungzuArbeiten.pdf

I am glad to give you feedback upon your request during the seminar (on your progress) and after you have received your grade (on your final term paper).

The general course language will be English. Perfection is not required - you should be ready to understand and make yourself understood, thus be able to participate actively.

Literature

I will provide 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!

¹ Please note that this declaration must be given in German even if the rest of the thesis is in English.

+++ Preliminary Schedule +++ Preliminary Schedule +++ Preliminary Schedule +++

Session 1 (19.04.2017)

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/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_v4.pdf?token=UxHfYUapzB6T6Fvphx%2F7ewNXMLQ%3D

Leaflet: „[Informationen zum Verfassen einer Haus- und Abschlussarbeit](#)“

(Information on how to write a term paper, only available in German language, please contact me in case of questions)

I Electoral Systems and Voting Behavior

Session 2 (26.04.2017)

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.

Elff, M. & Roßteutscher, S. (2017). Social Cleavages and Electoral Behaviour in Long-Term Perspective: Alignment without Mobilization? *German Politics*, 26(1), pp. 12-34.

Session 3 (03.05.2017)

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 (10.05.2017)

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.

Skills input: Introduction

II Interest aggregation and representation

Session 5 (17.05.2017)

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.

Session 6 (24.05.2017)

Interest groups, unions and the state

Roberts, G. (2016). Interest group politics. In: Roberts, G., *German Politics Today (3rd)*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 172-188.

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.

Skills input: Literature review

Session 7 (31.05.2017)

The media's role

Van Aelst, P. (2014). Media, political agendas and public policy. In: Reinemann, C., *Political Communication*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter.

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.

No session on 07.06.2017 - Pfingstferien

III Governing between conflict and consensus

Session 8 (14.06.2017)

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.

Skills input: Theory

Session 9 (21.06.2017)

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 (28.06.2017)

The Federal Constitutional Court

Vanberg, G. (2005). *The Politics of Constitutional Review in Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 4, pp. 95-115.

Skills input: Research design

Session 11 (05.07.2017)

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 (12.07.2017)

Joint decision-making

Jeffery, C. & Rowe, C. (2014). The Reform of German Federalism. In: Padgett, S., Paterson, W. & Zohlnhöfer, R. (eds.), *Developments in German Politics 4*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 35-56.

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

Skills input: Analysis

Session 13 (19.07.2017)

German federalism within the European Union

König, T. & Mäder, L. (2012). Does Europeanization Change Executive-Parliament Relations? Executive Dominance and Parliamentary Responses in Germany. In: Brouard, S., Costa, O. & König, T. (eds.), *The Europeanization of Domestic Legislatures*. New York: Springer, pp. 95-108.

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 (26.07.2017)

Revision, feedback and discussion of term papers

Skills input: Conclusion