

University of Cologne
Seminar No. 14335.0108

“The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany”

Summer term 2018

Wednesday, 14.00 – 15.30

IBW-Building (building no. 211, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, 50931 Köln)
Room: S 101 (ground floor)

Stephan Vogel

email: stephan.vogel@wiso.uni-koeln.de

office hours

please make an appointment via email

office address

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, IBW-Building, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, Room 1.04, 1st floor

(updated on 28/03/2018)

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 as well as their relationship with state actors. Coalition and veto player theories are subjects of the third block for which 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 a deeper understanding of essential processes, structures and the behavior of actors within political systems by means of general political theories. Additionally, we focus on the individual steps of developing and executing a research project in order for participants to be prepared to write their own term paper.

Course requirements

The course concept relies on **active and regular 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**, which will be graded on a pass-fail basis. The formats of the oral presentations will be outlined at the beginning of the course and oral presentations will be distributed among participants in the second session. 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 examination regulation of 2007: 4 ECTS, 2.500 words, ±10%

Bachelor examination regulation of 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 Monday, 10 September 2018**, 10:00 a.m. (CET) (deadline) to my email address (stephan.vogel@wiso.uni-koeln.de). This version will be checked for plagiarism. Late submissions will not be accepted and result in a fail unless prior arrangement for exceptional cases has been made.

As well, you must hand in a **printed version** at the CCCP-secretary (IBW-Building, room 1.09, please be aware of the opening hours!) or send it via mail to: Stephan Vogel, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln. The printed version must contain the **signed non-plagiarism statement** from the following website: <http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/EidesstattlicheErklaerung.pdf> Please note that this declaration must be given in German although the rest of the paper is in English.

Students are highly recommended to consult with me on their plans for the term paper (please arrange an appointment via email).

Information on how to write a term paper can be retrieved from the guidelines mentioned for Session 1 (see below). General assessment criteria for term papers are laid out under: [http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Assessment criteria for research papers and final thesis.pdf](http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Assessment%20criteria%20for%20research%20papers%20and%20final%20thesis.pdf)

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

Literature

Parts of the seminar literature will be provided on ILIAS. Students are expected to access the other pieces of the literature, i.e. online articles from academic journals, via the University Library. Some of these online articles can only be accessed from within the UKLAN network of the University of Cologne. If you do not know how to obtain access to UKLAN, please consult the RRZK's website at <http://rrzk.uni-koeln.de/netzzugang.html?&L=1>

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. If you cannot access KLIPS, please send me an email. Once the seminar has started and you have decided that you want to pass the examination of this course, please do not forget to additionally *register for the examination* until the respective deadline.

Teilnahme- und Prüfungsbedingungen (*Course requirements in German*)

Das Seminar beruht auf der **aktiven und regelmäßigen Teilnahme und Diskussion in den Sitzungen**. Daher erwarte ich von den Teilnehmenden die Literatur vor jeder Sitzung zu lesen und bereit zu sein, ihre Erkenntnisse aus der Lektüre in den Sitzungen einzubringen. Während des Semesters hält jeder Studierende einen **mündlichen Vortrag**, der mit „bestanden“ oder „nicht bestanden“ bewertet wird. Die verschiedenen Arten von mündlichen Vorträgen werden zu Beginn des Seminars erläutert und die Vorträge werden in der zweiten Sitzung unter den Teilnehmenden verteilt. Am Ende des Seminars reichen die Studierenden eine **Hausarbeit** in englischer Sprache ein. Die Note des Seminars ergibt sich aus der Bewertung der Hausarbeit.

Anforderungen an Hausarbeiten sind abhängig von der Prüfungsordnung:

Bachelor Prüfungsordnung 2007: 4 ECTS, 2.500 Worte, ±10%

Bachelor Prüfungsordnung 2015: 6 ECTS, 3.500 Worte, ±10%

(Wortzahl ohne Titelseite, Inhaltsverzeichnis und Literaturverzeichnis)

Bitte reichen sie die **elektronischen Version** der Hausarbeit als pdf bis zur **Frist am Montag, 10. September 2018, 10 Uhr** (MEZ) an meine Emailadresse (stephan.vogel@wiso.uni-koeln.de) ein. Diese Version wird auf Plagiatsverstöße geprüft. Verspätete Einreichungen führen zum Nichtbestehen des Seminars, es sei denn, ihnen geht eine Absprache mit mir in Ausnahmefällen voraus.

Darüber hinaus ist die Hausarbeit in **gedruckter Form** im CCCP-Sekretariat (IBW-Gebäude, Raum 1.09, bitte beachten Sie die Öffnungszeiten!) einzureichen oder an mich per Post zu schicken: Stephan Vogel, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln. Der gedruckten Hausarbeit ist eine unterschriebene **Eidesstattliche Erklärung** beizufügen, die Sie hier herunterladen können: <http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/EidesstattlicheErklaerung.pdf> Bitte beachten Sie, dass die Erklärung in deutscher Sprache erfolgen muss, auch wenn die Hausarbeit in englischer Sprache verfasst wird.

Session 1 (11.04.2018)

Introduction (course content and academic writing)

Minkoff, S. L. (2016). A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science.

http://scottminkoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_aug2016.pdf

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (2017). Information on how to write a term paper or thesis.

[http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Information on how to write a term paper or thesis.pdf](http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Information%20on%20how%20to%20write%20a%20term%20paper%20or%20thesis.pdf)

I Electoral Systems and Voting Behavior

Session 2 (18.04.2018)

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.

Session 3 (25.04.2018)

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 (02.05.2018)

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

No session on 09.05.2018

II Interest aggregation and representation

Session 5 (16.05.2018)

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.

No session on 23.05.2018 (Whitsun break)

Session 6 (30.05.2017)

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 (06.06.2018)

The media's role

Van Aelst, P. (2014). Media, political agendas and public policy. In: Reinemann, C., *Political Communication*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, pp. 231-248.

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.

III Governing between conflict and consensus

Session 8 (13.06.2018)

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 (20.06.2018)

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 (27.06.2018)
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 (04.07.2018)
Direct Democracy

Scarow, 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 (11.07.2018)
Joint decision-making

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

Jeffery, C. & Pamphilis, N. (2016). The Myth and the Paradox of 'Uniform Living Conditions' in the German Federal System. *German Politics*, 25(2), pp. 176-192.

Skills input: Analysis

Session 13 (18.07.2018)
Revision and feedback

Skills input: Conclusion

<p>10.09.2018, 10 a.m. Due date for your term paper!</p>
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