

Dr. Elena Semenova

## Politics as Profession: A Comparative Empirical Perspective

### Syllabus

The course discusses theoretical, empirical, and normative aspects of politics as a profession by using examples from European, Latin American, and Asian countries. We will examine such questions as (1) who is interested in politics and why; (2) who is nominated and elected to the national parliaments and at the European level; (3) who becomes a minister and why; (4) who becomes a politician in authoritarian systems and does it differ from democratic systems; and (5) what politicians do after they lost elections and how it is related to lobbyism.

**The seminar will be a block seminar on October 7<sup>th</sup> (via Zoom), October 14-15, October 28-29, and November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

### Prerequisites

This seminar is aimed at students of the MA program. In general, a good understanding of general concepts of political science (such as institutions, party and electoral systems) and ability to understand and analyze English-language scientific works is required.

### Assessment

Students are expected to **read at least one text** before each session they attend. During the semester each student will give a presentation. The topics for the presentation will be distributed among the participants. The presentation will account for 40% and the term paper for 60% of the overall grade.

### Term paper

At the end of the semester, a term paper of 3500-4000 words is to be handed in. The bibliography does not count against the word limit. This paper must be submitted via ILIAS. Late submissions will not be accepted. The deadline for the term paper is March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

I recommend that participants discuss their plans for the term paper with me in advance. To prepare for the consultation please send me the current status of your thoughts on your term paper 24 hours prior to **semenova@wiso.uni-koeln.de**

General assessment criteria for term papers can be found at [http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Teaching/Assessment\\_criteria\\_for\\_research\\_papers\\_and\\_final\\_thesis.pdf](http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Teaching/Assessment_criteria_for_research_papers_and_final_thesis.pdf)

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| 07.10.2024 | <b>Introduction</b>   |
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| 14.10.2024 | <b>Political Leaders and Leadership: Theory</b>   |
|            | <i>Questions for the session:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is considered to be a leader?</li><li>• What characteristics should a (good) leader have?</li></ul> |

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|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the foundation of the leader's power?</li> <li>• How a new leader can come to power?</li> <li>• How to be a bad leader?</li> </ul>   |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Nederman, C. (2023). Niccolò Machiavelli. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Available online.</p> <p>Machiavelli, N. (1513/2022). The prince. Available online: <a href="https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1232/pg1232-images.html">https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1232/pg1232-images.html</a></p> <p>Weber, M. (1921). Politics as a Vacation. Duncker &amp; Humblodt, Munich.</p>  |
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| 14.10.2024 | <b>Political representation</b>   |
|            | <p>Question for the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a political representation?</li> <li>• What kind of forms a political representation can take?</li> <li>• What are the strength and weaknesses of each form?</li> <li>• Is political representation important? Why it is important?</li> </ul>  |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Dovi, S. (2018) Political representation. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Available online.</p> <p>Stockemer D, Sundström A. (2023). Age Inequalities in Political Representation: A Review Article. <i>Government and Opposition</i>. Published online: 1-18.</p>  |
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| 14.10.2024 | <b>Political participation and interest</b>   |
|            | <p><b>Questions for the session:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any political interest and participation differences across different groups based on gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic standing?</li> <li>• Are these differences good or bad for the functioning of democracies?</li> <li>• How these differences can be explained? What are the key factors?</li> <li>• What can be done to increase political interest and participation of underrepresented groups?</li> </ul> |
|            | <b>Literature</b>   |
|            | <p>Li, R., &amp; Jones, B. M. (2020). Why do immigrants participate in politics less than native-born citizens? A formative years explanation. <i>Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics</i> 5(1), 62-91.</p> <p>Grasso, M., &amp; Smith, K. (2022). Gender inequalities in political participation and political engagement among young people in Europe: Are young women less politically engaged than young men? <i>Politics</i>, 42(1), 39-57.</p>  |
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| 15.10.2024 | <b>The Voters' Preferences</b>  |
|            | <p>Questions for the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the voters have preferences for certain type of</li> </ul>  |

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|            | <p>politicians? For men, rich, white, or clever?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can these preferences be identified?</li> <li>• What are the reasons for such preferences?</li> <li>• How can one change these preferences?</li> </ul>  |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Hibbing, J. and Theiss-Morse, E. (2003) <i>Stealth democracy. Americans' beliefs about how government should work.</i> Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Campbell, R., &amp; Cowley, P. (2014). What Voters Want: Reactions to Candidate Characteristics in a Survey Experiment. <i>Political Studies</i> 62(4): 745-765.</p>   |
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| 15.10.2024 | <b>Are you a politician type? Psychological factors</b>   |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are psychological factors matter for being nominated?</li> <li>• Are they important for being successful in politics?</li> <li>• What kind of people are attracted to politics as profession?</li> </ul>  |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>James Weinberg, <i>The Winner Takes It All? A Psychological Study of Political Success among UK Members of Parliament, Parliamentary Affairs</i> 73(4): 711–733.</p> <p>Best, H. (2011). Does personality matter in politics? Personality factors as determinants of parliamentary recruitment and policy preferences. <i>Comparative Sociology</i>, 10(6), 928-948.</p>           |
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| 28.10.2024 | <b>Parties and party systems: Nomination of candidates</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How candidates are selected in different types of party systems?</li> <li>• What is the role of party leadership in selecting candidates?</li> <li>• What kind of candidates should be selected and why?</li> <li>• Are there any party-specific patterns of selecting candidates?</li> </ul>       |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Rahat, G., &amp; Hazan, R. Y. (2001). Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework. <i>Party Politics</i>, 7(3), 297-322.</p> <p>Reiser, M. (2018) Contagion effects by the AfD? Candidate selection in Germany. In: <i>The Selection of Politicians in Times of Crisis</i>, edited by Xavier Coller, Guillermo Cordero, and Antonio Jaime-Castill. London: Routledge.</p> |
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| 28.10.2024 | <b>Electoral systems: Nomination and success</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How electoral systems affect the nomination of candidates?</li> <li>• Are there any electoral systems that are better for the parliamentary representation of women, youth,</li> </ul>  |

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|            | <p>ethnic/racial minorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we identify such systems?</li> <li>• What is the effect of incumbency (i.e., re-election) on the selection of candidates, their success in the parliament, and political representation?</li> </ul>   |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Brancati, D. (2008). Winning Alone: The Electoral Fate of Independent Candidates Worldwide. <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 70(3): 648–662</p> <p>Moser, R. G. (2001) The effects of electoral systems on women's representation in post-communist states. <i>Electoral Studies</i>, 20(3): 353-369</p>   |
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| 28.10.2024 | <b>Political careers I: Ways to and in the national parliament</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of political experience is important for being nominated to the parliament?</li> <li>• What kind of political experience is important for being elected?</li> <li>• How politicians progress within the parliamentary hierarchy? What are important factors?</li> </ul>   |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>Ohmura, T., Bailer, S., Meißner, P., &amp; Selb, P. (2017). Party animals, career changers and other pathways into parliament. <i>West European Politics</i>, 41(1), 169–195.</p> <p>Heinsohn, T., and Schiefer, M. (2019). Advancing to positions of power in parliament – does seniority matter? <i>The Journal of Legislative Studies</i>, 25(4): 511–532.</p>  |
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| 29.10.2024 | <b>Political careers II: Ways to the cabinet</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Question for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to become a minister? What are the important factors for selecting a minister?</li> <li>• Do the preferences of prime ministers, presidents, and coalition partners for selecting cabinet ministers differ? If yes, how?</li> </ul>  |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>  |
|            | <p>De Winter, L. (1991) Parliamentary and party pathways to the cabinet. In: <i>The profession of government minister in Western Europe</i>, edited by Blondel, J. and Thiebault, J.-L. London: Palgrave, 44-69.</p> <p>Amorim Neto, O. and Strom, K. (2006) Breaking the Parliamentary Chain of Delegation: Presidents and Non-partisan Cabinet Members in European Democracies. <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 36(4): 619-643.</p> |
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| 29.10.2024 | <b>Multi-level careers</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do political careers in federal countries differ from careers in unitary systems?</li> </ul>  |

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|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do politicians move across territorial levels in order to pursue their careers? What are the major factors for these movements?</li> </ul>  |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>   |
|            | <p>Semenova, E., &amp; Dowding, K. (2023). Patterns of political career movements in multi-level systems: a cross-national comparison of twenty-seven countries. <i>Regional &amp; Federal Studies</i>, 1-32.</p> <p>Fabiano G. M. Santos &amp; Fabiano J. H. Pegurier (2011) Political Careers in Brazil: Long-term Trends and Cross-sectional Variation, <i>Regional and Federal Studies</i>, 21(2): 165-183.</p>  |
| 29.10.2024 | <b>Political careers at the supranational level: European Union</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are European institutions a desirable destination for politicians in Europe?</li> <li>What are the most attractive and least attractive features of political careers in supranational institutions?</li> <li>How candidates to the European Parliament selected? Do these selection criteria differ from those relevant for candidates for the national parliaments?</li> <li>How politicians progress within the European Parliament?</li> </ul> |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>   |
|            | <p>Whitaker, R. (2014). Tenure, turnover and careers in the European Parliament: MEPs as policy-seekers. <i>Journal of European Public Policy</i>, 21(10), 1509–1527.</p> <p>Mihail Chiru (2020) Loyal soldiers or seasoned leaders? The selection of committee chairs in the European Parliament, <i>Journal of European Public Policy</i>, 27:4, 612-629</p>   |
| 11.11.2024 | <b>Careers in authoritarian systems</b>  |
|            | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the major criteria for selecting and promoting politicians in authoritarian systems? Do they differ from those relevant in democracies? If yes, how?</li> <li>What is the role of presidents, religious leaders, and military in selecting and promoting politicians in authoritarian systems?</li> <li>How to remain a politician in an authoritarian system?</li> </ul>   |
|            | <b>Literature:</b>   |
|            | <p>Bueno de Mesquita, B. and Alastair Smith (2011). <i>The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior is Almost Always Good Politics</i>. NY: PublicAffairs.</p> <p>Fonseca, A. M. (2009). Ministers and centres of power in Nazi Germany. In: <i>Ruling Elites and Decision-Making in Fascist-Era Dictatorships</i>, edited by A. Costa-Pinto. Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 55-82.</p>  |
| 11.11.2024 | <b>Life after death? What do former politicians do?</b>  |

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|  | <p><i>Questions for the session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where do former politicians go after the end of their political careers?</li> <li>• A revolving door. What does it mean for careers of former politicians?</li> <li>• Lobbyism and former politicians</li> </ul>   |
|  | <p><i>Literature:</i></p>  |
|  | <p>Claessen, C., Bailer, S. and Turner-Zwinkels, T. (2021), The winners of legislative mandate: An analysis of post-parliamentary career positions in Germany and the Netherlands. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i>, 60: 25-45.</p> <p>Dörrenbächer, N. (2016) Patterns of post-cabinet careers: When one door closes another door opens?. <i>Acta Politica</i> <b>51</b>, 472–491.</p> |