PhD in Political Science, European Studies and International Relations (PEI)
Academic Year 2015-2016

Course
Comparative Political Institutions

Instructors:
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Lecture Hours: Tuesday 10.00-12.00 (the course starts on January, 19, 2016)

Venue: Polo Mattioli, Università di Siena

Evaluation: Students’ evaluation will be based for about 50% on class presentations and active attendance to seminars and about 50% on a term paper of about 6500/7000 words to be delivered by the end of the term.

Readings
Three classes of readings are proposed in this syllabus. A first class concerns the Background readings. These are pieces from general introductions to comparative politics (handbook, international encyclopaedia, basic readings, etc.) which the instructors suggest in particular to the students who are not particularly familiar with the discipline. The Core readings, circulated on a weekly basis, will have to be studied and analysed by the students in order to prepare their presentations in class. Each week 2 to 3 core readings will be discussed.

Finally, some Further readings will be communicated in order to provide the students with a list of adequate and complementary pieces of researches devoted to the issues covered by the seminars.

Background readings
C. Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*
G. W. Cox. *Making votes count: strategic coordination in the world's electoral system*


D. M. Olson, *Democratic Legislative Institutions A Comparative View*, M.E. Sharpe, London 1994

G. B. Powell, Jr. *Elections as instruments of democracy: majoritarian and proportional visions*

A. Przeworski... [et al.]. *Democracy and development: political institutions and material well-being in the world, 1950-1990*


M. S. Shugart and J. M. Carey. *Presidents and assemblies: constitutional design and electoral dynamics*

Comparative Political Institutions

Outline

19 January (Luca Verzichelli): Course Presentation. The study of Comparative Politics
Comparative method and comparative approach. Units of analysis

Core readings (No students presentations this week)

- Lijphart, A. Comparative politics and comparative method, American Political Science Review, 1971
- J. Blondel, Comparative politics. Then and now. In “Political Studies”, Volume 47, Issue 1, 1999, pp. 152–160,

Recommended readings

26 January (L. Verzichelli): Democratic regimes. Then and Now

Traditional and recent typologies of democratic regimes are at the core of this seminar. The different systems of government, such as Parliamentary and Presidential democracies or hybrid forms recently developed are considered in relation to their stability, their impact to government organization. The core readings poses some new questions to comparative empirical research: how different are democratic regimes, and how differently evolve?

Core readings

Recommended readings


2 February (A. Chiaramonte): Electoral systems and their consequences

The comparative study of electoral systems. The different types of electoral systems. The effects of electoral systems on party systems: Duverger’s laws and beyond. The electoral reforms.

Core readings


Recommended readings


9 February (A. Chiaramonte): Party systems and party system change

Rokkan’s cleavage theory. The traditional Sartori’s classification of party systems and its (troublesome) application to contemporary party systems. Party system change.

Core readings


Recommended readings


Kitschelt, H. [2004], Diversification and reconfiguration of party systems in postindustrial democracies, Bonn, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

16 February (A. Chiaramonte): Elections, competition and voting


Core readings

Recommended readings
23 February (L. Verzichelli)

**Government structure, government performance and ministerial delegation**

How does the cabinet work? How different is the link between parliaments and executives (within the universe of parliamentary democracy)? And what about the delegation from the Chief executive and his/her delegates? These questions have been deeply refurbished and reshaped during the past two decades, due to the evolution of neo-institutionalism, and to the large use of quantitative methods.

**Core readings**


**Recommended readings**


1 March (L. Verzichelli)
Democracy and Political elites

Is the iron law of oligarchy a limit to democratic development? To what extent do elites affect the democratic consolidation and democratic transformations? These classic questions coming from the elitist theory of democracy have been evolved, during the XX century, in a number of empirical puzzles: are political elites similar across countries? What are their main lines of continuity. Are post-modern elite changes significantly different from those observed in the course of XX century?

Core readings

- Hazan, R.Y and G. Rahat (2010), Democracy within parties: Candidate selection methods and their political consequences, Oxford, Oxford University Press. Ch. 10

Recommended readings

8 March (L. Verzichelli)

Parties as organizations

What is a political party? Why are modern democracies based on political parties? What is the internal organizational structure of political parties? In which way party organizations interact with the external environment? Old and new questions about the role of party organization in contemporary democracies

Core readings

Recommended readings
- S. Bartolini, The class cleavage, Cambrdige, 2000-
New parties. New Cleavages?

The end of the freezing proposition and the emergence of new social and political cleavages in the Western democratic hemisphere. Recent researches on the development of new party families and different types of parties, related to populism, extremism and «anti-party sentiments».

Core readings


Recommended readings

22 March (L. Verzichelli)

Changes in contemporary representative democracies: personalisation and leader democracy.

Return to «Democratic theory» and panorama on some recent contribution about the crisis of representative democracy and its consequence

Core readings


Recommended readings


- Pogunkte T. and P. Webb” *The Presidentialization of Politics”,* Oxford, OUP, 2005,

- B. Manin, *The principles of Representative democracy*, CUP, 1997