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**Dates: tba**

### **Party systems in Europe**

Office Hours in Turlington Hall, 3326C: MWF 12-1 pm and by appointment

*PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS, SUBJECT TO CHANGES UNTIL FIRST COURSE WEEK*

#### **Description**

Is there a European party system model? This course shall make sense of the genesis and the evolution of the interplay of political parties in Europe. In doing so, different approaches to the explanation of the shape of party systems shall be covered. In more detail, students shall get to know cleavage and other sociological theories, institutional theories and actor-centered approaches. All relevant families of parties shall be included in the empirical part of the course, including socialists/social democrats, conservatives/Christian democrats, liberals, greens as well as far left and far right parties. In terms of countries, the focus will be on the systematic comparison of all relevant nation states in Europe. The course shall conclude with a reflection on contemporary changes in the European party systems in terms of electoral successes and decrease of membership numbers.

#### **Requirements**

*Attendance (10% of grade).*

One unexcused absence over the course of the semester is allowed; after that, unexcused absences count against your attendance grade. Excused absences do not count against your grade, but these require prior consultation with the instructor. According to the Office of the University Registrar, “acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.” For further information about the University of Florida’s attendance policy, please see the current Undergraduate Catalogue (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>).

*Active participation (20% of grade)*

Students are expected to attend class and participate actively, share their opinions and questions and take part in discussions. Required texts will be addressed in the discussions and their reading is mandatory. In addition to participation in class discussions (10% of grade), this includes one short response papers (3 pages double-spaced, 10% of grade) which should refer to the topic of the oral presentation and must be handed in by the end of week 15 the latest. Student participation is a very important component of this course. Full and active engagement with the readings, lectures, and discussions in the class is expected. In the interests of fairness and given the size of the course, there will be no extra credit assignments.

*Oral presentation (30% of grade).*

Each student make an oral presentation on one weekly topic. Presentations will take place on Fridays (or Wednesdays if there is no regular class on Friday) and should take approx. 15-25 minutes. Depending on class size, some presentations may likely be done in pairs or threes, which might extent their duration. Your presentations will address major questions on the topic that was discussed during the week and shall provide further research, different perspectives, and inspire discussions in class. To stay on track, it is highly recommended to talk about your ideas during the office hours, where also additional text for the presentation can be provided.

*Final exam (40% of grade).*

The exam will cover information from the first 11 weeks of the course. Format and scope of exam will be discussed in class prior to first exam; terms sections will be demonstrated with hypothetical questions. All exam questions can be answered with the content of the lectures given in class.

**Requirements for grad students**

Grad students are expected to attend class (10% of grade), take part in classroom discussions (10% of grade), give an oral presentation (30% of grade) as well as hand in a term paper (50% of grade). The paper is an essay on a specific research question selected by the students in consultation with the teacher.

**Policy on Exam Make-Ups**

I will only schedule exam make-ups for students who contact me by email at least a day before the exam and who can provide official documentation why they were physically unable to take the exam.

**Grading Scale**

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	E Below 60
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

**Texts**

The required texts and most other readings will be available on-line through CANVAS. The required texts are to be read at each course week. All further readings are optional. The reading schedule below is subject to change depending on the pace of progress and unforeseen scheduling changes. Please refer to the online syllabus for the latest version.

*\* indicates required readings for each week.*

**PART I: THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO PARTY SYSTEMS**

**Week 1: Introduction**

**Readings:**

- \* J Blondel (1968), Party Systems and Patterns of Government in Western Democracies. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1 (2): 180-203.  
G Smith (1989), A system perspective on party system change. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1 (3): 349-364.

**Week 2: Measuring party systems**

**Readings:**

- \* RJ Dalton (2008), The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems Party System Polarization, Its Measurement, and Its Consequences. *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (7): 899-920.  
M Laakso and R Taagepera (1979), 'Effective' Number of Parties. A Measure with Application to West Europe. *Comparative Political Studies* 12 (1): S. 3-27.  
MN Pedersen (1979), The Dynamics of European Party Systems: Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility. *European Journal of Political Research* 7 (1): 1-26.

**Week 3: Ideology and polarization in party systems**

**Readings tba**

**Week 4: The social foundations of party systems I**

**Readings:**

- FC Bértoa (2014), Party systems and cleavage structures revisited: A sociological explanation of party system institutionalization in East Central Europe. *Party Politics* 20 (1): 16-36.  
S Bornschier (2009), Cleavage Politics in Old and New Democracies. *Living Reviews in Democracy* 1 (1): S. 1-13.  
\* SM Lipset and S Rokkan (1990), Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments. In: P. Mair (ed.), *The West European Party System*. Oxford, pp. 91-138.

**Week 5: The concept of party identification**

**Readings:**

- K Arzheimer (2006), Dead Men Walking? Party Identification in Germany, 1977-2002. *Electoral Studies* 25 (4): 791-807.  
\* M Kroh and P Selb (2009), Inheritance and the Dynamics of Party Identification. *Political Behavior* 31 (4), S. 559-574.

**Week 6: The social foundations of party systems II**

**Readings:**

- Z Enyedi (2008), The social and attitudinal basis of political parties: Cleavage politics revisited. *European Review* 16 (3): 287-304.  
N Sitter (2002), Cleavages, Party Strategy and Party System Change in Europe, East and West. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 3 (3): 425-451.

## **Week 7: Spatial theories of party competition**

### ***Readings:***

C van der Eijk, H Schmitt and T Binder (2005), Left–Right Orientations and Party Choice. In: J Thomassen, (ed.), *The European Voter: A Comparative Study Of Modern Democracies*. Oxford, pp. 166-190.

\* DE Stokes (1963), Spatial models of party competition. *American Political Science Review* 57 (2): 368–377.

## **Week 8: Strategic goals of political parties**

### ***Readings:***

K Strøm (1990), A Behavioural Theory of Competitive Political Parties, in: *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (2), S. 565-598.

K Strøm and WC Müller (1999), Political Parties and Hard Choices. In: WC Müller and K Strøm (eds.), *Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, Cambridge, pp. 1-35.

## **II. PARTY SYSTEMS IN EUROPEAN COMPARISON**

### **Week 9: West European party systems**

*Readings tba*

### **Week 10: Northern European party systems**

*Readings tba*

### **Week 11: Party systems in Central and Eastern Europe**

*Readings tba*

### **Week 12: Southern European party systems**

*Readings tba*

### **Week 13:**

*Readings tba*

### **Week 14: Final reflections**

*Readings tba*

## **Final Notes**

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this

class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office so that special arrangements can be made to accommodate you. It is your responsibility to do so at the beginning of the semester and to communicate directly with the professor during the first week of classes (or as soon as the disability occurs).

**Honor Code:** Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, and what the university policies are.

If you have doubts, we please discuss with the professor immediately. After the infringement is too late. Please refer to the current Undergraduate Catalogue for more information on the Student Honor code (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>). Students who have questions about these policies, should contact the undergraduate advisement center for additional information.