**Course Overview**

The course provides an overview of concepts and theories employed in the study of political parties in competitive democracies. The course will develop theoretical arguments and employ empirical examples primarily from the literature on party systems in advanced postindustrial democracies. In the first section, we will focus on pure, general theories of parties as coalitions of politicians and party systems as arenas for competition among such coalitions.

In the second part of class, we add democratic institutions, and more specifically electoral systems, as rules that constrain and enable politicians to choose strategies. In the third section, we consider societal (political-economic, cultural) conditions as forces impinging upon the nature of competition among parties and the internal process of strategy formation and resource pooling inside parties. In the final part of class, we consider change in both parties and party systems, paying special attention to the entry of new parties.

**Course Expectations and Requirements**

**Response Papers**

Each student will complete two written critiques of the readings, 5-8 pages each (or 1250-2000 words). Each paper should be distributed to all class members via email by 12.30pm the Wednesday before class. These response papers will be the starting point for our discussion each week. The authors will also be expected to help lead the discussion during their week. To ensure even coverage, we will coordinate response papers during the first session.

I expect the papers to be analytical response papers, not simply restatements of the main arguments. Rather than summaries, you should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the readings, including addressing any debates between the readings as well as discussing any interesting unanswered research questions raised by the authors. Do not feel obliged to address each article from the week. Rather, you may want to focus on one issue or debate and follow it through several pieces. The supplementary readings provide additional resources for this purpose and you are welcome to incorporate them. For these readings, though, be aware your classmates will not have read them so a little more summarizing may be in order.
**Book Review**

In addition, students will write one book review on a work in the Supplementary Readings, 800-1200 words. You may propose a book not on the syllabus that is pertinent to the topics of a class section, but each book may be reviewed only once. Similar to the response papers, the better reviews will not simply describe the main argument but focus on evaluating the theory and empirics. Issues to address include: central question(s) and its relevance in the scholarly literature and/or the policy world, the clarity and validity of the theory, and the quality of the key evidence. Book reviews are to be circulated to students and the instructor no later than 24 hours before the appropriate class session, i.e., by 12:30pm on Wednesday. Book reviews will be distributed on a first-come first-serve basis, so notify the instructor when you select a book.

**Discussant**

Each student will choose one article from the main readings to discuss. The discussant will present the paper, key findings, and some criticism to jump-start the discussion. Beyond presenting and summarizing the paper itself, discussants should provide comments and criticisms should be similar to the Political Science Research Workshop format. Comments should be between 10-20 minutes.

**Research Design**

Each student will write an original research design, between 15-20 pages (3,750-5,000 words). These papers should look like an empirical journal article or conference paper, with only the actual empirical analysis missing. The papers should include a research question or puzzle, a short review of the relevant literature, theoretical arguments and hypotheses, and a proposed method of researching the question (empirical evidence, methodology, i.e. how you would answer test these hypotheses etc.). Papers can include some preliminary analysis. The papers can focus on any of the literature or questions raised in the class.

Prior to spring break, each student should prepare a topic statement and submit it for approval. We will discuss these ideas in class to generate constructive feedback and directions for research.

During the final class session on 4/23, we will have a panel discussion of the papers. Each student will present their paper and serve as a discussant for a colleague’s paper. Presentations are expected to be conference-style, meaning 10-15 minutes, preferably with Power-Point. To facilitate the discussion, the paper drafts will be circulated no later than Monday 4/20.

The final paper is due 5/6. Submit it via hard copy and electronically.

**Participation**

As a graduate seminar, each participant will be expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Active student participation is essential to a successful seminar.

**Evaluation**

- Response Papers (2) 20%
- Book review 10%
- Discussant 10%
- Research Paper 40%
- Participation 20%
Readings

All books will be available for purchase from the Syracuse University bookstore, and will be placed on reserve at the library. Readings will be available on-line, either in library reserves or blackboard.

Required Books


Course Policies

Statement Regarding Disability-Related Accommodations

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, Office of Disability Services http://disabilityservices.syr.edu.

Academic Integrity Statement

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu

Class Schedule

Session 1: Introduction
(15 January)
Session 2: Why Parties?  
(22 January)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


Session 3: The Internal Politics of Parties
(29 January)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


Kitschelt. The Transformation of Social Democracy, Chs. 5-6.


Session 4: Theories of Party Competition
(5 February)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


Session 5: Institutional Constraints & Opportunities Part 1
(12 February)

Required Readings


Session 6: Institutional Constraints & Opportunities Part 2
(19 February)


Supplementary Readings


Session 7: Cleavages and Party Competition  
(26 February)

Required Readings


Mair. *WEPS*:
- Maurice Duverger, Ch. 3 “Caucus and Branch, Cadre Parties and Mass Parties”: 37-45.
- Sigmund Neumann, Ch. 4 “The Party of Democratic Integration”: 46-49.
- Hans Daalder, Ch. 8 “The ‘Reach’ of the Party System”: 78-90.
- Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, Ch. 9 “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments”: 91-138.
- Stein Rokkan, Ch. 10 “Toward a Generalized Concept of Verzuiling”: 139-149


Supplementary Readings


Session 8: Strategic Politicians
(5 March)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


No Class — Spring Break  
(12 March)

Session 9:  Linkages Between Parties and Electoral Constituencies  
(19 March)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


Session 10: Party & Party System Change  
(26 March)

Required Readings


Mair. *WEPS*:
- Otto Kirchheimer, Ch. 5 “The Catch-All Party”: 50-60.
- Peter Mair, Ch. 14 “Parameters of Change”: 208-217.
- Steven B. Wolinetz, Ch. 15 “The Transformation of Western European Party Systems”: 218-231.
- Scott C. Flanagan and Russell J. Dalton, Ch. 16 “Models of Change”: 232-246.
- Ronald Inglehart, Ch. 17 “The Nature of Value Change”: 247-252.
- Ronald Inglehart, Ch. 19 “From Class-Based to Value-Based Politics.”: 266-282.


Supplementary Readings


Session 11: New Parties  
(2 April)

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


Session 12: European Parties and Representation Workshop
(Friday, 10 April)

Session 13: New Party Case Study: the Radical Right
(16 April)

Required Readings


   Ch. 9 “Demand-side: In Search of the Perfect Breeding Ground”: 201-231.


Supplementary Readings


Session 14:  Paper Discussions
(23 April)

Final drafts due 6 May.