

# **Comparative Government in Europe**

Undergraduate Course – Tue and Thu 11:00-12:15

V42.0983-001

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Between World War II and today, European democracies have developed in different sequences and in different types. This seminar is devoted to the analysis of democratic development and processes in selected European democracies in West and East. Topics include the political culture, interest groups and parties, decision making and policies in selected policy fields such as immigration. Specific country cases will be Great Britain and France in Western Europe, and Poland and Hungary in the East. Special attention will be given to the case of Germany where unification provides unique circumstances for the comparative analysis of democratic government.

The reading for this course is taken from books on sale at the bookstore, books and articles on blackboard. Readings are by week.

## **Course Requirements:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussion, to provide short topic-specific oral presentations in selected meetings (including a hand-out) and to submit a research paper. They are also required to follow the political news in the five countries covered in major and serious news media. The final grade will be a composite of the oral presentation and participation (33.3%) and the final paper (66.6%).

## **Reading**

### **Books to buy:**

Almond, Dalton, Powell, Strøm (eds.) *European Politics Today*, 4th Edition (New York: Longman, 2009) (EPT)

Dalton, Russell J. *Citizen Politics*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2008)

Stepan/Linz, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996).

Week 1 – Intro: what is Europe? (EPT chap. 1)

### *I. Concepts*

In this section some major themes of comparative political research will be addressed to heighten students' knowledge and sensibility of conceptual and methodological issues. This includes the logic of comparison and the issue of the number of cases, the analysis of institutions, cultural underpinnings and processes of democratic government, and the study of democratization processes.

Week 2 – Comparative Politics (Peters, chaps. 1-3)

Week 3 – Democratic Government (Dahl, pp. 1-16; EPT chaps. 2-4)

Week 4 – Democratization (Stepan/Linz, chaps. 1-5)

### *II. Country Cases*

Five major European countries will be studied intensively with regard to their governmental structure, their political cultures, the role of parties and elections, and the policy making processes. In each country, the question shall be addressed how “the people’s will” is translated into politics and outcomes, how traditions and institutions shape this translation and what major changes the systems are undergoing currently. While in Great Britain and France, the changes relate to segmented areas of these countries’ societal structures and political life, the Eastern European countries must deal with the more encompassing system changes in politics, economy and society stemming from the revolutions of 1989. In Germany, both processes meet in the course and aftermath of unification and provide a unique laboratory for the study of democratic politics.

Week 5 – Great Britain (EPT, chap. 5; Dalton, chaps. 7-8)

Week 6 – France (EPT, chap. 6; Dalton, chaps. 9-10)

Week 7 – Germany (I) (EPT chap. 7; Pollack et al., chap. 12; Padgett, chap.13)

Week 8 – Germany (II) (Kitschelt/Streeck, Wiesenthal, Rucht in: Kitschelt/Streeck)

Week 9 – Poland (Stepan/Linz, chaps. 15-16; EPT chap 10)

Week 10 – Hungary (Stepan/Linz, chaps. 17, 21; EPT chap 11)

### *III. Cross-Country Comparisons*

Leaving the country-by-country study, the final section addresses overarching themes of contemporary European politics in a comparative perspective which builds on the material of the previous sections. In each session, the issue is to identify common developments and country-specific manifestations and to investigate the patterns in their consequences for democratic politics in Europe. Is there a convergence of political cultures in East and West? Does welfare reform mean welfare retrenchment? Do national capitals all share the same functions in their respective political systems? Does the radical right pose a threat to European democracy?

11 Political Culture (Dalton chaps. 1,2,5,6; Pollack et al., chaps. 3,6)

12 The Welfare State (Esping-Andersen, chaps. 1,2,9; Guyomarch, chap. 10; Alcock/Craig, chaps. 7,9)

13 The Politics of European Capitals (Gordon, chaps. 1-4, 7, 14; Crowley, introduction and conclusion)

14 The Radical Right (Minkenberg 2003; Minkenberg/Perrineau; Minkenberg 2005; Minkenberg/Schain; Minkenberg 2002)

## **Required Readings:**

Alcock, Pete / Craig, Gary (eds.) 2001. *International Social Policy: Welfare Regimes in the Developed World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Almond, Gabriel A. / Dalton, Russell J. / Powell, G. Bingham / Strøm, Kaare (eds.). 2009. *European Politics Today*. 4th ed. London: Longman.

Crowley, David. 2003. *Warsaw*. London: Reaktion Books.

Dalton, Russell J. 2008. *Citizen politics : public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, DC : CQ Press.

Dahl, Robert, 1971. *Polyarchy*. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton NJ.

Gordon, David (ed.) 2006. *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*. London : Routledge.

Guyomarch, Alain et al. (eds.) 2001. *Developments in French Politics 2*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kitschelt, Herbert / Streeck, Wolfgang (eds.) 2004. *Germany beyond the Stable State*. London: F. Cass.

Minkenberg, Michael. 2002. "The Radical Right in Post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe: Comparative Observations and Interpretations", in *East European Politics and Society*, vol. 16, No. 2 (spring 2002), pp.335-362.

Michael , Minkenberg. 2003. "The West European Radical Right as a Collective Actor: Modelling the Impact of Cultural and Structural Variables on Party Formation and Movement Mobilization," in: *Comparative European Politics* vol. 1, No. 2 (June 2003), pp. 149-170.

Minkenberg, Michael 2005. "From Party to Movement? The German Radical Right in Transition" in: Xavier Casals (ed.) *Political Survival on the Extreme Right. European Movements between the Inherited past and the Need to Adapt to the Future* (Barcelona: ICPS, 2005), pp. 51-70

Minkenberg, Michael / Perrineau, Pascal. 2007. "The Radical Right in the European Elections 2004", with Pascal Perrineau, in: *International Political Science Review* 28, 1 (Jan. 2007), pp. 29-55

Minkenberg, Michael/Schain, Martin. 2003. "The Front National in Context: French and European Dimensions," in: Peter Merkl/Leonard Weinberg (ed.), *Right-wing Extremism in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 161-190

Padgett, Stephen (ed.) *Developments in German Politics 3*. Durham, N.C.: Duke, pp. 269-287

Peters, Guy. 1998. *Comparative Politics. Theory and Methods*. London: Macmillan.

Pollack, Detlef et al. (eds.) 2003 *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe* (London: Basingstoke).

Stepan, Alfred. 2001. *Arguing Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

Stepan, Alfred / Linz, Juan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press.