

Political Science 357
Contemporary Politics in Western Europe
Winter 2005

Instructor: Prof. Stuart Soroka (Leacock 529, ext. 4865, stuart.soroka@mcgill.ca)

Prerequisites: Students should have taken at least one 200-level comparative (developed) course in Political Science (at McGill, PoliSci 211 or 212). All other students should seek the instructor's permission to take the course.

Objectives: The aim of the course is to give students an understanding of contemporary domestic politics and political institutions in Western Europe. Regarding political institutions, there will be a particular emphasis on political parties, party systems and electoral systems. Where contemporary politics is concerned, we will use current events in Western European countries to illustrate, highlight, and critique some of the literature in the study of comparative Western European politics.

Subject Matter & Readings: Lectures will be given with the assumption that students have completed that week's course readings. Readings will be drawn from three sources:

(1) the course text: Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair. 2001. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, 3rd edition (New York: McGraw Hill), available at the McGill University Bookstore,

(2) journal articles, available in a coursepack (at the McGill University bookstore), and

(3) additional journal and newspaper articles, available online over the term via WebCT.

Regarding (3): because the course seeks to link political science research with current events, articles will be added the reading list over the course of the term. If there is an important political event in Germany that is relevant to the topic we cover the following week, for instance, newspaper articles on that event – readily available electronically – will be added to reading list. Students are therefore expected to regularly check the course website on WebCT.

The course is organized thematically, rather than by country. We cover country-specific material throughout; intermittently, however, we dedicate an entire lecture to a specific country. These lectures are noted in the course outline that follows; the specific countries will be chosen based on students' interests.

Requirements: Grades will be based on the following: first paper (25%), second paper (40%), and final exam (35%). The exams will be based on all course material – text, journal articles, newspaper articles, and lectures. Details of exams and assignments will be distributed in class, and via WebCT.

COURSE OUTLINE

Introductions

Lecture 1 **Introduction to the course**

No readings.

Lecture 2 **Introduction to the study of comparative politics**

Gallagher et al., pg 1-6.

Lecture 3 **Introduction to Modern Europe**

Gallagher et al., pg. 6-13.

Browse these two sources (these will be useful throughout the course):

CIA World Factbook (available online; see links below)

Political Data 2000, *European Journal of Political Research* 40(3-4) (available online; see links below).

Societies, Cleavages, Parties, and Elections

Lecture 4 **Social Cleavages**

Gallagher et al., 234-241.

Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan. 1990. "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments," Pp. 91-138 in Peter Mair, ed., *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lecture 5 **Party Families I: Old Party Families**

Gallagher et al., 202-231.

Seymour Martin Lipset. 2001. "The Americanization of the European left," *Journal of Democracy* 12(2):74-87.'

Lecture 6 **Party Families II: New Party Families**

Herbert Kitschelt. 1997. Chapter 1 in *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Roger Eatwell. 2000. "The rebirth of the 'extreme right' in Western Europe," *Parliamentary Affairs* 53(3):407-425.

F. Muller-Rommel. "The Lifespan and the Political Performance of Green Parties in Western Europe," *Environmental Politics* 11(1, special issue): 1-16.

Lecture 7 **COUNTRY FOCUS I**

TBA

Lecture 8 **Political Parties: What Do They Do?**

Gallagher et al., 271-297.

Maurice Duverger, "Caucus and Branch, Cadre Parties and Mass Parties," Pp. 37-45 in Peter Mair, ed., *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nathan Yania. 1999. "Why do political parties survive? An analytical discussion," *Party Politics* 5(1):5-17.

Paul Pennings and Reuvan Y. Hazan. 2001. "Democratizing candidate selection: causes and consequences," *Party Politics* 7(3):267-275. + other articles in this issue.

Lecture 9 **Party Systems**

Gallagher et al., 171-199.

Giovanni Sartori. 1990. "A Typology of Party Systems," Pp. 316-349 in Peter Mair, ed., *The West European Party System* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Lecture 10 **Electoral Systems**

Gallagher et al., 300-335.

Bryan O'Neal. 1993. *Electoral Systems*. Political and Social Affairs Division, Parliamentary Research Branch, Library of Parliament (BP334E).

Arend Lijphart. 1990. "The political consequences of electoral laws, 1945-1985," *American Political Science Review* 84(2):481-496.

Lecture 11 **Electoral System Reform: The Jenkins Commission**

Iain McLean. 1999. "The Jenkins Commission and the implications of electoral reform for the UK Constitution," *Government and Opposition* 34(2):143-160.

Helen Margetts and Patrick Dunleavy. 1999. "Reforming the Westminster electoral system: evaluating the Jenkins Commission proposals," *British Elections and Parties Review* 9:46-71.

Also see the Jenkins Report at:

<http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm40/4090/4090.htm>.

Lecture 12 **Elections**

Gallagher et al., 300-335.

Eric A. Bakker and Arend Lijphart. 1980. "A Crucial Test of Alphabetic Voting: The Elections at the University of Leiden, 1973-1978," *British Journal of Political Science* 10(4):521-525.

Arend Lijphart. 1997. "Unequal participation: democracy's unresolved dilemma," *American Political Science Review* 91(1): 1-14.

Lecture 13 **Electoral Change: The Big Picture**

Gallagher et al., 242-267.

Ronald Inglehart. 1997. Chapter 8 in *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Science in 43 Societies*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Paul R. Abramson and Ronald Inglehart. 1987. "Generational Replacement and the Future of Post-Materialist Values," *Journal of Politics* 49(1): 231-241.

Lecture 14 **COUNTRY FOCUS II**

TBA

Governing

Lecture 15 **Constitutions and Courts**

Gallagher et al., 14-37.

Martin Shapiro and Alec Stone. 1994. "The New Constitutional Politics in Europe," *Comparative Political Studies* 26:397-420.

Lecture 16 **Institutional Design: Divisions of Power**

Gallagher et al., 41-93, 135-170.

Giovanni Sartori. 1997. Selections from *Comparative Constitutional Engineering: An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives, and Outcomes*, (2nd edition).

Lecture 17 **Coalition-Building**

Gallagher et al., 339-372.

Kaare Strom and Jorn Y. Leipart. 1993. "Policy, Institutions, and Coalition Avoidance: Norwegian Governments, 1945-1990," *American Political Science Review* 38(2):303-35.

Lecture 18 **COUNTRY FOCUS III**

TBA

Policymaking

Lecture 19 **Do Parties Matter?**

Gallagher et al., 375-395.

Manfred G. Schmidt. 1996. "When parties matter: a review of the possibilities and limits of partisan influence on public policy," *European Journal of Political Research* 30(2):155-183.

Alexander M. Hicks; Duane H. Swank. 1992. "Politics, Institutions, and Welfare Spending in Industrialized Democracies, 1960-82," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 86(3):658-674.

Lecture 20 **Political Institutions and Policy Processes**

George Tsebelis. 2002. Selections from *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton NJ: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lecture 21 **Pluralism and Corporatism**

Gallagher et al., 398-420.

Alan Siaroff. 1999. "Corporatism in 24 industrial democracies: meaning and measurement," *European Journal of Political Research* 36(2):175-205.

Jeremy Richardson. 2000. "Government, interest groups and policy change [in EU countries]," *Political Studies* 48(5):1006-1025.

Lecture 22 **Consociationalism**

Arend Lijphart. 1969. "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* 21(2):207-225.

Rudy B. Andeweg. 2000. "Consociational Democracy," *Annual Review of Political Science* 3:509-36.

Lecture 23 **COUNTRY FOCUS IV**

TBA

The European Union

Lecture 24 **The EU: Introduction, and Representation in EU Institutions**

Gallagher et al., 96-132.

Michael Marsh and Pippa Norris. 1997. "Political representation in the European Parliament," *European Journal of Political Research* 32:153-164.

Lecture 25 **The EU in Domestic Politics**

Paul Taggart. 1998. "A touchstone of dissent: Euroskepticism in contemporary Western European party systems," *European Journal of Political Research* 33:363-388.

Robert Ladrech. 2002. "Europeanization and political parties: towards a framework for analysis," *Party Politics* 8(4):389-403 + other articles in this issue.

Nick Sitter. 2001. "The politics of opposition and European integration in Scandinavia: is Euro-scepticism a government-opposition dynamic?," *West European Politics* 24(4):22-39.

+ Browse the EU's Public Opinion page (http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/), in particular the most recent results from the Standard Eurobarometer survey.

Lecture 26 **Review**

No readings.

LINKS

The following links may be valuable throughout the course, for gathering information on Western European countries, and particularly for keeping track of current events.

General Information

PoliSci.Com: The Political Reference

Almanac: Nations of the World <http://www.polisci.com/almanac/nations.htm>

CIA World Factbook <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

Political Science: A Net Station <http://www.library.ubc.ca/poli/>

Library of Congress Country Studies <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/>

European News

EuroNews <http://www.euronews.net/>

CNN.com Europe <http://europe.cnn.com/>

BBC News Europe <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/default.stm>

West Europe News <http://www.westeuropenews.com/>

Elections and Political Parties

Elections Around the World <http://www.electionworld.org/>

IFES ElectionGuide.org <http://www.ifes.org/eguide/elecguide.htm>

Elections and Electoral Systems

Around the World <http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.htm>

Parties and Elections in Europe <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/>

Major Parties in the 86 Democracies <http://www.wheretodoresearch.com/International/Parties.htm>