



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

European Political Parties Between State and Society - 54647

Last update 11-09-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: European Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Tristan Klingelhoef

Coordinator Email: tr.klinge@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday, 16:00 – 17:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Tristan Klingelhoef

Course/Module description:

Political parties are amorphous organizations. On the one hand, they can be considered voluntary private associations that aggregate and channel the demands of ordinary citizens into the political process. On the other hand, parties are an integral part of state institutions, structuring electoral, legislative, and governmental activity. This course explores how European political parties have negotiated the tension that arises from being simultaneously societal and state actors. We ask whether the relationship between parties, the state, and society has changed over time and what the implications for contemporary democracy are. Schattschneider (1942, 1) once famously wrote that “political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties”. But how should political parties be organized to sustain or improve the health of contemporary democratic regimes?

Course/Module aims:

In addition to discussing substance, the course seeks to hone two different research skills. First, using empirical evidence to adjudicate between rival theories: There are two broad theoretical interpretations of the development of European political parties that will be introduced in the first part of the course. Based on our reading of a number of studies in the second part of the course, we will discuss which one is more in line with empirical reality. Second, applying general concepts and hypotheses to specific cases: Based on our reading of the comparative literature, we will analyze specific parties.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

At the end of the course, students should be able to

- describe the current condition of political parties in European democracies,
- analyze specific political parties,
- evaluate the relationship between party organization and democracy.

Attendance requirements(%):

85

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar

Course/Module Content:

- (1) The problem: Distrust and indifference*
- (2) Current research on the state of representative democracy*

Part 1 – The theoretical framework

- (3) Some tales of “the golden age” of party democracy*
- (4) From society to the state?*
- (5) Divergent trajectories in Southern and Eastern Europe?*

Part 2 – Political parties in Europe today

- (6) Relations with civil society*
- (7) Responses to membership decline*
- (8) State relations and party organization*
- (9) Countering leadership dominance?*
- (10) Ideological convergence?*
- (11) Facets of representation*

Part 3 – The future of political parties in Europe

- (12) Parties and democracy*
- (13) Towards synthesis or something new?*

Required Reading:

The complete syllabus and the required reading will be uploaded to the Moodle site of the course.

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

- Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 60 %*
- Active Participation / Team Assignment 15 %*
- Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 10 %*
- Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture 15 %*

Additional information: