



Syllabus

Electoral politics: voter behavior representation and party systems - 56354

Last update 07-10-2021

HU Credits: 2

Responsible Department: Political Science

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Orit Kedar

Coordinator Email: orit.kedar@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday, 12-13 or by appointment

*Teaching Staff:
Prof Orit Kedar*

Course/Module description:

The course discusses classic issues and current topics in electoral politics. The focus is thematic, but the issues addressed will be discussed in the context of particular case studies. Some of the topics discussed are: party systems, political cleavages, representation, gender and vote choice, class and electoral politics, the extreme right, and electoral politics in multi-level governance systems.

Course/Module aims:

By the end of the course students will be familiar with main topics in electoral politics.

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

Ability to read and critically evaluate studies in electoral politics

Attendance requirements(%):

100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and class discussion

Course/Module Content:

1. October 29 Introduction

I. VOTING AND KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

2. November 5 Gender and voting

Why do women vote for the left more than men do? Why was the opposite the case forty years ago?

*Giger, Natalie. 2009. "Towards a Modern Gender Gap in Europe? A Comparative Analysis of Voting Behavior in 12 Countries." *The Social Science Journal*, Vol. 46: 474-492.*

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Shayo, Moses. 2009. *A Model of Social Identity with an Application to Political Economy: Nation, Class, and Redistribution*, *American Political Science Review* 103(2): 147-174.

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II. VOTER BEHAVIOR AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

4. November 19 Electoral systems

What are some of the key principles (and) values behind different electoral systems? What are the tradeoffs between them?

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5. November 26 Votes, seats, and representation

How do votes translate into seats and, in turn, policy under different institutional regimes? Do some regimes represent voters' preferences better than others?

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Achen, Christopher H. 1978. "Measuring Representation." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 22 (3): 475-510.

Samuels, David and Richard Snyder. 2001. "The Value of a Vote: Malapportionment in Comparative Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 31: 651-671.

6. December 3 Parties in contemporary democracies

What is the role of parties in contemporary democracies? Can we have a functioning democracy without them? Do parties help or hurt democratic processes?

Kirchheimer, Otto. "The Catch-All Party." In *The West European Party System*. Peter Mair, Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1990. Pp. 50-60.

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*you may skip the second experiment described in the article.

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and economic institutions condition election results. Cambridge University Press, 2008. Ch. 1.

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Do voters take into consideration the potential impact of their vote on policy? Do they weigh the chances of their preferred party to get a seat or be in cabinet?

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Bargsted, Matias A., and Orit Kedar. 2009. "Coalition-Targeted Duvergerian Voting: How Expectations Affect Voter Choice under Proportional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 53(2): 307-323.

Kedar, Orit. 2005. "When Moderate Voters Prefer Extreme Parties: Policy Balancing in Parliamentary Elections." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 99(2): 185-199.

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What do voters think about when they vote "off season"? Are midterm elections like general elections? Does it matter that only some positions are up for election?

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How can we design an electoral system that works well in an ethnically divided society? Should we try to cut across ethnic lines and thus blur divisions or channel them into politics?

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*Lijphart, Arend. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy, Vol. 15(2): 96-109.**

Recommended

*Fraenkel, Jon, and Bernard Grofman. 2006. "Does The Alternative Vote Foster Moderation in Ethnically Divided Societies?" *Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 39(5): 623-651.**

Response:

*Horowitz, Donald L. 2006. "Strategy Takes a Holiday." *Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 39(5): 652-662.**

Rejoinder:

*Fraenkel, Jon, and Bernard Grofman. 2006. "The Failure of The Alternative Vote As A Tool for Ethnic Moderation in Fiji" *Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 39(5): 663-666.**

III. VOTER BEHAVIOR: CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS

11. January 7

Who votes (and who cares)?

Why citizens participate in politics in general and in elections in particular? Who participates? Why do Americans participate in lower rates compared with citizens of other western democracies?

*Blais, Andre, and R. K. Carty. 1990. "Does Proportional Representation Foster Voter Turnout?" *European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 18(2): 167-181.**

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Kasara, Kimuli, and Pavithra Suryanarayan. "When do the rich vote less than the poor and why? Explaining turnout inequality across the world." *American Journal of Political Science* 59.3 (2015): 613-627.

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Leighley, Jan E., and Jonathan Nagler. 2013. *Who Votes Now? Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States*. NJ: Princeton University Press.

Wolfinger, Raymond E. and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Colomer, Joseph M., 2001. *Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.

12. January 14 Elections under authoritarian regimes (+review)

What is the role of elections under authoritarian regimes? How do elites manage them? How do voters think about them?

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Golder, Matt. 2003. "Explaining Variation in the Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe." *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 36: 432-466.

Joel S. Fetzer. 2000. *Public Attitudes toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany*. Chapters 8-9, pp. 123-154. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

14. January 28 Populism

TBA

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Additional Reading Material:
See course site (Moodle)

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 90 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 10 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

None.