

## Political Science 120E

Lectures: MW 11:00 – 1:50 PST on Zoom  
Professor Kaare W. Strøm  
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Office Hours: Tue 12:00 – 1:00 and by appointment  
4 academic units

## Summer Session II 2020

R 163  
Teaching Assistant: Nicholas M. Smith  
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Office Hours: By appointment

# SCANDINAVIAN POLITICS

### Course Description

This course gives an introduction to the politics of the five Scandinavian (or Nordic) countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. We shall focus on this region's historical development, political culture, constitutions, political institutions (such as parliaments), parties and interest groups, the Scandinavian welfare states, and foreign policy. Scandinavia is noted for its peacefulness, class and gender equality, strong labor unions and social democratic parties, expansive welfare states, law-abiding citizens, high standards of living, high prices and taxes, and its reluctance to embrace European integration. But the Scandinavian countries are not all alike, in many ways they are changing, and not everyone agrees about their virtues or shortcomings. We will explore these and other characteristics of Scandinavian societies.

### Course Format and Learning Objectives

The course will be offered remotely and synchronously. It will be supported by a Canvas electronic course account, where recorded Zoom classes, lecture files, and assignments will be uploaded. The course has three main learning objectives: (1) to familiarize you with Scandinavian politics and society, (2) to enable you to understand and discuss important topics and debates as they relate to Scandinavian politics, and (3) to engage you in discussion and writing on related topics. Thus, after completing this class, you should be able to discuss and explain not only what characterizes, for example, Scandinavian political parties or foreign policies, but also how these differ across Scandinavia and why. Students will benefit from some background in Comparative Politics, for example Political Science 11 or an equivalent. Some familiarity with European politics and history will also be helpful, but is not a prerequisite. The syllabus includes a list of study questions for each class meeting. These questions are designed to help guide your study, and we will plan to discuss some of them in class, as time permits.

### Course Assignments

Written course assignments include a midterm and a comprehensive (cumulative) final examination. On tests, you will be responsible for all lecture and reading materials. The midterm and final exam will both give you a 48-hour window in which to complete them. You will also be expected to make two contributions to the course discussion board per week. One of these should be a comment or question pertaining to the week's readings, whereas the other should address one of the listed study questions for that week (though of course it need not give a full or definitive answer). There will be no make-up midterm. Incompletes or special exams will be given only for *emergencies* or *recognized disability* in accordance with UC San Diego policy. Petitions for any special accommodation must be *timely* and *properly documented*. Students requesting accommodations due to a disability must do so well before any assignment by providing a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the

Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Their contact information: Phone: 858.534.4382; E-mail: [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu); Website: <https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/>

### **Grading**

All assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, where A = 90-100; B = 80-89.9; C = 70-79.9, D = 60-69.9, and F = 59.9 or below. Course grades will be based as follows: midterm 40%, final 50%, and participation 10%. You will need to complete and pass both written assignments to pass the course. Participation grades will be based mainly on your discussion board contributions but you are also encouraged to make use of office hours and to contact and engage the teaching team or other students in other ways. Note that in most cases your participation grade can change your course grade by at most one-third of a grade (e.g., from a B+ to an A-, or vice versa). If you do not get a passing participation grade, however, the downward impact on your course grade could be larger.

### **Teaching Team**

**Kaare W. Strøm** will be the principal instructor. Born and raised in the Norwegian town of Arendal (now familiar to many, in slightly twisted form, thanks to Disney), he attended St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN) as an international student and then earned his MA and PhD from Stanford University. He teaches Comparative and European Politics at UC San Diego and has published a number of books and articles on Parliamentary Democracy, Political Parties, Powersharing, and European Politics. He was Study Center Director for the UC EAP programs in Lund and Copenhagen 2002-04 and taught in the UC-Lund University Joint Summer School on Critical World Issues from 2004 to 2008. He has taught a UC San Diego Global Seminar in Copenhagen in 2012 and one in Dublin in 2016. His email is: [kstrom@ucsd.edu](mailto:kstrom@ucsd.edu). He will hold office hours on Zoom Tuesdays 12-1pm PST and by appointment.

**Nicholas M. Smith** will be the course Teaching Assistant. He is entering his fourth year as a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at UC San Diego. His intellectual interests are in international security and foreign policy. Nick hails from the Sacramento region and earned his undergraduate degree at UC Davis. He also studied abroad at Sciences Po in Paris. Nick's email is: [nms001@ucsd.edu](mailto:nms001@ucsd.edu). He will hold office hours on Zoom by appointment.

In addition to the office hours posted here, there will also be an online discussion board, regularly monitored by the teaching team, to which you can submit questions at any time.

### **Class Format and Conduct**

Synchronous class sessions will take place every Monday and Wednesday, beginning at 11:00am PST and lasting up to 2 hours and 50 minutes. We will normally take one break of about 20 minutes some time near the middle of the session. There will be a set of Power Point slides for each class session, and these will normally be posted on Canvas before the beginning of that class. You are strongly encouraged to remotely attend all the Zoom classes. We also encourage you to turn on your camera during class (although for privacy reasons you are not required to do so), so that we can see your face, but please mute yourself unless you want to ask or answer a question or participate in a class discussion. Be courteous to other students and try not to interrupt. Do not eat, text, access social media, or listen to other devices during class. Use the "raise your hand" function in Zoom to ask questions or participate in discussions (or manually raise your hand so that we can see it). For help with Zoom for video conferencing, virtual office hours, and lectures:

<https://blink.ucsd.edu/technology/file-sharing/zoom/>

### Academic Integrity

Fair and effective education requires academic integrity. UCSD rules concerning academic integrity can be found in the General Catalog. Note that plagiarism - submitting as your own work or without proper attribution something done wholly or in part by another person - is strictly prohibited. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on assignments as well as using unattributed sources (including work you may have done for other courses). Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course will be *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person permitted. We will report any case of suspected academic dishonesty to the Academic Integrity Office. If you are in doubt about the rules or have other questions about academic integrity, please contact the UC San Diego Office of Academic Integrity, access its website, or ask a member of the teaching staff.

### Books and Materials

The following books are required readings and have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore, which is open for online textbook orders:

- David Arter, *Scandinavian Politics Today*. 3rd edition. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.
- Michael Booth, *The Almost Nearly Perfect People*. New York: Picador, 2016.
- Byron J. Nordstrom, *Scandinavia since 1500*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

These books will be supplemented by additional readings, as listed in the syllabus. All readings below are required. Please do not get an old edition (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>) of Arter's book, which will be obsolete. We have requested that all available readings be placed on UCSD library e-reserves. Please note, however, that due to copying restrictions and the lack of electronic editions, not all required readings will be available on e-reserves. For Library help concerning course reserves, connecting from off-campus, and research support: <https://library.ucsd.edu/ask-us/triton-ed.html>.

### Calendar

Tentatively, the **midterm** has been scheduled for **August 17**. The **final examination** will be given on **Friday, September 4, between 11:30am and 2:29pm**. All dates and class schedules are subject to change.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

### August 3: The Nordic Societies and their Origins: Vikings, Kings, and Queens

#### Readings:

Arter, chap. 1.

Torbjörn Bergman and Kaare Strøm (eds.), *The Madsonian Turn*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011, chap. 2.

Booth, Introduction; Denmark, chaps. 1-2 and 6.

Nordstrom, pp. 1-37.

#### Study Questions:

1. Where does the Nordic region begin and end?
2. What makes the Scandinavian countries distinctive?
3. How did the Vikings affect Europe, and why did they suddenly become peaceful?
4. Margrethe I and the Kalmar Union: Precursors of the European Union?

**August 5: From Poverty and Conflict to Affluence and Peace**

**Readings:**

Booth, Denmark, chap. 10; Iceland, chaps. 1, 3, and 5.

Nordstrom, pp. 52-78, 98-120, and 138-185.

**Study Questions:**

1. Why should we remember Christian IV and Gustavus Adolphus?
2. How did the Protestant Reformation affect Scandinavia?
3. How did Sweden eclipse Denmark as the Nordic great power?
4. Did great power politics define Scandinavia?

**August 10: Democracy, Industrialization, and Political Culture**

**Readings:**

Arter, chap. 2.

Booth, Denmark, chaps. 3-6, 11-12, 14; Iceland, chap. 5; Norway, chaps. 1, 4, 7; Finland, chaps. 1-3; Sweden, chaps. 1-3, 8.

Nordstrom, pp. 213-227, 257-281, and 291-357.

**Study Questions:**

1. To what extent did the Nordic countries pioneer modern democracy?
2. What debts does Nordic democracy owe to the Glorious Revolution, Napoleon, and 1776?
3. Why does Scandinavia have such high levels of social trust?
4. What aspects of Nordic culture are most likely to surprise or confuse foreigners?

**August 12: Parliaments, Governments, and Executives**

**Readings:**

Arter, chaps. 6 and 11-13.

Booth, Sweden, chap. 10.

**Study Questions:**

1. Why are the Nordic legislatures called "working parliaments," and why does it matter?
2. Are Nordic political leaders a cross-section of their populations?
3. Why does Scandinavia still have monarchies?
4. How have political checks and balances come to be more important in Scandinavia?

**August 17: Political Parties and Voters**

**Readings:**

Arter, chaps. 3, 4 (pp. 64-69 and 80-84), 5 (pp. 85-89 and 105-12), and 8.

Booth, Sweden, chaps. 7-8.

**Study Questions:**

1. What is special about the Nordic five-party model, and is it still alive?
2. Why have Nordic voters become so much more fickle?
3. Why have Social Democratic parties been so successful?
4. How has immigration changed Scandinavian party politics?

**MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

**August 19: Political Economy**

**Readings:**

Arter, chap. 10.

Booth, Denmark, chaps. 7-10; Finland, chap. 6; Iceland, chs 1-2; Norway, chaps. 5-7; Sweden, chap. 11.

Michael Lewis, *Boomerang*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011, chap. 1 (“Wall Street on the Tundra.”)  
Stephanie J. Rickard, *Spending to Win: Political Institutions, Economic Geography, and Government Subsidies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, chap. 7.

**Study Questions:**

1. Is there (still) a Nordic model of political economy?
2. Was the Third Way Swedish, Nordic, or Social Democratic?
3. What is the purpose of (neo-)corporatism and why has it declined?
4. Why did Sweden, Finland, and Iceland need to be turned around?

**August 24: The Welfare State**

**Readings:**

Arter, chaps. 14-15.

Booth, Denmark, chaps. 3, 7-9 and 14; Finland, chap. 6; Sweden, chap. 11.

**Study Questions:**

1. How has the Nordic welfare state changed from the Great Depression to the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
2. How has the Nordic welfare state been changed by feminism and immigration?
3. In what ways has the Scandinavian welfare state been a model for other countries?
4. Will the Nordic welfare state go bankrupt?

**August 27: Gender and the Representation of Women**

**Readings:**

Arter, review chap. 11, especially pp. 216-18.

Booth, Finland, chap. 7; Norway, chaps. 2-3; Sweden, chaps. 4-6, and 9.

Nima Sanandaji, “The Nordic Glass Ceiling.” Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 835, March 8, 2018.

Mari Teigen and Hege Skjeie, “The Nordic Gender Equality Model.” In Oddbjørn Knutsen (ed.), *The Nordic Models in Political Science* (Oslo; Fagbokforlaget, 2017), chap. 5.

**Study Questions:**

1. Why are the Nordic countries so woman-friendly?
2. How has the strong presence of women affected Scandinavian politics?
3. What policy areas matter most for gender equality?
4. What have Scandinavian gender quotas and regulations accomplished, and at what cost?

**August 31: Immigration, Integration, and the Rule of Law**

**Readings:**

Arter, review chap. 14, especially pp. 300-02 and chap. 11, especially pp. 324-26.

Booth, Denmark, chap. 14; Finland, chap. 7; Norway, chaps. 1-3; Sweden, chaps. 4-6 and 9.

**Study Questions:**

1. Why are Scandinavians so law-abiding?
2. What are the differences between civil liberties in Scandinavia and the United States?
3. Why are some Nordic countries still much more ethnically homogeneous than others?
4. Have the Nordic countries failed to integrate immigrants and ethnic minorities?

**September 2: The Nordic Region, Europe, and the World**

**Readings:**

Arter, chaps. 16-18.

Booth, Finland, chaps. 4-5; Iceland, chap. 5; Epilogue.

Christine Ingebritsen, *Scandinavia in World Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), chap. 2.

**Study Questions:**

1. Why are Nordic countries so Euro-skeptic?
2. How did World War II and the Cold War affect Nordic attitudes toward Europe?
3. Why have the Nordic countries become global agenda-setters?
4. How have key individuals shaped Nordic international engagement?

**September 4: FINAL EXAMINATION**