POLI 137A: COMPARATIVE POLITICAL PARTIES

Course Objectives: This course is designed to introduce students to the role political parties play within political society, focusing primarily on the experiences of political parties in advanced industrial democracies (particularly the political systems of the United States and Europe). The first half of the course examines the formation and evolution of political parties, paying special attention to the tradeoffs that political parties make when campaigning for votes, enacting desired policies, and securing office. We will also investigate connections and relationships between party elites and party members, examining the survival of political parties in an era where partisan attachments appear to be weakening. The second portion of the course investigates connections between political parties and party systems and how these relationships are affected by: electoral rules (e.g., electoral thresholds), societal change (e.g., postmaterialism and the rise of new movements such as the Tea Party movement and Occupy), and/or patterns of competition (e.g., the presence or absence of extreme political parties).

Learning Objectives: At the end of this course, students will:

1) Develop an understanding of the role that political parties play in political systems.
2) Examine the evolution of the organization and purpose of political parties.
3) Create new insights into how political parties make choices as it related to seeking office, shaping policy and winning votes.
4) Understand how patterns of electoral competition, social divisions, and electoral institutions shape the number and identity of political parties.
5) Compare and contrast party systems throughout the Western world.
6) Improve their oral and written communication skills.

Course Assignments/Grading: The grade for this course will be determined as follows:

- **Game Attendance/Participation:** 10%
- **Game Report:** 25%
- **Midterm Examination:** 30%
- **Final Examination:** 35%

Attendance and Participation: Due to the way in which themes will be presented in this course, regular attendance and participation is required. Students are expected to attend lecture prepared to actively discuss the assigned readings as well as participate in the course games. Subsequently, I will be taking attendance on game days and this will factor into your participation grade. Please be advised that you cannot make up missed game participation and no extra credit will be offered to make up missed games.
**Midterm and Final Examinations:** The topic and due dates for the midterm and the final examination will be discussed in lecture. Please be advised that both course examinations build on material discussed in lecture and course readings. **Understanding the logic of the games will be particularly relevant for the midterm examination, so attendance on game days will also assist you in preparation for your midterm examinations. Both examinations will be 5-7 pages in length and require the submission of a hard copy in class AND an electronic submission to turnitin.com.** We will not grade any paper for which we do not have both a hard copy and an electronic submission.

**Game Report:** Throughout the course of this quarter, we will be playing four games which simulate concepts which are discussed in lecture and course readings. While you are expected to participate in all four games you will be asked to report on only **ONE** game of your choosing. On game days, I will be taking attendance, so please remember that you will not be able to report on any games for which you were not in attendance. **The game report should be 3-4 pages in length and are due at the beginning of lecture a week after the game is played in class. Please be advised that if you choose to write on one of the later games you might not receive feedback prior to submitting the midterm.** A handout detailing game report expectations is available on the course website.

**Late Assignments:** Barring emergencies accompanied by valid documentation, **no late assignments will be accepted.** Additionally, a hard copy of each paper is required; e-mail attachments will **not** be accepted. Please be advised that we will not typically entertain any request to accept a late paper for which we are not made aware prior to the due date.

**Academic Integrity:** While issues of plagiarism are not expected, course assignments are to be completed on an individual basis in a manner consistent with UCSD policies on academic integrity. Incidents of plagiarism will be dealt with according to department and university procedures. Please be advised that under no circumstances will credit be given for any assignment which is deemed to violate UCSD’s policies on academic integrity.

**Reading Schedule:** Given that this is an upper division course, the reading load is extensive (although it is nothing compared to what you will see in graduate programs). While we recognize that students have a variety of responsibilities, we expect students to attend lecture prepared to actively discuss the course readings as you cannot succeed in this course without doing the readings. Please keep this in mind while planning for the session as course assignments will require students to show understanding of course readings. **Strategies for tackling academic readings can be found at: http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtoread.pdf.**

**Books:**

**Required:**
- Ware, Alan. *Political Parties and Party Systems*

Reserve materials (available electronically)

**Note:** For each unit, please read any scheduled chapters in Ware prior to reading the remaining material (read section A and skim country notes in section B based on interest). The material from Muller and Strom is intended to provide case material to flesh out some practical aspects of the theoretical concepts and should be read after the relevant theoretical material. If you have specific interests in any particular system, please let me know.
Course Schedule:

UNIT ONE: INTRODUCTION

Week 0: (3 October):
Course Logistics

UNIT TWO: EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Week 1 (6-10 October):
Introduction: What are Political Parties?
Ware: pgs. 1-6

Evolution and Development of Parties
Mair: pgs. 25-30, 37-45 and 50-74

UNIT THREE: PARTY STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Week 2 (13-17 October):
Game 1: Primitive Politics

Parties and Membership
Ware: CH 2 and 105-112
Reserves: Katz and Mair, Scarrow and Gezgor

Week 3 (20-24 October):
What do Parties Want? Parties and Votes
Ware: CH 11
Mueller and Strom: pgs. 1-13
Case Study (Netherlands): Mueller and Strom pgs. 112-140

Game 2: Elections

Parties and Policy: Policy and Ideology
Ware: CH 1
Case Study (Spain): Mueller and Strom: pgs. 89-111

Week 4 (27-31 October):
Game 3: Coalitions

Parties and Office: Coalition Formation-Office vs. Policy
Reserves: Lijphart, Laver and Schofield
Case Study (Ireland/Denmark): Mueller and Strom pgs. 36-62 or 63-88

Midterm: Distributed
UNIT FOUR: PARTY SYSTEMS DEFINED

Week 5 (3-7 November):
Game 4: Coalections with Portfolios

Party Systems: Competition Models
Ware: pgs. 6-12 and CH 5
Mair: pgs. 316-340
Case Study (Italy): Mueller and Strom pgs. 141-171

Week 6 (10-14 November):
Party Systems: Sociological Models
Ware: pgs. 184-202
Mair: pgs. 91-149

Midterm: Due

UNIT FIVE: MEASURING PARTY SYSTEM STABILITY/CHANGE

Week 7 (17-21 November):
Party Systems: Institutional Models
Mair: pgs. 285-295
Case Study (France): Mueller and Strom pgs. 258-278

Party System Change and Electoral Volatility
Ware: CH 7
Mair: pgs. 195-217

Week 8 (24-28 November):
Party System Change: Partisan Realignment
Mair: pgs. 232-239 and 253-265
Reserves: Inglehart and Flanagan

NO CLASS 28 NOVEMBER: THANKSGIVING

Week 9 (2-6 December):
Party System Change: Postmaterialism and the New Left/New Right
Reserves: Kitschelt, Bale
Case Study (Germany): Mueller and Strom pgs. 216-236

Party System Change: Social Movements and Party Politics
Reserves: Case Study (United States)-Williamson et al., Gitlin

Final: Distributed

UNIT SIX: CONCLUSIONS

Week 10 (9-13 December):
Party System Change: Partisan Dealignment
Mair: pgs. 239-246
Concluding Remarks: The Future of Parties and Party Systems
Reserves: Mair et al. pgs TBA

Final: Due 11:30am-2:29pm on 18 December 2014
Location TBA via Tritonlink

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to provide an overview of the course. You cannot claim any rights from it. While the information included within the syllabus should be a reliable guide for the course, scheduling and dates may change. Official announcements are always those made in lecture.