

University of Cologne – Cologne Center for Comparative Politics  
Seminar No. 14335.0106

**“The Political System of Germany”**  
Winter term 2018-2019

**Thursday, 16:00 - 17:30 h**  
IBW-Building (building no. 211), Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, 50931 Köln  
Room: S 105 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor/2. OG)

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*Office hours*  
Please make an appointment via email with either of us

*Office address*  
Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, IBW-Building, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, Room 1.04 – 1<sup>st</sup> floor

(Updated on 28/08/2018)

## **Course description**

This seminar is an introduction to the **comparative analysis of political institutions** exemplified by the case of the Federal Republic of Germany. We will devote the single sessions to explore how formal and informal institutions influence the behavior of actors within a political system. The syllabus covers **four major subject areas**:

To begin with, we focus on **electoral systems and voting behavior (I)**. Amongst other questions, we examine how and why different electoral systems evolve. In the second part, dedicated to **interest aggregation and representation (II)**, we take a closer look at political parties, interest groups, and the media as well as their relationship with state actors. Coalition and veto player theories are subjects of the third block for which we look at political actors **governing between conflict and consensus (III)**. We apply the veto player approach to discuss and explain policy evolvment and change. Furthermore, we compare and contrast theories on coalition building and assess, for example, how well they can predict coalition outcomes of national elections. The last part of the seminar, **multi-level governance (IV)**, focusses on interdependences between different political levels. Particularly, we highlight the mechanisms and effects of federal systems and Europeanization.

The overall aim of the seminar is to gain a deeper understanding of essential processes, structures and the behavior of actors within political systems by means of general political theories. Additionally, we focus on the individual steps of developing and executing a research project in order for participants to be prepared to write their own term paper.

## Course requirements

The course concept relies on **active and regular participation and in-class discussions**. Therefore, we expect you to complete the reading assignments prior to every session and to come to class prepared and ready to contribute. During the semester, each student gives an oral presentation, which will be graded on a pass-fail basis. The formats of the **oral presentations** will be outlined at the beginning of the course and oral presentations will be distributed among participants in the second session. At the end of the seminar, the students hand in a written term paper (in English language). The final grade is based on the **term paper**.

Term paper requirements differ with examination regulations:

Bachelor examination regulation of 2007: 4 ECTS, 2.500 words, ±10%

Bachelor examination regulation of 2015: 6 ECTS, 3.500 words, ±10%

(Word count without title page, content page, and references!)

Please submit an **electronic version** of your paper (PDF) **no later than Friday, March 15, 2019, 11:59 p.m. (CET)** (deadline) to both our email addresses (kaftan@wiso.uni-koeln.de and saldivia@wiso.uni-koeln.de). This version will be checked for plagiarism. Late submissions will not be accepted and result in a fail unless prior arrangement for exceptional cases has been made.

As well, you must hand in a **printed version** at the CCCP secretariat (IBW-Building, room 1.09, please be aware of the opening hours!) or send it via mail to: Lea Kaftan & Daniel Saldivia, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln. The printed version must contain the **signed non-plagiarism statement** from [this website](#).<sup>1</sup> Please note that this declaration must be given in German although the rest of the paper is in English.

Students are highly recommended to consult with us on their plans for the term paper (please arrange an appointment via email).

Information on how to write a term paper can be retrieved from the guidelines (see Session 1). General assessment criteria for term papers are laid out under [this link](#).<sup>2</sup>

The general **course language will be English**. Perfection is not required – you should merely be ready to understand and make yourself understood, thus be able to participate actively.

## Literature

Parts of the seminar literature will be provided on ILIAS. Students are expected to access the other pieces of the literature, i.e. online articles from academic journals, via the University Library (UB). Some of these online articles can only be accessed from within the UKLAN network of the University of Cologne. If you do not know how to obtain access to UKLAN, please consult the [RRZK's website](#).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Link: <http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/EidesstattlicheErklaerung.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Link: [http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Assessment\\_criteria\\_for\\_research\\_papers\\_and\\_final\\_thesis.pdf](http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Assessment_criteria_for_research_papers_and_final_thesis.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Link: <http://rrzk.uni-koeln.de/netzzugang.html?&L=1>

**Please register** for the **course** via KLIPS. If you cannot access KLIPS, please send us an email. Once the seminar has started and you have decided that you want to pass the examination of this course, please do not forget to **additionally register for the examination** until the respective deadline.

*\*\*\* Course requirements in German \*\*\**

## **Teilnahme- und Prüfungsbedingungen**

Das Seminar beruht auf der **aktiven und regelmäßigen Teilnahme und Diskussion in den Sitzungen**. Daher erwarten wir von den Teilnehmenden die Literatur vor jeder Sitzung zu lesen und bereit zu sein, ihre Erkenntnisse aus der Lektüre in den Sitzungen einzubringen. Während des Semesters hält jede und jeder Studierende einen **mündlichen Vortrag**, der mit „bestanden“ oder „nicht bestanden“ bewertet wird. Die verschiedenen Arten von mündlichen Vorträgen werden zu Beginn des Seminars erläutert und die Vorträge werden in der zweiten Sitzung unter den Teilnehmenden verteilt. Am Ende des Seminars reichen die Studierenden eine **Hausarbeit** in englischer Sprache ein. Die Note des Seminars ergibt sich aus der Bewertung der Hausarbeit.

Anforderungen an Hausarbeiten sind abhängig von der Prüfungsordnung:

Bachelor Prüfungsordnung 2007: 4 ECTS, 2.500 Wörter, ±10%

Bachelor Prüfungsordnung 2015: 6 ECTS, 3.500 Wörter, ±10%

(Wörteranzahl ohne Titelseite, Inhaltsverzeichnis und Literaturverzeichnis!)

Bitte schicken Sie die **elektronischen Version** der Hausarbeit als pdf bis zur **Frist am Freitag, 15. März 2019, 23:59 Uhr** (MEZ) an beide unserer Emailadressen (kaftan@wiso.uni-koeln.de und saldivia@wiso.uni-koeln.de). Diese Version wird auf Plagiatsverstöße geprüft. Verspätete Einreichungen führen zum Nichtbestehen des Seminars, es sei denn, ihnen geht in Ausnahmefällen eine Absprache mit uns voraus.

Darüber hinaus ist die Hausarbeit in **gedruckter Form** im CCCP-Sekretariat (IBW-Gebäude, Raum 1.09, bitte beachten Sie die Öffnungszeiten!) einzureichen oder an uns per Post zu schicken: Lea Kaftan und Daniel Saldivia, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln. Der gedruckten Hausarbeit ist eine unterschriebene **Eidesstattliche Erklärung** beizufügen, die Sie [hier herunterladen](https://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/EidesstattlicheErklaerung.pdf)<sup>4</sup> können. Bitte beachten Sie, dass die Erklärung in deutscher Sprache erfolgen muss, auch wenn die Hausarbeit in englischer Sprache verfasst wird.

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<sup>4</sup> Link: <https://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/EidesstattlicheErklaerung.pdf>

## Basic literature recommendations

- Blum, S. & Schubert, K. (eds.) (2013). *Policy Analysis in Germany*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Newton, K. & van Deth, J. (2005). *Foundations of Comparative Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Padgett, S., Paterson, W. & Zohlnhöfer, R. (eds.) (2014). *Developments in German Politics Four*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Roberts, G. (2016). *German politics today (3rd edition)*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Schmidt, M. (2009). *Political institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## Course outline

### Session 1 (11.10.2018)

#### Introduction (course content and academic writing)

Minkoff, S. L. (2018). [A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science](#).<sup>5</sup>

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (2017). [Information on How to Write a Term Paper or Thesis](#).<sup>6</sup>

Department of Political Science, University of Cologne (2016). [Hinweise zur Technik des wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens](#).<sup>7</sup>

## I Electoral Systems and Voting Behavior

### Session 2 (18.10.2018)

#### Social cleavages and voting behavior

Arzheimer, K. & Falter, J. (2008). Voter Behavior. In: Kaid, L. & Holtz-Bacha, C. (eds.). *Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. London: SAGE Publications.

Elff, M. & Roßteutscher, S. (2017). Social Cleavages and Electoral Behaviour in Long-Term Perspective: Alignment without Mobilization? *German Politics*, 26(1), pp. 12-34. (also presentation)

### Session 3 (25.10.2018)

#### The emergence of the German electoral system

Bawn, K. (1993). The Logic of Institutional Preferences: German Electoral Law as a Social Choice Outcome. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(4), pp. 965-989. (also presentation)

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<sup>5</sup> Link: [http://scottminkoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/minkoff\\_researchpaper\\_guide\\_aug2018.pdf](http://scottminkoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_aug2018.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Link: [http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Information\\_on\\_how\\_to\\_write\\_a\\_term\\_paper\\_or\\_thesis.pdf](http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Information_on_how_to_write_a_term_paper_or_thesis.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Link: [https://www.politik.uni-koeln.de/sites/politik/user\\_upload/Hinweise\\_zur\\_Technik\\_des\\_wissenschaftlichen\\_Arbeitens.pdf](https://www.politik.uni-koeln.de/sites/politik/user_upload/Hinweise_zur_Technik_des_wissenschaftlichen_Arbeitens.pdf)

Recommended reading: Shepsle, K. (2006). Old Questions and New Answers about Institutions. The Riker Objection Revisited. In: Weingast, B. & Wittman, D. (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1031-1049.

**NO CLASS (01.11.2018) – National holiday: Allerheiligen / All Saints' Day**

#### **Session 4 (08.11.2018)**

##### **The effects of the German electoral system**

Klingemann, H.-D. & Wessels, B. (2001). Political Consequences of Germany's Mixed-Member System: Personalization at the Grass Roots? In: Shugart, M. & Wattenberg, M. (eds.). *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems. The Best of Both Worlds?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 279-296.

Sieberer, U. (2010). Behavioral Consequences of Mixed Electoral Systems: Deviating Voting Behavior of Districts and List MPs in the German Bundestag. *Electoral Studies*, 29, pp. 484-496. *(also presentation)*

**Skills input:** Introduction

## **II Interest aggregation and representation**

#### **Session 5 (15.11.2018)**

##### **Parties and party systems**

Poguntke, T. (2014). Towards a New Party System: The Vanishing Hold of the Catch-all Parties in Germany. *Party Politics*, 20(6), pp. 950-963. *(also presentation)*

Recommended reading: Saalfeld, T. & Schoen, H. (2014). Party Politics and Electoral Behaviour. In: Colvin, S. (ed.). *The Routledge Handbook of German Politics & Culture*, ch. 7, pp. 105-118.

#### **Session 6 (22.11.2017)**

##### **Interest groups, unions, and the state**

Roberts, G. (2016). Interest Group Politics. In: Roberts, G. *German Politics Today (3rd)*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 172-188.

Trampusch, C. (2005). From Interest Groups to Parties: The Change in the Career Patterns of the Legislative Elite in German Social Policy. *German Politics*, 14(1), pp. 14-32.

Recommended reading: Ebbinghaus, B. (2006). Trade Union Movements in Post-industrial Welfare States: Opening up to New Social Interests? In: Armingeon, K. & Bonoli, G. (eds.). *The Politics of Post-Industrial Welfare States*. Routledge: New York, pp. 123-142. *(also presentation)*

**Skills input:** Literature review

## **Session 7 (29.11.2018)**

### **The media's role**

Van Aelst, P. (2014). Media, Political Agendas and Public Policy. In: Reinemann, C. (ed.). *Political Communication*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, pp. 231-248.

Schäfer, M. S., Ivanova, A. & Schmidt, A. (2013). What Drives Media Attention for Climate Change? Explaining Issue Attention in Australian, German and Indian Print Media from 1996 to 2010. *The International Communication Gazette*, 76(2), pp. 152-176. (also presentation)

## **III Governing between conflict and consensus**

### **Session 8 (06.12.2018)**

#### **Exercise and control of political power**

Lupia, A. (2003). Delegation and its Perils. In: Strøm, K., Müller, W.C. & Bergman, T. (eds.). *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 33-54.

Saalfeld, T. (2003). Germany: Multiple Veto Points, Informal Coordination, and Problems of Hidden Action. In: Strøm, K., Müller, W.C. & Bergman, T. (eds.). *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 347-375. (also presentation)

**Skills input:** Theory

### **Session 9 (13.12.2018)**

#### **Government formation**

Müller, W. (2009). Government Formation. In: Landman, T. & Robinson, N. (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*. London: SAGE, pp. 227-236.

Debus, M. & Müller, J. (2013). Do Voters' Coalition Preferences Affect Government Formation? *West European Politics*, 36(5), pp. 1007-1028. (also presentation)

### **Session 10 (20.12.2018)**

#### **The Federal Constitutional Court**

Vanberg, G. (2005). *The Politics of Constitutional Review in Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ch. 4, pp. 95-115.

*Recommended reading:* Stüwe, K. (2001). Das Bundesverfassungsgericht als verlängerter Arm der Opposition? *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 37-38, pp. 34-44. (also presentation, German proficiency necessary)

**Skills input:** Research design

**Session 11 (10.01.2019)**  
**Direct Democracy**

Scarrow, S. (2001). Direct Democracy and Institutional Change: A Comparative Investigation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(6), pp. 651-665.

Eder, C., Vatter, A. & Freitag, M. (2009). Institutional Design and the Use of Direct Democracy: Evidence from the German Länder. *West European Politics*, 32(3), pp. 611-633. *(also presentation)*

**IV Multi-level governance**

**Session 12 (17.01.2019)**  
**Joint decision-making**

Manow, P. & Burkhart, S. (2007). Legislative Self-Restraint Under Divided Government in Germany, 1976-2002. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 32(2), pp. 167-191.

Jeffery, C. & Pamphilis, N. (2016). The Myth and the Paradox of 'Uniform Living Conditions' in the German Federal System. *German Politics*, 25(2), pp. 176-192. *(also presentation)*

**Skills input:** Analysis

**Session 13 (24.01.2019)**  
**German politics within the European Union**

König, T. & Mäder, L. (2012). Does Europeanization Change Executive-Parliament Relations? Executive Dominance and Parliamentary Responses in Germany. In: Brouard, S., Costa, O. & König, T. (eds.). *The Europeanization of Domestic Legislatures*. New York: Springer, pp. 95-108.

Wonka, A. & Rittberger, B. (2013). The Ties that Bind? Intra-party Information Exchanges of German MPs in EU Multi-level Politics. *West European Politics*, 37(3), pp. 624-643. *(also presentation)*

**Session 14 (31.01.2019)**  
**Revision and feedback**

**Skills input:** Conclusion