Winter Term 2014/15

Dr. Jan Sauermann


Time: Thursdays 8:00 – 9:30
Room: Gottfried-Keller-Str. 6, Hörsaal des Forschungsinstituts
First Session: 9 October 2014

Course description

Is there a public good? Can it be revealed by democratic procedures? The course will focus on these fundamental questions through the lens of social choice theory. In his highly influential book 'Liberalism against Populism' William Riker argues that democratic decisions are chaotic, meaningless, and arbitrary. The seminar consists of two parts. In the first part of the seminar we will examine Riker's line of argumentation in detail. In the second part we will analyse alternatives from democratic theory trying to defend democracy against Riker's pessimistic interpretation of social choice theory.

Prerequisites
Students should have a good knowledge of political science concepts, basic qualitative and quantitative methods, some math skills, and an interest in current research. Since nearly all reading assignments are in English, this will be the general classroom language as well. Participants therefore must know enough English to be able to participate actively. Perfection is not required – you just need to understand and make yourself understood.

Relevance for study programmes
The course is open to all doctoral students and advanced master/diploma students of the WiSo-Faculty with an interest in political science.

Registration
The course will be taught on a weekly basis (first session October 9). Students should register via KLIPS. Students unable to use KLIPS can register via Email (jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de).

Reading assignments
At the beginning of October a reader with the required texts for the sessions of the seminar can be bought at Copy-Star (Zülpicher Straße 184, 50937 Köln).

Working requirements and assessment method
All participants are expected to:
  - attend the seminar on a regular basis
  - complete assigned readings according to schedule
  - actively contribute to class discussions
  - give a 10 to 15 minutes presentation in the seminar
Depending on the “Prüfungsordnung”

- **EITHER** write a research paper of 15-20 pages (about 5,000-6,000 words) in length
- **OR** sit a written exam

**Submission of the research paper**

Please hand in **two versions** of your research paper:

- **Electronic version**
  (pdf- or Word file) via email to jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de
  **Deadline:** 9 March 2015, 10:00am

- **Paper version**
  You can hand in the paper version personally at the secretary of the Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (IBW Gebäude, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, 1st floor, Room 1.09) or send it by mail to:
  Jan Sauermann, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln

  **The paper version must contain the following signed statement:**
  [Link to the statement]

**Teilnahme- und Prüfungsbedingungen**

- Regelmäßige Teilnahme an den Seminarsitzungen
- Gründliche Vorbereitung der angegebenen Grundlagenliteratur
- Aktive Beteiligung an den Diskussionen im Seminar
- Referat (10-15 Minuten)
- **UND:** Abhängig von der jeweils geltenden Prüfungsordnung:
  - Hausarbeit von 15-20 Seiten (ca. 5,000-6,000 Wörter)
  - **ODER:** Klausur (60 Minuten)

**Abgabe der Hausarbeit**

Bitte reichen Sie zwei Versionen Ihrer Hausarbeit ein:

- **Elektronische Version**
  (pdf- oder Word-Dokument) per Email an jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de
  **Deadline:** 9. März 2015, 10:00 Uhr

- **Papierversion**
  Sie können die ausgedruckte Version Ihrer Hausarbeit entweder persönlich während der Öffnungszeiten im Sekretariat des Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (IBW-Gebäude, Herbert-Lewin-Str.2, 1. Stock, Raum 1.09) abgeben oder per Post an folgende Adresse senden:
  Jan Sauermann, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln

  **Die Papierversion muss folgende unterschriebene Erklärung beeinhalten:**
  [Link to the statement]
General readings:


Schedule

9 October 2014  
***Introduction***

Required readings:


16 October 2014  
***Rational choice theory***

Required readings:


Optional readings:


23 October 2014  
***Riker I***

Required readings:


30 October 2014  
***Riker II: The Arrow-problem***

Required readings:


Optional readings:


6 November 2014  
***NO CLASS***
13 November 2014  Riker III: Strategic voting and agenda control

Required readings:

Optional readings:

20 November 2014  Riker IV: Political disequilibrium

Required readings:

27 November 2014  Riker's conception of democracy

Required readings:

4 December 2014  Mackie I: Defending democracy from social choice

Required readings:

11 December 2014  Mackie II: Unrestricted domain of preferences

Required readings:

Optional readings:
18 December 2014  Discussion of research designs
Joint discussion of participants’ ideas/ research questions/ research designs for final papers.

Task for this session:
Hand in a one-page outline of your planned research design by Tuesday, 16 December 2013, 10:00 AM.

8 January 2014  Mackie III: Strategic voting

Required readings:

15 January 2015  Mackie IV: Multidimensional chaos

Required readings:

Optional readings:

22 January 2015  Mackie vs. Riker

Required readings:

Optional readings:

29 January 2015  Social choice and deliberation

Required readings:
5 February 2015 Social choice and pluralism

Required readings: