



Universität zu Köln

Comparative Legislative Politics

Summer Semester 2018

Thursday, 12:00 - 13:30 (Hörsaal, Gottfried Keller Straße 6)

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Office Hours: (by appointment, online registration via Ilias)

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1. Course Description

This seminar surveys research on comparative legislative behavior and politics at the national and supranational level in Europe. The seminar will adopt an analytical and empirical perspective. The readings focus mostly on recent theoretical and empirical work on parliaments. Questions that the course will address include: whose interests do politicians represent? How do multiparty governments confront the challenges of joint policymaking? Why can minority governments be effective law-makers? Why are ministerial careers only weakly connected to patterns of government termination? When do opposition parties support governments? Do parliamentary speeches reflect political polarization? Do voters reward or punish rebel MPs? How do mainstream parties respond to populist parties in parliament? How does substantive representation of women occur in parliament? How do members of the European Parliament represent interests? How can national parliaments successfully scrutinize European legislation? In addition to a discussion of these topics, the course will offer two data skill sessions in which students will get to know how to manage and analyze legislative data and speeches.

2. Course Objectives

- Develop capacity to understand and critically reflect on the main debates related to the study of legislative politics and behavior
- Develop empirical research skills
- Develop oral presentation skills
- Learn how to write an empirical research paper

3. Prerequisites

While there is no formal prerequisite, students should bring an open mind and willingness to learn quantitative methods.

4. Course Requirements

It is expected that student participate regularly and actively in the seminar. Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following components:

1. Presentation (30%)

The course presentation has three components. The first component is a **seminar discussion role** (10%). Each student will serve as discussion leader for a particular week. Depending on the size of the class, several students may share this task. The student will start the seminar by describing key conceptual issues, central arguments and debates, and methodological issues. The initial presentation should last for about 10 minutes (possibly shared with other students).

The second component is a **research presentation** (15%). Each student will present a research project (research design and preliminary results).

The third component is the provision of **feedback to other student presentations** (5%). This feedback should be respectful and offer constructive methodological criticism, including ideas for how the research can be improved. In addition to providing at least one constructive comment in class, students need to submit the written comments after the presentations to the instructor.

2. Research Paper (70%)

Students will write a 15 page research paper, to be handed in on **August 9** (PhD students 15-20 pages). You are encouraged to use the research project as an opportunity to start work on your thesis, or to work on a potentially publishable paper. A list of references and appendices do not count towards the page limit. The final paper should focus on a puzzle in the field of legislative behavior or politics in Europe and be one of the following:

- (a) a research design for an empirical study (MA thesis or PhD dissertation)
- (a) an original empirical analysis using existing datasets

You are expected to hand in a 2-page proposal for the paper, indicating choice (a) or (b) by **May 24** (email). It should describe the puzzle/research question, working hypotheses, and the methods (and possibly data) you are planning to use. PhD students are encourage to submit an empirical analysis (option b).

5. Bonus Points

You will be able to collect up bonus points to improve the final grade (bonus points are not transferable to other semesters). You may receive the top grade for this class without submitting any bonus work. The following activities will yield bonus points:

- Proposing a discussion question

You can submit a discussion question until Wednesday noon before class for weeks 2-4, 6-7, and 10 (Ilias). The question should go beyond mere questions for clarification, but should be suitable for a discussion of the readings and demonstrate that you have done the readings. If I pick your question for debate in class that week, you will receive 1 bonus point. If I do not pick your question, you will receive 0 bonus points. In total, you will be able to accumulate a total of 6 bonus points for this part.

- Group project on parliamentary speech

You will receive a data analysis assignment related to the automated text analysis of political speech after the first data skills session. You may complete this assignment together with another seminar member. Details about the assignment will be announced on May 17. You will have two weeks to complete the assignment. You will be able to receive up to 6 bonus points for the assignment.

- Analyzing legislative data

You will receive a data analysis assignment related to the analysis of legislative data after the second data skills session. You may complete this assignment together with another seminar member. Details about the assignment will be announced on June 28. You will have two weeks to complete the assignment. You will be able to receive up to 6 bonus points for the assignment.

6. Course Material

Readings will be available as electronic articles through Ilias.

7. Course Outline

Week 1 **Introduction to the Study of Legislative Politics and Behavior** April 12

Readings:

- Martin, S., T. Saalfeld, and K. W. Strøm. 2014. "Introduction" in: Martin et al. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 - Uslander, E. M, and Zittel, T. 2006. "Comparative Legislative Behavior." In Rhodes, R. et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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Week 2 **Cabinets, Ministers, and Law-Making** April 19

Readings:

- Martin, L. and G. Vanberg. 2011. *Parliaments and Coalitions: The Role of Legislative Institutions in Multiparty Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 2-3 and 5.
 - Strom, K. 1984. "Minority governments in parliamentary democracies: The rationality of nonwinning cabinet solutions." *Comparative Political Studies*, 17(2), 199-227.
 - Huber, JD. and C. Martinez-Gallardo. 2008. "Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 169-80
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Week 3 **Opposition Politics** April 26

Readings:

- Andeweg, Rudy B. 2013. "Parties in Parliament: The Blurring of Opposition." In Müller, W. C. and Narud, H. (eds.), *Party Governance and Party Democracy*, pages 99–114. Springer, New York.
 - Louwse, T., Otjes, S., Willumsen, D.M. and Öhberg, P., 2016. "Reaching across the aisle: Explaining government–opposition voting in parliament." *Party Politics*, DOI: 10.1177/1354068815626000, pp. 1-14
 - Proksch, S.O. and Slapin, J.B., 2011. "Parliamentary questions and oversight in the European Union. *European Journal of Political Research*, 50(1), pp. 53-79
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Week 4 **Electoral Connection and Party Unity**

May 3

Readings:

- Proksch, Sven-Oliver and Jonathan B. Slapin. 2015. *Politics of Parliamentary Debate: Parties, Rebels, and Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-2.
 - Campbell, R., Cowley, P., Vivyan, N., and Wagner, M. 2016. "Legislator Dissent as a Valence Signal." *British Journal of Political Science*
 - Hix, Simon. 2004. "Electoral Institutions and Legislative Behavior: Explaining Voting Defection in the European Parliament." *World Politics* 56(2), pp. 194-223.
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Week 5 **Data Skills I: Automated Text Analysis of Political Speech**

May 17

Students will learn various automated text analysis techniques for political speeches. A laptop is required. Instructions will be circulated in advance.

Week 6 **Populist Parties in Parliament**

June 7

Readings:

- Kaltwasser, C.R. et al. 2017. "Populism: An Overview of the Concept and the State of the Art." In: Kaltwasser et al. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 - Schumacher, G., and Van Kersbergen, K. 2016. "Do mainstream parties adapt to the welfare chauvinism of populist parties?" *Party Politics*, 22(3), 300-312.
 - Otjes, S. and Louwerse, T. 2015. "Populists in Parliament: Comparing Left-Wing and Right-Wing Populism in the Netherlands". *Political Studies*, 63: 60–79.
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Week 7 **Women in Parliament**

June 14

Readings:

- Childs, S., and Krook, M. L. 2009. "Analysing women's substantive representation: From critical mass to critical actors." *Government and Opposition*, 44(2), 125-145.
- O'Brien, D. Z. 2015. "Rising to the Top: Gender, Political Performance, and Party Leadership in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science*, 59: 1022–1039.
- Barnes, T. 2016. *Gendering Legislative Behavior: Institutional Constraints and Collaboration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-3.

Week 8 **No class (EPSA conference)**

June 21

Week 9 **Data Skills II: Analyzing Legislative Data (4 hour session)**

June 28

We will discuss available datasets suitable for legislative analysis and techniques for analyzing them. A laptop is required. Instructions will be circulated in advance.

Note: the session from 14-15:30 will take place in Building 210, (Bauwens-Gebäude), Richard Strauss Straße 2, 2.B.11

Week 10 **The European Parliament and National Parliaments**

July 5

Readings:

- Proksch, SO and J. B. Slapin. 2015. *Politics of Parliamentary Debate: Parties, Rebels, and Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7.
- Senninger, R. 2017 "Issue expansion and selective scrutiny - how opposition parties used parliamentary questions about the European Union in the national arena from 1973 to 2013", *European Union Politics* 18 (2), pp. 283-306.
- Auel, K and C. Neuhold. 2016. "Multi-arena players in the making? Conceptualizing the role of national parliaments since the Lisbon Treaty", *Journal of European Public Policy* 24 (10), pp. 1547-1561.

Week 11 **No class**
July 12

Week 12 **Research Presentations (4 hour session)**

July 19

Students will present their research projects in class.

Note: the session from 14-15:30 will take place in Building 210, (Bauwens-Gebäude), Richard Strauss Straße 2, 2.B.11