

Political Science 137A  
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Fall Quarter 1998  
WLH 2204  
MWF 1:25 - 2:15 pm  
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# COMPARATIVE POLITICAL PARTIES AND INTEREST GROUPS

## Objectives

As an introduction to the study of political parties and interest groups in democratic countries, this course has four major objectives. Students taking this course should (1) learn to think about political parties and interest groups in systematic and comparative terms, (2) gain some knowledge and understanding of such political organizations in two foreign countries, (3) acquire familiarity with theories of democracy, representation, and voter and group behavior, and (4) develop the ability to assess these theories empirically.

## Approach

The course is divided into three parts. The first part introduces the analytical tools and surveys the structures and activities of parties and interest groups in Western democracies. The second and third parts apply these tools to two European countries: The United Kingdom and Norway. The parties and interest groups of these countries will be compared and contrasted. We also shall make comparisons between Western Europe and the United States. We shall devote relatively more attention to parties than to interest groups. Prior familiarity with American parties and interest groups, or with European politics, will be helpful, but not a prerequisite.

## Course Assignments and Grading

The course assignments include (1) an in-class midterm, (2) an analytical paper (approx. 2000 words) over an assigned topic, (3) a brief written report on one of two games played in class, and (4) an in-class final examination. The paper assignment will be based on prior class discussion. Tests will be based on lectures as well as course readings. For students whose final exam grades are better than their average for the midterm and paper, the final will count 50% and each of the other two assignments 25%. In the opposite case, each major assignment will count one-third toward the course grade. Late papers will be penalized. Class attendance is required, and class participation and game reports may collectively be used to adjust course grades, upward or downward, up to a maximum of one full grade. Students who fail to complete one or more assignments will not pass the course. Extensions, Incompletes, or make-up exams will be given in *exceptionally pressing* cases only and in accordance with university policy. Petitions have to be *timely* and *properly documented*.

## Academic Honesty

Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any violation is a very serious matter. UCSD rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Note especially the strict prohibition against plagiarism, i.e., submitting as your own or without proper attribution work done wholly or in part by another person. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are *individual*, and no collaboration with any person is permitted. In-class tests are *closed-book*, with no aids allowed. Any academic dishonesty will be punished by a grade penalty up to automatic course failure and will **without exception** be reported to the student's dean for disciplinary action.

## Calendar

Tentatively, the midterm has been scheduled for October 23 and the class discussion for the paper assignment for November 6. The paper is due on November 20. The final exam will be given on Monday, December 7, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm (**Note: Two hours only**). The games are tentatively scheduled for October 9 and November 20, respectively. Game reports are due no later than December 2, but you are strongly encouraged to submit them earlier. All dates and lecture topics are subject to change. Definitive announcements will be made in class.

## Books and Materials

The following books and reprints have been ordered by the bookstore:

Jeffrey Archer, *First Among Equals*. Harper 1993.

Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Western Europe*. Second edition. McGraw-Hill 1995.

Iain McLean, *Dealing in Votes*. St. Martin's 1982.

Philip Norton, *The British Polity*. Third Edition. Longman 1994.

Kaare Strøm and Lars Svåsand, eds., *Challenges to Political Parties: The Case of Norway*. University of Michigan Press 1997.

Other required readings will be made available in a course packet. All readings below are required. They will be placed on reserve at the Undergraduate Library.

# COURSE OUTLINE

## I Democracy, Parties, and Interest Groups (September 25 - October 23)

### Readings:

Gallagher, Laver, and Mair (hereafter: GLM), chs. 2-3, 7-14.

Michael J. Laver, *Playing Politics*, ch. 3.

McLean, chs. 1, 4-8.

### Class Schedule:

Sep 25: Democracy and Political Organizations

Sep 28: Parties in the Electorate: Frozen Party Systems (GLM, chs. 7-8; McLean, ch. 1)

Sep 30: Parties in the Electorate: The Silent Revolution (GLM, ch. 9)

Oct 2: Party Competition: The Power of the Median Voter (McLean, ch. 4)

Oct 5: Electoral Systems: Duverger's Law (GLM, ch. 11)

Oct 7: Party Organization: Contagion from the Left or Right? (GLM, ch. 10; McLean, ch. 6)

Oct 9: **Game: Entrepreneurs** (Laver)

Oct 12: Parties in Government: The Mandate Model (GLM, chs. 3, 13; McLean, ch. 8)

Oct 14: Party Systems: ~~A~~Three's a Crowd ...? (GLM, ch. 2)

Oct 16: Coalitions: The Size Principle (GLM, ch. 12)

Oct 19: Interest Groups: The Collective Action Problem (McLean, chs. 5, 7)

Oct 21: Interest Group Systems: Pluralism and Corporatism (GLM, ch. 14)

### Oct 23: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

## II Parties and Interest Groups in Great Britain (October 26 - November 11)

### Readings:

Gallagher, Laver, and Mair, review relevant parts.

Archer, entire.

Samuel H. Beer, *Britain Against Itself*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1982, pp. 1-76.

McLean, chs. 2, 5.

Norton, chs. 1, 3-8, 11.

### Class Schedule:

Oct 26: Background (Archer; Norton, chs. 1, 3-4)

Oct 28: Parties in the Electorate I (McLean, ch. 2; Norton, ch. 5)

Oct 30: Parties in the Electorate II (McLean, ch. 2; Norton, ch. 5)

Nov 2: Party Organization (Archer; Norton, ch. 6)

Nov 4: Parties in Government (Archer; Norton, chs. 8, 11)

Nov 6: **Class Project Discussion**

Nov 9: Interest Groups (McLean, ch. 5; Norton, ch. 7)

Nov 11: Pluralism and Corporatism (Beer)

## III Parties and Interest Groups in Norway (November 13 - December 4)

### Readings:

Michael J. Laver, *Playing Politics*, ch. 5.

Harry Eckstein, *Division and Cohesion in Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, chs. 2-3, 5.

Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 1-8, 11, 13, and 15.

Hilmar Rommetvedt, "Norway." In Erik Damgaard, ed., *Parliamentary Change in the Nordic Countries*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1992.

### Class Schedule:

Nov 13: Background (Strøm and Svåsand, ch. 1; Eckstein)

Nov 16: Parties in the Electorate I (Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 2-3)

Nov 18: Parties in the Electorate II (Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 4, 11)

Nov 20: **Game: Coalitions** (Laver, ch. 5); **Paper Due**

Nov 23: Party Organization (Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 5-6)

Nov 25: Parties in Government (Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 5, 13, 15)

Nov 30: Party System and Coalitions (Rommetvedt)

Dec 2: Interest Groups (Strøm and Svåsand, chs. 7, 13); **Game Reports Due**

Dec 4: Corporatism (Strøm and Svåsand, ch. 8)

**Dec 7: FINAL EXAMINATION**