
Political Science 4063

Prof Wm A Clark
240 Stubbs Hall
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Tu & Th 9:00 – 10:20
203 Woodin Hall
Fall 2016

This course is dedicated to the comparative analysis of political institutions, which in comparative politics are viewed as either rules or organizations. The primary orientation of the course material lies in state governmental institutions, although some social institutions will also be examined. The course focuses on what has come to be called the "new institutionalism," which adopts a more decidedly structural or state-centric approach to politics. It emphasizes the relative autonomy of political institutions, and thus seeks to present a counterweight to the predominant view of politics as merely a reflection of the aggregation of individual preferences and behaviors. If it can be argued that individuals and institutions impact each other, the new institutionalism focuses primary attention on how relatively autonomous political institutions (i.e., rules and organizations) affect individual political behavior and impact the performance of the political system. As a result, it is assumed that (a) the design of institutions is a major determinant of the behavior and performance of political actors, and (b) that institutions can be engineered to produce more or less predictable results.

First, each student is expected to attend each and every class session. Second, it is imperative that students keep pace with the reading assignments. Come to class having already read the assigned materials for that day. Third, each student must sit for two examinations. The first examination is scheduled for our class session on Tuesday, October 11. The second examination is set for the final

"A" indicates "distinguished mastery"

Hans Keman (2006). "Parties and Government: Features of Governing in Representative Democracies," pp. 160-174 in Richard S. Katz and William Crotty, eds., Handbook of Party Politics (Sage).

Lijphart, chapter 6

Wolfgang C. Muller & Kaare Strom (2000). "Coalition Governan

Lijphart, chapter 10

Brian Galligan (2008). "Comparative Federalism," pp. 261-280 in R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder, and Bert A. Rockman, eds., The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Charlie Jeffery and Daniel Wincott (2006). "Devolution in the United Kingdom: Statehood and Citizenship in Transition," Publius: The Journal of Federalism, vol. 36, no. 1: 3-18.

Lijphart, chapter 11

Sartori, chapter 10

John Uhr (2008). "Bicameralism," pp. 474-494 in R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder, and Bert A. Rockman, TJET0 g175.22 64

Each student must write a short research paper that addresses one of the themes below. The essay is to be approximately 1,800 words (not counting the cover page or footnotes), using an 11- or 12-point font and with normal margins. Use of outside materials is

- (10) Did Russia's Boris Yeltsin act unconstitutionally in the 1998 Kirienko nomination affair?
- (11) What likely will happen to the British House of Lords?
- (12) Why does the current French constitution prohibit MPs from serving on the cabinet?
- (13) What are the strengths and weakness of coalition governments?
- (14) Would Al Gore have been elected president in 2000 if the US had a popular vote-based system?
- (15) Is the British Prime Minister becoming increasingly "presidential"?
- (16) Why have Italian governments had such short life spans?
- (17) Is France's constitutional council a "third house" of the French legislature?
- (18) Are political parties more important inside of government or outside of government?
- (19) Why do federalism, bicameralism, and judicial review all tend to go together?
- (20) Why has the Weimar constitution of interwar Germany become a metaphor for the present?
- (21) Is the constitutional rule in the USA of two Senators per state undemocratic?
- (22) What effect does France's parliamentary election system have on the French party system?
- (23) How does the PR electoral system of Weimar Germany differ from its current PR system?
- (24) Is the Swiss political structure really a confederacy?
- (25) Is Russia a semi-presidential system or a super-presidential system?
- (26) Why did Australia impose compulsory voting in 1924? What's been its long-term impact?
- (27) Was the German Constructive Vote of No Confidence in 1982 properly executed?
- (28) What is the rationale for Article 99 of the Belgian Constitution? How has it impacted cabinet formation?
- (29) In what ways is the Good Friday Agreement consociationalist? In what ways is it not?
- (30) How does parliamentarism at the state level impact the operation of the German Bundesrat?