

PLSC 485S - The Politics of Parliaments

Spring 2018

Instructor:	Christine Sylvester	Class:	Mondays
	LNG 77		5:50-8:50PM
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	Office Hours: Mondays 3:45PM-5:45PM,		Binghamton University
	or by appointment		

Course Description

Overview: This class will examine the interworking of parliamentary politics by focusing of three aspects of policy formation in parliamentary democracies (1) parliamentary institutions, practices, and procedures, (2) parliamentary behavior, and (3) governance and coalition bargaining. Our study of these aspects will focus on the role of political parties in parliamentary politics and how parties use shrewdness and guile to push their agendas. This seminar is designed for advanced undergraduate students who have completed introductory studies in Comparative Politics. Students in this seminar will have a chance to engage in original research in the study of how multi-party systems effectively govern. This is an interactive seminar where full participation is essential and required.

Course Requirements

This seminar is grounded in core reading materials. All students are expected to come to class each week having completed all the assigned readings and assignments. Final grades for this seminar will be tabulated from class participation, weekly assignments or quizzes, an original research project (including paper and presentation), along with two examinations. The distribution of these components is as follows:

Participation (30%): You will be expected to have completed all reading assignments each week and to actively join in class discussions of them. Attendance is mandatory. Participation cannot be made up, if you don't show up or arrive late your participation for that day will be zero. Mere attendance (showing up but not contributing to discussion) is not enough. You will be graded on the depth and thoughtfulness of your comments not the volume. The two best rules to consider in discussions are "*Will this comment further substantive and supportive discussion amongst my classmates?*" and "*Does this comment provide insight into this or prior week's material?*" At the end of each class, if you think you have sufficiently contributed to the class, hand your instructor a piece of paper with your name, the date, and a detailed note on how you believe you contributed that day. Your instructor will either accept it or decline it. If you have submitted 9 of these by the end of the semester, you get full credit. Less than 9 will result in partial credit. The semester will have 11 weeks where slips will be collected so students should keep track of how many they have done so far.

Weekly Assignments and Quizzes (20%): Throughout the course students will complete short assignments or quizzes that relate to the topic of the week. Students will have several quizzes and short written assignments over the course of the semester, either during class or as homework. The quizzes will not be announced in advance. Written assignments will be either announced in class or on MyCourses and must be submitted at the beginning of class. Unless otherwise specified, written

assignments should be double-spaced and stapled. They must also use 12-point Times New Roman font, normal (one-inch) margins, and employ a proper method of citation (both in-text and bibliography). Failure to abide by these formatting requirements will result in a grade deduction (for example, an assignment receiving an A will be reduced to an A- etc.). Failure to employ a proper method of citation may be construed as plagiarism and result in disciplinary action. Students will be required to submit for all assignments both a hard-copy in class and electronically through Turnitin (a plagiarism detection program). Assignments that have been submitted in class but not through Turnitin (or vice versa) will not be graded and the student will receive a zero on the assignment.

No assignments will be accepted after class has begun or via email. At the end of the semester, the lowest score will be dropped.

Research Paper and Presentation (30%): Students will write a research paper on a topic that relates to the material addressed in this course. The paper must pose a research question, present an argument which incorporates an answer to the research question, an evaluation of the argument supported by evidence (such as data analysis or case application), and a conclusion that links your findings to future research paths. Papers should be between 10-15 pages in length, double-spaced, and stapled. They must also use 12-point Times New Roman font, normal (one-inch) margins, and employ a proper method of citation (both in-text and bibliography). Failure to abide by these formatting requirements will result in a grade deduction (for example, a paper receiving an A will be reduced to an A- etc.). Failure to employ a proper method of citation may be construed as plagiarism and result in disciplinary action. Students will be required to submit both a hard-copy of their paper in class and electronically through Turnitin (a plagiarism detection program). Papers that have been submitted in class but not through Turnitin (or vice versa) will not be graded and the student will receive a zero on the assignment. More detailed instructions on paper requirements will be discussed throughout the semester. The best rule of thumb is to pick your topic and get writing early.

Students are expected to come up with a topic for their paper (you are always welcome to come to my office hours to discuss ideas) and write a one-page description of their project to be submitted at the start of class on 26 February. This paper topic assignment and a brief presentation of it will count towards the student's overall paper grade. While this topic assignment is only one-page the expectation is that students will have identified their research question, proposed a reasonable theory/argument and have begun to collect evidence.

Hard copies of the final research paper are due at the start of class on April 23rd by 5:50 pm and should be submitted electronically to TurnItIn by the same deadline. Late papers will be penalized by one grade each calendar day they are late including those submitted after class has begun (for example, a paper receiving an A that is submitted 1 day late will receive an A-, 2 days late will receive a B+, etc.).

On April 30th and May 7th students will be responsible for presenting their research paper. The format of the presentation is up to each student (for example, PowerPoint, Video, or Prezi) and should be 12-15 minutes in length. For the presentation, you are the expert on your paper topic and should ensure your presentation does a thorough job of explaining your research question, its significance, your analysis, findings, conclusions, and possible extensions. Presentations will count towards the student's overall paper grade.

A Note on Missed Presentations. Presentations missed without a valid and prearranged excuse cannot be made up, effectively resulting in a zero. Missing presentation day will greatly reduce your chances of receiving a passing grade for the semester. Please plan accordingly.

Midterm Exam (10%) and Final Exam (10%): Both examinations will be a non-traditional format instead focusing on the development of practical skills regularly utilized in the professional policy-making world. Further details on the requirements and format of these examinations will be provided during the semester.

A Note on Missed Exams. Exams missed without a valid and prearranged excuse cannot be made up, effectively resulting in a zero for that exam. Missing an exam greatly reduces your chances of receiving a passing grade for the semester. Please plan accordingly.

Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule of topics, readings, assignments, and exams that will be covered in this course. I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule, including exam dates, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these changes. Date changes will be announced well in advance during class. Readings denoted as (B) will be posted on MyCourses, (R) will be held at the Bartle Library on reserve, and those denoted as (S) will be the responsibility of the student to locate. Students are encouraged to use Library resources to locate these readings well in advance. **All readings are required.**

22 January Introductions: Bio Sketch and Course Requirements

Assignment: Complete Bio Sketch assignment and submit online prior to the start of our first class

29 January Political Representation I

Readings:

- Burke, Edmund (1774) "Speech to the Electors of Bristol at the Conclusion of the Poll 3 November 1774." <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch13s7.html>
- Pitkin, Hannah. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. University of California Press. Chapters 3-6. **(B)**
- Shapiro, Ian, Susan C. Stokes, Elisabeth Jean Wood, and Alexander S. Kirshner, eds. 2009. *Political Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3 **(B)**

Assignment: LTDs of Pitkin Chapters 3-6 and Shapiro et al Chapter 3 (you should have two LTDs, one for each author and bring two hard-copies of each turning in one set at the start of class)

5 February Political Representation II

Readings:

- Pitkin, Hannah. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. University of California Press. Chapters 8 & 9. **(B)**
- Shapiro, Ian, Susan C. Stokes, Elisabeth Jean Wood, and Alexander S. Kirshner, eds. 2009. *Political Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4 & 5 **(B)**
- Mansbridge, Jane. 2003. "Rethinking Representation." *American Political Science Review*. 97(4): 515-528. **(B)**

Assignment: LTDs of each of the three assigned readings (bring two hard-copies of each and turn one set in at the start of class)

12 February What is Parliamentary Democracy?

Readings:

- Arend Lijphart, ed. 1992. *Parliamentary versus Presidential Government*. Oxford University Press. Introduction (pp. 1-27). **(R)**
- Cheibub, Jose Antonio. 2007. *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2. **(B)**
- Strøm, Kaare, Wolfgang C. Müller and Torbjörn Bergman, eds. 2003. *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 1 and 3. **(B)**

Assignment: LTDs of each of the three assigned readings (bring two hard-copies and turn one set in at the start of class)

19 February Parliamentary Structure and Process

Readings:

- Cox, Gary W. 1987. *The Efficient Secret*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 6. **(B)**
- Döring, Herbert ed. 1995. *Parliaments and Majority Rule in Western Europe*. St. Martin's Press. Chapters 7 and 10. **(B)**
- Martin, Lanny W. and Georg Vanberg. 2005. "Coalition Policymaking and Legislative Review." *American Political Science Review*. 99(1): 93-106. **(S)**

Assignment: LTDs of each of the three assigned readings (bring two hard-copies and turn one set in at the start of class)

26 February Research Paper Topic Discussion

Assignment: Research Paper Topic due at the start of class. You will also be asked to do a mini presentation of your paper topic. This short presentation (under 5 minutes) should mention your research question, discuss your argument, and walk the class through the major components of your paper.

5 March Winter Break (No Class)

12 March Midterm

19 March Parliamentary Institutions

Readings:

- Saalfeld, Thomas. 2011. "Parliamentary Questions as Instruments of Substantive Representation: Visible Minorities in the UK House of Commons, 2005–10." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 17(3): 271-89. **(S)**
- Rasch, Bjorn Erik. 2011. "Behavioural Consequences of Restrictions on Plenary Access: Parliamentary Questions in the Norwegian *Storting*." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 17(3): 382-93. **(S)**

- Bowler, Shaun. 2010. "Private Members' Bills in the UK Parliament: Is There an Electoral Connection?" *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 16(4): 476-94. **(S)**

Assignment: Question Hour – It has several names, sometimes it's 'Question Hour', 'Question Time', 'Question Period', or something related. Research the topic of the 'Question Time' in parliamentary systems and in three full pages (11-12 pt Times New Roman, double-spaced) compare and contrast the rules and practices of the question hour in two separate countries (a hard-copy should be submitted at the start of class)

26 March **Parliamentary Elections**

Readings:

- Bawn, Kathleen. 1993. "The Logic of Institutional Preferences: German Electoral Law as a Social Choice Outcome." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(4): 965-89. **(S)**
- Smith, Alastair. 2003. "Election Timing in Majoritarian Parliaments." *British Journal of Political Science* 33: 397-418. **(S)**
- Strøm, Kaare, Stephen Swindle. 2002. "Strategic Parliamentary Dissolution." *American Political Science Review* 96(3): 575-291. **(S)**

Assignment: Working with Public Opinion Data – Detailed instructions for this assignment can be found on MyCourses (a hard-copy should be submitted at the start of class).

2 April **Spring Break (No Class)**

9 April **Case Application – New Zealand**

Readings:

- Hayward, Janine. 2015. *New Zealand: Government and Politics*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 3.0-3.3, 4.0-4.6, 5.3, and 6.0-6.4. **(B)**

Assignment: LTD for the assigned readings (bring two hard-copies and turn one in at the start of class)

16 April **Coalition Bargaining I**

Readings:

- Neto, Octavio Amorim and Kaare Strøm. 2006. "Breaking the Parliamentary Chain of Delegation: Presidents and Non-partisan Cabinet Members in European Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 36: 619-43. **(S)**
- Carroll, Royce and Gary W. Cox. 2007. "The Logic of Gamson's Law: Pre-election Coalitions and Portfolio Allocations." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(2): 251-65. **(S)**
- Huber, John D. and Cecilia Martinez-Gallardo. 2008. "Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracy." *American Political Science Review* 102(2): 169-80. **(S)**

- Kam, Christopher, William Bianco, Itai Sened, and Regina Smyth. 2010. "Ministerial Selection and Intraparty Organization in the Contemporary British Parliament." *American Political Science Review* 104(2): 289-306. **(S)**

Assignment: Niche Party Politics – Detailed instructions for this assignment can be found on MyCourses (a hard-copy should be submitted at the start of class).

23 April Research Papers Due TODAY

Coalition Bargaining II

- Diermeier, Daniel and Randolph T. Stevenson. 2000 "Coalition Terminations and Critical Events." *American Political Science Review* 94(3): 627-40. **(S)**
- Druckman, James N. 1996. "Party Factionalism and Cabinet Durability." *Party Politics* 2(3): 397-407. **(S)**
- Lupia, Arthur W. and Kaare Strøm. 1995. "Coalition Termination and the Strategic Timing of Parliamentary Elections." *American Political Science Review* 89(3): 648-65. **(S)**
- Warwick, Paul V. 1999. "Ministerial Autonomy or Ministerial Accommodation? Contested Bases of Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 29: 369–394. **(S)**

Assignment: All research papers due at the start of class, regardless of what week you present. An electronic version should also be submitted to TurnItIn by 5:50PM.

30 April Paper Presentations

7 May Paper Presentations, Final Exam and Course Wrap-Up

General Education Information

N Requirement (Social Science) This course also fulfills a N requirement. Students will learn major concepts, models and issues of political science. They will gain an understanding of the methods used by social scientists to explore social phenomena including, when appropriate to the discipline, observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of mathematical and interpretive analysis.

W Requirement (Writing) This course also fulfills a Harpur College writing requirement. Students will need to show understanding of course materials through formal academic writing. They will need to effectively demonstrate critical thinking by advancing sound arguments with clearly defined hypotheses, arguments, and conclusions all of which must be appropriate to widely accepted practices in the discipline.

General Course Policies and Additional Resources

1. **MyCourses.** Course announcements and selected readings will be posted to the classes MyCourses page. Each student should ensure they have access to MyCourses and check it regularly for updates.
2. **Attendance and comportment.** Class begins at 5:50PM. Arriving late is disruptive to both the instructor and other students, especially in such a small class. This class is an encouraging and supportive environment and as such students should refrain from disruptive behavior such as side conversations, whispering, or offensive remarks. I reserve the right to ask students to leave if they arrive late or are disruptive.
3. **Rules governing late submission of assignments.** Late weekly assignments will not be accepted. Late research papers will be severely penalized. It is your responsibility to ensure that I receive your assignments on time. Excuses, including computer problems, printing troubles, a cold, will not be accepted. The date of presentations is outlined in this syllabus and owing to time limitations cannot be rescheduled.
4. **Grading Scale:** Your semester grade will be computed on a 100-point scale as follows: 95-100 = A; 91-94 = A-; 88-90 = B+; 84-87 = B; 81-83 = B-; 78-80 = C+; 74-77 = C; 71-73 = C-; 65-70 = D; 0-64 = F. You will receive a letter grade on your research paper which corresponds to numeric grades as follows: A = 100; A- = 94; B+ = 89; B = 85; B- = 82; C+ = 79; C = 75; C- = 72; D = 67; F = 50. You will receive a numeric grade on participation, quizzes, exams, assignments and presentations.
5. **Grade appeals must be submitted in writing.** If you have a concern regarding your grade on an assignment you may write a one-page letter explaining your specific concerns and request your assignment be regraded. This letter should be submitted to me in hard-copy along with the original graded assignment within one week of the assignment having been returned to the class/instructor assignment comments being posted online. Once I have reviewed and considered your request I will respond in writing. The revised grade may be higher, lower, or the same as your original grade. Under no circumstances will I discuss appeals to your grade with you in person.
6. **Electronic policy.** Cell phone use in class is disruptive and discourteous to others, as such, cell phones should be silenced and stored so they are not visible. Students using their cell phones during class will be asked to leave and will be marked as absent for that day. Laptops will be used to aid collaborative work and may only be used when you have been instructed. Students using laptops or tablets outside of these designated times or for purposes other than the task at hand will be asked to leave and marked as absent for that day. No other electronic devices may be used in the classroom and class sessions may not be recorded.
7. **Disability-Related Equal Access Accommodations.** Students wishing to request academic accommodations to insure their equitable access and participation in this course should notify me by the second week of class. Authorizations from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) are required and I encourage you to contact SSD in UU-119 to schedule an appointment with the Director or Learning Disabilities Specialist. Their website (www.binghamton.edu/ssd) includes information regarding their Disability Documentation Guidelines.
8. **Academic Integrity.** Binghamton University provides explicit guidelines in the Student Academic Honesty Code (<http://www2.binghamton.edu/watson/about/academic-honesty.html>). I expect the work you submit for grading to be yours and yours alone. Not acknowledging another's work with proper references, taking credit for someone else's work, letting your work appear in another student's paper, or fabricating "results" are grounds for failing the assignment and/or the course in addition to any penalty imposed by the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask me. You may also find the library's tutorials on academic honesty useful to review (Tutorials on academic honesty can be found at <http://library.binghamton.edu/research/tutorials/WebTutorials/web/index.html>).

9. **Resources for Students in Distress.** If you are experiencing undue personal or academic stress at any time during the semester or need to talk with someone about a personal problem or situation, I encourage you to seek support. I am available to talk with you about stresses related to your work in my class. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis may require additional professional support. Binghamton University provides a variety of support resources:

Dean of Students Office: 607-777-2804

Decker Student Health Services Center: 607-777-2221

University Police: On campus emergency, 911

University Counseling Center: 607-777-2772

Interpersonal Violence Prevention: 607-777-3062

Harpur Advising: 607-777-6305

Office of International Student & Scholar Services: 607-777-2510

10. **Library Resources.** The Binghamton University Library offers a wide variety and range of services including research assistance, instruction, user-friendly interfaces, digital scanners and resources sharing. You will be responsible for locating several required readings throughout the semester. If you have not yet had to do this the best place to start is: <http://www.binghamton.edu/libraries>
11. **University Tutoring Services.** UTS offers free tutoring for undergraduate students at Binghamton University. All UTS tutoring appointments must be scheduled online through TutorTrac at tutortrac.binghamton.edu. Students log in using their PODS username and password. Walk-in tutoring is also available for select courses. If you have any questions about UTS, call 607-777-9235, email uts@binghamton.edu, or visit the website: <http://www.binghamton.edu/tutoring>.