

# Gender and Political Representation

## Session 12: Wrap-Up

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## Ablaufplan der heutigen Sitzung

- Your project ideas
- Evaluation criteria of term papers
- Review of learning outcomes
- Evaluation of course

## Your project ideas

*Form pairs, where both persons present the idea of their thesis in no more than two minutes. In the next step, the pairs mix, and the person who previously listened presents the pitch of another person.*

- Do you have questions about the project idea?
- What do you find particularly good?
- What might be challenging?

# Evaluation of the project work

## Formal criteria

As a reminder:

- Submission of the term paper by **September 30, 2025**; late submission leads to downgrade
- Submit your term paper as a .pdf file.
- Length of the paper: 5,000 words (excluding abstract and bibliography)
- Correct citation, transparency in the use of AI (fail to do so leads to automatic fail or oral exam)
- Are all tables and figures labeled and referenced?
- All other formal criteria, especially the Word template to be used, can be found [here](#)

## Content-related criteria

- Does the structure correspond to that of a scientific paper?
- Focus particularly on the following criteria:
  - Clarity of the research question
  - Motivation and relevance is clearly outlined
  - Systematic literature review
  - Theoretical argument (including the four components we talked about in class)
  - Use of appropriate data source and good description of it
  - Choice of method and explanation of its implementation as well as weighing the pros and cons of a method
  - Addressing strengths and limitations of the proposed design (theoretical limitations, practical shortcomings)

## Structural criteria

- Do the individual parts of the paper transition well into one another?
- Were repetitions avoided?
- Is there a golden thread throughout the term paper, particularly on the lit review and theory?

## Literature

**Powner LC** (2014) *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide*. CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-4833-7065-1

- Introduction to academic writing in political science
- Overview of all sub-steps of an empirical paper
- Particularly helpful are the first 3 chapters (research question, theory, and literature review)

On writing style in academic articles:

**Schimmel J** (2012) *Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded*. Oxford University Press, USA. ISBN: 978-0-19-976023-7

## What did you learn?

Take a few minutes to reflect on what you are taking away from the seminar.

## What did you learn?

- Anything you are happy to have learned?
- Anything you want to study in more detail in the future?
- Do you have any open questions?

## What I hoped to communicate...

As stated in the syllabus, proposed learning outcomes were related to an understanding of...

- ...political representation
- ...social norms
- ...the current state of gender (in)equality in politics
- ...explanations for these inequalities
- ...tools to tackle gender equality
- ...different methodological tools to assess gender equality

## On representation

**Learning Outcome:** The course will familiarize you with key concepts in the study of gender and political representation. You will learn what we mean by 'representation' and how different types of representation matter for our understanding of female underrepresentation in politics.

- concepts: formal, symbolic, descriptive, substantive representation
- arguments: essentialism and democratic procedures vs. balancing discriminatory legacies and improving deliberation
- empirics: descriptive representation might help to put feminized policy interests on the agenda but also elicits backlash
- reading(s): Mansbridge (1999), Ladam, Harden, and Windett (2018), Breyer (2024), and Dingler, Corinna, and Fortin-Rittberger (2019)

## On social norms

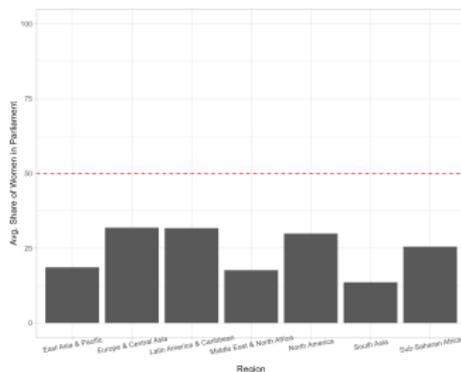
**Learning Outcome:** Moreover, you will acquire an understanding of social norms and their transmission through socialization and culture.

- concepts:
  - social norms = (1) empirical expectations, (2) normative expectations
  - cultural transmission through vertical, horizontal and oblique mechanisms
- empirics: norms on gender equality are highly persistent
- reading(s): Cavalli-Sforza et al. (1982), Alesina, Giuliano, and Nunn (2013), and Bicchieri, Muldoon, and Sontuoso (2011)

## On gender inequalities

**Learning Outcome:** You will get a general picture of the current state of gender equality in politics.

Women's equality in politics can be evaluated by measures focusing on input, throughput or output (*number of female politicians, feminized policy backed by male legislators or the pink tax*):



**Figure:** Share of Women in Parliaments by Region

## On explanations for gender equalities

**Learning Outcome:** You will engage with different explanations of gender inequality in politics and understand how societal legacies, the demand-side (voters) and supply-side dynamics (political actors) contribute to it.

### On demand-side discrimination

- argument: voters discriminate against female politicians
- empirics: mixed evidence on direct discrimination but assignment of stereotypes (e.g., through language) and different standards
- reading(s): Anderson-Nilsson and Clayton (2021), Bauer and Carpinella (2018), Madsen (2019), and Teele, Kalla, and Rosenbluth (2018)

# On explanations for gender equalities

## Supply-side patterns

- argument: parties might be biased against female candidates and women are less likely to pursue political career
- empirics: taste-based or statistical discrimination in encouraging women to run exist which might explain lower levels of political ambition aside from socio-structural resource factors; ideology matters
- reading(s): Ben-Shitrit, Elad-Strenger, and Hirsch-Hoefler (2022), Bernhard, Shames, and Teele (2021), and Fox and Lawless (2004)

# On explanations for gender equalities

## Institutions

- argument: the rules of the game are biased against women and prevent them from entering politics
- empirics: institutional designs, such as plurality-based voting systems or insufficient working conditions might prevent women from running
- reading(s): Skorge (2023) and Singh (2025)

## On tools to tackle inequalities

**Learning Outcome:** You will be able to critically evaluate instruments that aim to tackle gender equality, understanding their potentials and challenges.

- concepts: feminist institutionalism, critical mass and linguistic relativity
- arguments vary: challenging male-centric rules, bringing more women into leading positions or preventing gender stereotypes from developing
- reading(s): Clayton et al. (2019), Kim (2019), Betz, Fortunato, and O'Brien (2021), Pérez and Tavits (2019), Marx (2025), Broockman (2014), Ladam, Harden, and Windett (2018), and Foos and Gilardi (2020)

## On methods

**Learning Outcome:** Through reading and discussion, you will get a glimpse on different methodological approaches to assess gender equality.

- We have focused on quantitative readings but discussed qualitative evidence as well
- Main methods: survey (experiments), quasi-experimental settings
- Other methods: focus groups Marx (2025), text analysis Erfort (2023) and Waldendorf (2024), interviews Lawless and Fox (2010)

## Course evaluation

*You should've all been invited to complete the course evaluation on Learnweb, please go ahead.*

## Other activities at the Chair of Comparative Politics

- thematic seminars on political protest and participation (Elena Leuschner), democratic norms (Daniel Bischof) and political parties (myself)
- methodological seminars on coding (Elena Leuschner), causal inference (Daniel Bischof) and quantitative text analysis (myself)
- speaker series on "Understanding Democracies" with international speakers
- supervision of theses that follow a comparative, empirical-analytic logic

Thank you for your attention!  
Any further questions?

## Literature

-  **Alesina A, Giuliano P, and Nunn N (2013)** On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough\*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* **128** (2), 469–530.
-  **Anderson-Nilsson G and Clayton A (2021)** Gender and Policy Persuasion. *Political Science Research and Methods* **9** (4), 818–831.
-  **Bauer NM and Carpinella C (2018)** Visual Information and Candidate Evaluations: The Influence of Feminine and Masculine Images on Support for Female Candidates. *Political Research Quarterly* **71** (2), 395–407.
-  **Ben-Shitrit L, Elad-Strenger J, and Hirsch-Hoefler S (2022)** ‘Pinkwashing’ the Radical-Right: Gender and the Mainstreaming of Radical-Right Policies and Actions. *European Journal of Political Research* **61** (1), 86–110.

## Literature

-  **Bernhard R, Shames S, and Teele DL (2021)** To Emerge? Breadwinning, Motherhood, and Women's Decisions to Run for Office. *American Political Science Review* **115** (2), 379–394.
-  **Betz T, Fortunato D, and O'brien DZ (2021)** Women's Descriptive Representation and Gendered Import Tax Discrimination. *American Political Science Review* **115** (1), 307–315.
-  **Bicchieri C, Muldoon R, and Sontuoso A (2011)** Social Norms.
-  **Breyer M (2024)** Backlash or Progressive Mobilization? Voter Reactions to Perceived Trajectories of Women's Representation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 00104140231223745.

## Literature

-  **Broockman DE (2014)** Do Female Politicians Empower Women to Vote or Run for Office? A Regression Discontinuity Approach. *Electoral Studies* **34**, 190–204.
-  **Cavalli-Sforza LL et al. (1982)** Theory and Observation in Cultural Transmission. *Science* **218** (4567), 19–27.
-  **Clayton A et al. (2019)** In Whose Interest? Gender and Mass–Elite Priority Congruence in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Comparative Political Studies* **52** (1), 69–101.
-  **Dingler SC, Corinna Kroeber, and and Fortin-Rittberger J (2019)** Do Parliaments Underrepresent Women’s Policy Preferences? Exploring Gender Equality in Policy Congruence in 21 European Democracies. *Journal of European Public Policy* **26** (2), 302–321.

## Literature

-  **Erfort C (2023)** *Gendered Targeting: Do Parties Tailor Their Campaign Ads to Women?* 2023.
-  **Foos F and Gilardi F (2020)** Does Exposure to Gender Role Models Increase Women's Political Ambition? A Field Experiment with Politicians. *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 7 (3), 157–166.
-  **Fox RL and Lawless JL (2004)** Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office. *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (2), 264–280.
-  **Kim JH (2019)** Direct Democracy and Women's Political Engagement. *American Journal of Political Science* 63 (3), 594–610.

## Literature

-  **Ladam C, Harden JJ, and Windett JH (2018)** Prominent Role Models: High-Profile Female Politicians and the Emergence of Women as Candidates for Public Office. *American Journal of Political Science* **62** (2), 369–381.
-  **Lawless JL and Fox RL (2010)** *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office, Revised and Expanded Edition*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
-  **Madsen JK (2019)** Voter Reasoning Bias When Evaluating Statements from Female and Male Political Candidates. *Politics & Gender* **15** (02), 310–335.
-  **Mansbridge J (1999)** Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent "Yes". *The Journal of Politics* **61** (3), 628–657.

## Literature

-  **Marx P (2025)** Is There a Backlash Against Identity Politics? Experimental and Focus Group Evidence on the Conflict Over Gender-Neutral Language in Germany. *Comparative Political Studies*, 00104140251328038.
-  **Pérez EO and Tavits M (2019)** Language Influences Public Attitudes toward Gender Equality. *The Journal of Politics* 81 (1), 81–93.
-  **Powner LC (2014)** *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide*. CQ Press, 2014.
-  **Schimmel J (2012)** *Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2012.

## Literature

-  **Singh SP** (2025) Compulsory Voting Increases Men's Turnout Most. *American Journal of Political Science* **n/a** (n/a).
-  **Skorge ØS** (2023) Mobilizing the Underrepresented: Electoral Systems and Gender Inequality in Political Participation. *American Journal of Political Science* **67** (3), 538–552.
-  **Teele DL, Kalla J, and Rosenbluth F** (2018) The Ties That Double Bind: Social Roles and Women's Underrepresentation in Politics. *American Political Science Review* **112** (3), 525–541.
-  **Waldendorf A** (2024) Words of Change: The Increase of Gender-Inclusive Language in German Media. *European Sociological Review* **40** (2), 357–374.