

Party Competition in Western Europe

Wrap-Up

Mirko Wegemann

Universität Münster
Institut für Politikwissenschaft

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Today's session

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

Your project ideas

Form groups of three, where each person presents the idea of their term paper in no more than two minutes. After each input, the other members of the group discuss the idea. You can start with the following questions:

- 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: 6,000 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
 - At least one graph/table that supports your argument + appropriate integration in paper
 - 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...

- ...concepts in the study of parties and party systems
- ...voting behavior
- ...party strategies
- ...the role of institutions
- ...methods and data to study voters, parties and institutions

On concepts

Learning Outcome: You will learn what parties are and how they are embedded in different party systems.

- concepts: parties and party systems
- questions: what are parties? which functions do they fulfil?
which kinds of party systems exist?
- readings: Boix (2009), Caramani (2020), Katz (2020), and Sartori (2005)

On voters

Learning Outcome: You will better understand current demand-side dynamics in Western party systems.

- concepts:
 - cleavages (de- and realignment)
 - polarization
 - societal transformations
 - status loss
- empirics: partisan re-alignment with increasing polarization, also shaped by transformations caused by globalization and technologization
- reading(s): Abou-Chadi and Hix (2021), Abou-Chadi and Kurer (2021), Bischof and Wagner (2019), Gidron, Adams, and Horne (2023), Gallego, Kurer, and Schöll (2022), Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (2021), Kriesi (2008), and Wagner (2021)

On parties

Learning Outcome: You will better understand current supply-side dynamics in Western party systems.

- concepts:
 - issue competition (*issue yield*)
 - group appeals (*social group yield*)
 - emergence of and competition with challenger parties
- empirics: parties can use different strategies to appeal to voters; far-right often differs from dominant parties in their programmatic portfolio
- reading(s): Abou-Chadi (2016), Abou-Chadi and Krause (2020), De Sio and Weber (2014), Hjorth and Larsen (2022), Huber (2022), Meguid (2005), and Vries and Hobolt (2020)

On the intervening role of institutions

Learning Outcome: Moreover, you will be able to assess the role of institutions on both voters and the elite.

- concepts:
 - institutions
 - electoral systems
 - legislative rules and statutes
- empirics: electoral systems shape voting and party behavior; parliamentary debates are shaped by internal rules
- reading(s): Ellenbroek (2024), Fiva and Hix (2021), North (1990), and Proksch and Slapin (2012)

On methods and data

Learning Outcome: In three practical-oriented sessions, you will get to know different data sources to examine voters, parties and institutions.

- for voters:
 - Comparative Study of Electoral Systems
 - European Social Survey
 - Socio-Economic Panel / British Household Panel
- for parties
 - Manifesto Project
 - Chapel Hill Expert Survey
 - ParlSpeech
 - Comparative Candidate Study
- for institutions
 - V-Party
 - Inter-Parliamentary Union
 - Electoral System Design Database

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 gender and politics (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



Abou-Chadi T (2016) Niche Party Success and Mainstream Party Policy Shifts – How Green and Radical Right Parties Differ in Their Impact. *British Journal of Political Science* **46** (2), 417–436.





Abou-Chadi T and Hix S (2021) Brahmin Left Versus Merchant Right? Education, Class, Multiparty Competition, and Redistribution in Western Europe. *The British Journal of Sociology* **72**.



Abou-Chadi T and Krause W (2020) The Causal Effect of Radical Right Success on Mainstream Parties' Policy Positions: A Regression Discontinuity Approach. *British Journal of Political Science* **50** (3), 829–847.

Literature

-  **Abou-Chadi T and Kurer T (2021)** Economic Risk within the Household and Voting for the Radical Right. *World Politics* **73** (3), 482–511.
-  **Bischof D and Wagner M (2019)** Do Voters Polarize When Radical Parties Enter Parliament? *American Journal of Political Science* **63** (4), 888–904.
-  **Boix C (2009)** The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Ed. by C Boix and SC Stokes. 1st ed. Oxford University Press, 2009, 499–521.
-  **Caramani D (2020)** *Party Systems*. Oxford University Press, 2020. Chap. Comparative Politics, 213–230.

Literature

-  **De Sio L and Weber T (2014)** Issue Yield: A Model of Party Strategy in Multidimensional Space. *American Political Science Review* **108** (4), 870–885.
-  **Ellenbroek V (2024)** The Effect of More Choice on Voter Turnout Causal Evidence from Germany. *German Politics* **33** (4), 713–739.
-  **Fiva JH and Hix S (2021)** Electoral Reform and Strategic Coordination. *British Journal of Political Science* **51** (4), 1782–1791.
-  **Gallego A, Kurer T, and Schöll N (2022)** Neither Left Behind nor Superstar: Ordinary Winners of Digitalization at the Ballot Box. *The Journal of Politics* **84** (1), 418–436.

Literature



Gidron N, Adams J, and Horne W (2023) Who Dislikes Whom? Affective Polarization between Pairs of Parties in Western Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science* **53** (3), 997–1015.



Hjorth F and Larsen MV (2022) When Does Accommodation Work? Electoral Effects of Mainstream Left Position Taking on Immigration. *British Journal of Political Science* **52** (2), 949–957.



Hobolt SB, Leeper TJ, and Tilley J (2021) Divided by the Vote: Affective Polarization in the Wake of the Brexit Referendum. *British Journal of Political Science* **51** (4), 1476–1493.

Literature

-  **Huber LM (2022)** Beyond Policy: The Use of Social Group Appeals in Party Communication. *Political Communication* **39** (3), 293–310.
-  **Katz R (2020)** *Political Parties*. Oxford University Press, 2020. Chap. Comparative Politics, 231–251.
-  **Kriesi H (2008)** *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
-  **Meguid BM (2005)** Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *American Political Science Review* **99** (03), 347–359.
-  **North DC (1990)** *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Literature

-  **Powner LC** (2014) *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide*. CQ Press, 2014.
-  **Proksch SO and Slapin JB** (2012) Institutional Foundations of Legislative Speech. *American Journal of Political Science* **56** (3), 520–537.
-  **Sartori G** (2005) Party Types, Organisation and Functions. *West European Politics* **28** (1), 5–32.
-  **Schimmel J** (2012) *Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2012.
-  **Vries CE and Hobolt SB** (2020) *Political Entrepreneurs: The Rise of Challenger Parties in Europe*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020.

Literature



Wagner M (2021) Affective Polarization in Multiparty Systems. *Electoral Studies* **69**, 102199.