

Elections and Institutional Engineering

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1 Course Description

1.1 Abstract

This course introduces the students to a range of issues concerning electoral politics: (1) What rules determine the elections and how votes are translated into seats; (2) What factors mediate electoral outcomes; (3) How elections influence the political process. We will start with a detailed examination of existing electoral systems by paying special attention to their mechanical and psychological effects. Then, we will discuss the phenomena of electoral reforms and consider the electoral reform attempts across the countries. In the end, we will deal with topics of electoral malpractice and electoral integrity. The course provides the students with general tools for analyzing electoral politics and modeling the long-term political consequences of a given election.

1.2 Grading

- 10% – Presentation of an electoral system. Each student should describe an electoral system that is in use for the national parliamentary election in one of the following countries: *The United Kingdom, India, France, the Netherlands, Finland, South Africa, Hungary, Ukraine, and Japan*. The allocation of countries among students is conducted in the course of the first class. The oral presentation should not exceed 15 minutes and has to be supplemented with an electronic presentation. The student’s presentation should cover the main dimensions of a given electoral system and stress its mechanical and psychological effects based on the most recent election.
- 10% – Written test on topics covered in items 2.1–2.2.
- 10% – Group work on elaborating an electoral system for a given country.
- 10% – Written test on topics covered in items 2.3–2.5.
- 30% – Reading, preparation, and participation in class. Required readings for each class are given in the numbered lists, while recommended readings are in the bullet lists. The students should read the required texts and be ready to talk about them, answer questions and raise their own opinion related to the topics of discussion.
- 30% – Essay (election analysis paper).

1.3 Essay Requirements

The students prepare an election analysis paper (3,000–3,500 words) on any election held in 2020–2022 to the lower or the only chamber of a representative body located either at the national or subnational level.

The election analysis paper should be 12 *Times New Roman* font, one and a half spaced. Both *.docx* and *.pdf* file formats are appropriate. Late submissions will be penalized by one point of grade per day.

The election analysis paper must be an original text prepared by analogy with writings on elections from the “Notes on Recent Election” section of *Electoral Studies* or the “Elections in Context” section of *West European Politics*.

The election analysis paper should include the following elements: (1) Introduction; (2) Background of elections; (3) Electoral system description; (4) Campaign; (5) Results; (6) Political consequences; (7) References.

2 Class Schedule

If deviations from the readings are required, they will be announced in class or by email. Such changes always trump the reading list below.

2.1 Introductions to Electoral Studies

Elections in both autocracies and democratic regimes. History of the study of electoral systems. Modern agenda in studying electoral systems. Main dimensions of electoral systems. Classification of electoral systems.

Functions of elections. Implications of electoral studies.

- Katz R.S. (1997) *Democracy and Elections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 7.
- Gandhi J., Lust-Okar E. (2009) Elections under Authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, 403–407.
- Farrell D. M. (2011) *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1–12.
- Grofman B. (2016) Perspectives on the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems. *Annual Review of Political Science* 19, 523–526.
- Taagepera R., Shugart M. S. (1989) *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral System*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1–6, 47–57.

2.2 Electoral Systems as the Independent Variable

2.2.1 Majoritarian Electoral Systems

The way how different variants of majoritarian electoral systems operate and the political consequences they produce.

1. Farrell D. M. (2011) *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 13–63.
2. Reynolds A., Reilly B., Ellis A. (2005) *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: International IDEA, 35–56, 112–118.

Country reports: The United Kingdom, India, France.

- Hoyo V. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: France. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 673–698.
- Lundberg T. C. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: United Kingdom. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 627–650.
- Ziegfeld A. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: India. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 699–720.
- [OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission reports](#) on recent parliamentary elections in the United Kingdom and France. [Introduction](#) to the special issue of *India Review* on the 2019 Indian general election.

2.2.2 Proportional Electoral Systems

The way how proportional electoral systems (both list PR and STV) work and their political consequences. Main dimensions of proportional electoral systems.

1. Farrell D. M. (2011) *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 64–92.
2. Reynolds A., Reilly B., Ellis A. (2005) *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: International IDEA, 57–90.

Country reports: The Netherlands, Finland, South Africa.

- Jacobs K. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: The Netherlands. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 557–580.
- Ferree K. E. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: South Africa. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 944–964.
- von Schoultz Å. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: Finland. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 601–626.
- [OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission reports](#) on recent parliamentary elections in the Netherlands and Finland. [African Union Election Observation Mission report](#) on the 2019 South African general election.

2.2.3 Mixed Electoral Systems

The way how different variants of mixed electoral systems operate and the political consequences they produce.

1. Farrell D. M. (2011) *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 93–118.
2. Reynolds A., Reilly B., Ellis A. (2005) *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: International IDEA, 90–112.

Country reports: Hungary, Ukraine, Japan.

- Herron E. S. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: Ukraine. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 904–920.
- Nemoto K. (2018) Electoral Systems in Context: Japan. In: Herron E. S., Pekkanen R. & Shugart M. S. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 826–850.
- [OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission reports](#) on recent parliamentary elections in Hungary and Ukraine.

2.2.4 The Wider Set of Rules Concerning Elections

Timing of elections, funding of electoral campaigns, the structure of electoral management bodies (EMBs), ballot order, gender quotas, compulsory voting, the legal voting age, online voting.

Test on topics covered in items 2.1–2.2.

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- [Electoral Management Design](#). International IDEA.
 - [Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns: A Handbook on Political Finance](#). International IDEA.
 - *International Political Science Review: Special Issue on Building Better Elections: Electoral Management and Electoral Integrity*. Volume 40 Issue 3, June 2019.

2.3 Electoral Systems as the Dependent Variable

2.3.1 The History of Electoral System Reforms

The dynamics of electoral system choice in European countries at the turn of the century.

1. Boix C. (1999) Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies. *The American Political Science Review* 93 (3), 609–624.
2. Cusack T. R., Iversen T., Soskice D. (2007) Economic Interests and the Origins of Electoral Systems. *The American Political Science Review* 101 (3), 373–391.
3. Kreuzer M. (2010) Historical Knowledge and Quantitative Analysis: The Case of the Origins of Proportional Representation. *The American Political Science Review* 104 (2), 369–392.
4. Cusack T. R., Iversen T., Soskice D. (2010) Coevolution of Capitalism and Political Representation: The Choice of Electoral Systems. *The American Political Science Review* 104 (2), 393–403.
5. Boix C. (2010) Electoral Markets, Party Strategies, and Proportional Representation. *The American Political Science Review* 104 (2), 404–413.

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- Ahmed, A. (2010) Reading History Forward: The Origins of Electoral Systems in European Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (8–9), 1059–1088.

2.3.2 Explanations of Electoral Reform

Types of electoral reforms. Explanations of electoral reform: Rational choice theories, cultural explanations, and a synthetic approach.

1. Bowler S., Donovan T., Karp J. A. (2006) Why Politicians Like Electoral Institutions: Self-Interest, Values, or Ideology? *The Journal of Politics* 68 (2), 434–446.
2. Norris P. (2011) Cultural Explanations of Electoral Reform: A Policy Cycle Model. *West European Politics* 34 (3), 531–550.
3. Rahat G., Hazan R. Y. (2011) The Barriers to Electoral System Reform: A Synthesis of Alternative Approaches. *West European Politics* 34 (3), 478–494.

2.3.3 Electoral Engineering as a Tool to Pursue the Collective Interests

Electoral reforms in old and new democracies, divided and transitional societies.

1. Horowitz D. L. (2003) Electoral Systems: A Primer for Decision Makers. *Journal of Democracy* 14 (4), 115–127.
2. Lijphart A. (2004) Constitutional Design for Divided Societies. *Journal of Democracy* 15 (2), 96–109.

Group work on elaborating an electoral system for a given country.

2.4 Electoral Malpractice

2.4.1 Typology of Electoral Malpractice

Typology of electoral malpractice: Manipulation of electoral institutions, manipulation of vote choice, and manipulation of the voting act. Electoral engineering as a tool for electoral manipulation.

The Manipulation of electoral institutions across countries.

1. Diaz-Cayeros A., Magaloni B. (2001) Party Dominance and the Logic of Electoral Design in Mexico's Transition to Democracy. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 13 (3), 271–293.
2. Tan N., Grofman B. (2018) Electoral Rules and Manufacturing Legislative Supermajority: Evidence from Singapore. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 56 (3), 273–297.
3. Dukalskis A., Raymond C. D. (2018) Failure of Authoritarian Learning: Explaining Burma/Myanmar's Electoral System. *Democratization* 25 (3), 545–563.

2.4.2 Electoral Engineering in Russia

The politics of major electoral reforms in Russia and changes in Russian electoral legislation, 1993–2022.

Regional dimension of electoral engineering in Russia.

1. Кынев А. В. (2014) *Выборы региональных парламентов в России 2009–2013: от партизации к персонализации*. М.: Панорама, 6–81.
2. Кынев А. В. (2021) *Выборы региональных парламентов в России 2014–2020: Новая департизация и Управляемая партийность 2.0*. М.: Фонд «Либеральная миссия», 41–162.

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- Golosov G. V. (2014) Authoritarian Electoral Engineering and its Limits: A Curious Case of the Imperiali Highest Averages Method in Russia. *Europe-Asia Studies* 66 (10), 1611–1628.
 - Turchenko M., Shevchuk S. (2016) Veto Players and Major Electoral Reforms in Russia. *Russian Politics* 1 (2), 203–221.
 - Turchenko M. (2020) Electoral Engineering in the Russian Regions (2003–2017). *Europe-Asia Studies* 72 (1), 80–98.

2.4.3 Blatant Forms of Electoral Malpractice

Manipulation of the voter's choice (vote buying, voter intimidation, candidate obstruction) and manipulation of voting (the obstruction of election observation, electoral fraud, misreporting electoral results). An institutional structure enabling/preventing the occurrence of blatant forms of electoral malpractice.

Blatant forms of electoral malpractice in Russia.

1. Frye T., Reuter O. J., Szakonyi D. (2014) Political Machines at Work: Voter Mobilization and Electoral Subversion in the Workplace. *World Politics* 66 (2), 195–228.
2. Frye T., Reuter O. J., Szakonyi D. (2019) Hitting Them with Carrots: Voter Intimidation and Vote Buying in Russia. *British Journal of Political Science* 49 (3), 857–881.
3. Szakonyi D. (2022) Candidate Filtering: The Strategic Use of Electoral Manipulations in Russia. *British Journal of Political Science* 52 (2), 649–670.

2.5 Electoral Integrity

2.5.1 Elections and Protest

The concept of “electoral integrity”. The consequences of electoral malpractice. Ways to strengthen electoral integrity.

Election violence and post-election protests against the government.

1. Fjelde H., Höglund K. (2016) Electoral Institutions and Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. *British Journal of Political Science* 46 (2), 297–320.
2. Hafner-Burton E. M, Hyde S. D., Jablonski R. S. (2014) When Do Governments Resort to Election Violence? *British Journal of Political Science* 44 (1), 149–179.
3. Hafner-Burton E. M, Hyde S. D., Jablonski R. S. (2018) Surviving Elections: Election Violence, Incumbent Victory and Post-Election Repercussions. *British Journal of Political Science* 48 (2), 459–488.

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- *Journal of Peace Research: Special Issue on Electoral Violence*. Volume 57 Issue 1, January 2020.

2.5.2 Election Observation and Electoral Assistance

Election observation missions and electoral outcomes. The pseudo-democrat's dilemma. “Zombie monitors”.

1. Enikolopov R. et al. (2013) Field Experiment Estimate of Electoral Fraud in Russian Parliamentary Elections. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 110 (2), 448–452.
2. Buzin A., Brondum K., Graeme R. (2016) Election Observer Effects: A Field Experiment in the Russian Duma Election of 2011. *Electoral Studies* 44, 184–191.

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- Hyde S. D. (2011) Catch Us If You Can: Election Monitoring and International Norm Diffusion *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2), 356–369.

2.5.3 Voting Advice Applications

Voting Advice Applications (VAAs): definition, functioning, and political consequences. VAAs in democracies and authoritarian regimes.

Test on topics covered in items 2.3–2.5.

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- *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties. Special Issue on Voting Advice Applications*. Volume 27 Issue 1, 2017.