

SEMINAR SESSIONS “INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE”

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Thursday, 10:10-12:10

Seminar Description

The seminar sessions are an essential component of the course "Introduction to Political Science". Seminars will consist of a first part with two presentations from students relating to the **readings** (up to 10 minutes each) and a collective discussion of the specific readings assigned for that seminar session focusing on the development of the understanding of political science scholarship. The days that each student will do the oral presentation as well as the assigned seminar reading(s) on which it should focus – and their distribution between the students presenting – will be agreed with the seminar teacher at the beginning of the semester.

The second part will focus on the targeted discussion of the **practical cases** outlined for each week, that aim at developing students' analytical and argumentative abilities. Students should think about the practical cases in advance of the seminar sessions and bring some notes and/or sketches of their positions and responses to the practical cases, so that seminar discussions can be fruitful. In other words, seminar sessions require prior preparation by students every week.

For two of the seminar sessions (weeks 4, and 8), students will need to prepare a **short written assignment** (up to 1,500 words, everything included) to support the discussion of the practical case. These assignments will be submitted through Urkund (the anti-plagiarism software used by Sciences Po) to the seminar instructor the day before the given seminar session (deadline 12 am). The two assignments will be marked by the seminar instructor, and their assessment will form part of the continuous evaluation. In order to prepare students to the written assignments, during the sessions preceding the first written assignment (week 4) at least, instructors will provide detailed feedback (ca. 40mn) about the practical case after the collective discussion.

Detailed outline

Session 1 (28/01/2021): Introduction

- Presentation of the seminar instructors and the seminar work plan
- What is plagiarism? Presentation of Urkund and of plagiarism policy
- Methodological guidelines: How to write a short essay and to analyze a text
- Distribution of presentations

No readings for the first week.

Part 1: Key concepts and theories

Session 2 (04/02/2021): Political Science and the Study of Politics

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 1: Weber, Max. (Several editions [1919]). *Politics as a Vocation*. Until page 16 ("We have seen that..."). Available online here:
https://ia802609.us.archive.org/35/items/weber_max_1864_1920_politics_as_a_vocation/weber_max_1864_1920_politics_as_a_vocation.pdf
- Presentation 2: Machiavelli, Niccolò. (1532. Multiple editions, on multiple dates). *The Prince*. The advice is that you read it fully, as it is a very short book and is an essential reading for any student of political science. However, for the seminar, the mandatory reading is chapters XV-XIX. A free online e-book version can be found here:
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar: 20mn of collective discussion, 40mn of detailed feedback by the instructors.

According to Max Weber, a state is that "human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence within a given territory." The police and military are states' main instruments in this regard. However, in 2020, following the Black Lives Matters movement, protests have erupted around the world to condemn the use of violence against black people by police officers. Based on your reading of Weber and Machiavelli, bring notes to discuss the following question: What is the difference between legitimate and illegitimate violence?

Session 3 (11/02/2021): Power, Legitimacy and Political System

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 3: Easton, David. "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems." *World Politics*, vol. 9, no. 3, 1957, pp. 383–400. Available via library: www.jstor.org/stable/2008920.
- Presentation 4: Lukes, Steven. 1974. *Power. A Radical View*. Macmillan (multiple later editions available). Chapter 1, until section 8 (not included). An electronic copy can be found here: <https://voidnetwork.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Power-A-Radical-View-Sтивен-Lukes.pdf>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar: 20mn of collective discussion, 40mn of detailed feedback by the instructors.

Using the case of gender equality, reflect on the ways in which the three faces of power manifest themselves in this area where social relations and policymaking interacts, and on the extent to which the balance of power may (or may not) have changed over time.

Session 4 (18/02/2021): The Nation-State

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 5: Tilly, Charles. 1990. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*. Basil Blackwell. Pages 1-28 in chapter 1. Available online here: <https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Soc924-2011/TillyCh1.pdf>
- Presentation 6: Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Basil Blackwell. Chapters 1, 5 and 7. Available online: http://seas3.elte.hu/coursematerial/LojkoMiklos/Ernest_Gellner,_Nations_and_Nationalism_1983.pdf

Written assignment #1:

Based on the seminar readings, on the lectures and on your personal research, would you say that:

- (a) The EU is a state? Explain why.
- (b) The EU is a nation? Explain why.

Before the seminar, submit your essay through Urkund.

Session 5 (04/03/2021): International Relations Module – Liberal Internationalism and its Critics

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 7: Mead, Walter R. 2021. “The End of the Wilsonian Era: Why Liberal Internationalism Failed”. *Foreign Affairs*. 100-1, pp. 123-137. Available on Moodle.

Preparation of the mid-term exam and methodological reminder. Students should prepare and bring questions on aspects of the course that they did not fully understand.

Session 6: Ideologies

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 8: Bobbio, Norberto. 1996. *Left and Right. The Significance of a Political Distinction*, Polity Press. This is a short and useful book, so its full reading is recommended, but for the seminar chapters 1 to 3 are mandatory. Available online: <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Bobbio-Norberto-Left-and-Right-Significance-Political-Distinction.pdf>
- Presentation 9: Fukuyama, Francis. 1989. “The End of History?”. *The National Interest*. Available online: https://www.embl.de/aboutus/science_society/discussion/discussion_2006/ref1-22june06.pdf

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

In recent years, many regimes and political movements across the globe have been described as “populist”. Based on the lectures and on your personal research, would you say that they share a coherent ideology? What are their main ideological common features and differences? Compare at least one European case and one American case.

You might find it useful to consult: Mudde, Cas and Kaltwasser, Cristóbal. 2013. “Populism”. In Michael Freeden and Marc Stears, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*. Oxford University Press. Available via library: <https://www-oxfordhandbooks-com.acces-distant.sciencespo.fr/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199585977-e-026?rskey=DPJqNL&result=3>

Session 7: Democracy, Authoritarianism, Totalitarianism

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 10: Held, David, 2006, *Models of Democracy*, Polity Press: Introduction + Summary tables of models I-IX (at the end of chapters).
- Presentation 11: Rosanvallon, Pierre. 2007. "Democracy in an Era of Distrust". *Democracy, Past and Future: Selected Essays*, edited by Samuel Moyn, Columbia University Press, pp. 235-252. Access via library: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sciences-po/detail.action?docID=908442>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Based on the seminar readings and the lecture material, reflect on the following questions and bring a sketch of your key arguments for discussion in the seminar:

1. What are the main virtues of democracy as a system of government?
2. What are the perils or limitations of democracy as a system of government?
3. Which model of democracy seems more attractive to you and why?

Session 8: The institutional structure of contemporary political systems

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 12: Montesquieu. 1748. *The Spirit of the Laws*. Books II and III (Multiple editions and translations. Online access here: <https://www.bard.edu/library/arendt/pdfs/Montesquieu-Spirit.pdf>)
- Presentation 13: Lijphart, Arend, 2012, *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Yale University Press: chapters 2-3 (Access via library: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sciences-po/reader.action?docID=3421026&ppg=1>)

Written assignment #2:

Read the entries for "Regime (Comparative Politics)" and "Government", in Badie, Berg-Schlosser & Morlino (eds.), *International Encyclopaedia of Political Science*. (Online access through Sciences Po Library here: <http://sk.sagepub.com/reference/intlpoliticalscience>).

With the support of the entries and the lectures, as well as other sources that you will need to search on your own, classify the following countries according to their institutional organization: Brazil, China, Equatorial Guinea, France, India, Kenya, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, United States of America, and Venezuela. In 2-3 pages (max. 1,500 words), justify your classification and reflect upon the cases that might have caused you to hesitate. **Before the seminar, submit your essay through Urkund.**

Session 9: Actors and dynamics of the political process

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 14: Bourdieu, Pierre. 1979. "Public Opinion Does Not Exist". Armand Mattelart/ Seth Siegelau (Eds.): *Communication and Class Struggle 1*. New York: International General: 124–130. (Available online: https://is.muni.cz/el/fss/podzim2019/POLn4102/um/blok1/Bourdieu_PO_Does_Not_Exist.pdf)
- Presentation 15: Lipset, Seymour M. & Stein Rokkan, 1967, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction", in Lipset & Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, Free Press, pp. 1-33. Available online here: <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~mishler/LipsetRokkan.pdf>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Using the lectures and seminars material, prepare notes to answer the following questions:

- (a) How did the voter turnout to the European Parliament elections evolve since 1979? What do you think about the 2019 election?
- (b) How did the results of left and right parties in the European election evolve in Austria, France, Hungary and the UK since they joined the European Union? In light of the cleavage theory, what do you think of these evolutions?

You will find reliable and useful data here: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2019/post-election-survey-2019-complete-results/report/en-post-election-survey-2019-report.pdf> ;
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/in-the-past/previous-elections> ;
<http://dossiers-bibliotheque.sciencespo.fr/une-vie-politique-europeenne-european-political-life/participation-eu-elections-decreasing>

Session 10: The outputs of the political process and public policies

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 16: Pierson, Paul. 2005. "The Study of Policy Development." *Journal of Policy History* 17, no. 1, pp. 34–51. Available online: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/223C24332196A4AC81C1BA3A74CE92C6/S0898030600001238a.pdf/study_of_policy_development.pdf

- Presentation 17: Howlett, Michael. Giest, Sarah. 2012. "The policy-making process", in *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*. Routledge, pp. 17-28. Available via library: <https://www-routledgehandbooks-com.acces-distant.sciencespo.fr/doi/10.4324/9780203097571.ch2>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

With the help of the lectures and seminars reading material, try to identify the different steps of the policy cycle in the field of environmental policy (climate change) since the 1990s in your own country.

Session 11: International Relations Module – Globalization and Hegemony

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 18: Cooley, Alexander. Nexon, Daniel H. 2020. "How Hegemony Ends: The Unraveling of American Power". *Foreign Affairs*. 99-4, pp. 143-156.

Preparation of the final exam and methodological reminder. Students should prepare and bring questions on aspects of the course that they did not fully understand.

Session 12: The role of economic processes in politics and the study of Political Economy

Presentations (mandatory reading for everyone):

- Presentation 19: Hall Peter A. 2012. "The Economics and Politics of the Euro Crisis", *German Politics*, 21:4, 355-371. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09644008.2012.739614>
- Presentation 20: Lewis-Beck, Michael. Stegmaier, Mary. 2019. "Economic Voting", *The Oxford Handbook of Public Choice*. Oxford University Press. Available via library: <https://www-oxfordhandbooks-com.acces-distant.sciencespo.fr/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190469733.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190469733-e-12>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Compare the last two national general elections in each of the following countries – France, Japan, and the US – and find the relevant background information to ascertain and argue whether the economy played a major role either during the electoral campaign or in the electoral outcome.