Poli 630 Fall 2019

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Poli 630 GOVERNANCE IN WESTERN EUROPE

This seminar provides an encapsulated understanding of the continuities and discontinuities in governance of the major West European countries in the nascent European community.

The post-1945 period ushered in the cold war but also a new era of peace, politics and political economy, including the so-called German and Italian miracles. The Faustian bargains that created the postwar ways of doing politics have been challenged internally (through various efforts of regional and local movements aimed at decentering the state and central party monopoly) and externally and transnationally (through waves of migration, the nascent European Union and monetary crises). The course covers the collapse of the cold-war certainty and the emergent new political hegemonies by focusing on the following dimensions of public life:

1. Understanding Organized Complexity (meetings 1, 2, 3)
2. Representation (mass beliefs, participation and not just voting, old and new forms of collective action) (meetings 4, 5, 6)
3. Institutions and Public Goods: what is government for and what is good at? (meetings 7, 8, 9)
4. Political Economy (meetings 10, 11, 12)
5. Public entrepreneurship across countries (meeting 13).

We will cover a great deal of material in a relatively short period of time. The good news is that it is an exciting set of readings that will put you at the forefront in the study of comparative politics and political economy. Please remember that the success of the seminar will depend on attendance and on each one of us contributing to the conversation. Reading efficiently – maximizing the amount learned while minimizing the time spent doing it – is an art and practice in this art will be shown during the semester.

The following books are required readings and are available for purchase at the McGill University Bookstore:


The other readings will be available in the course pack. The course pack gives easy access to the readings and save time. I will also make available free of charge particular Economist columns. The individual readings will also be available in electronic form from the McGill Libraries.

You will be expected to write three 4,000 words analytical papers during the semester, one of which must cover material in meetings 1 and 2. The papers can be submitted during the semester or they can be submitted at the formal end of graduate classes.

I will provide more details about these papers in our first meeting. I will also set out my expectations for your seminar presentation.

Breakdown of Grade:
Seminar participation, 20%
Discussion leader, 20%
Three short (7 to 10 pages) papers, 60%.

Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offenses under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

Part I Understanding Organized Complexity

Seminar Meeting # 1. Organization and Overview of the Seminar

Seminar Meeting # 2. The Lure of Western Europe


[one more reading, suggested, if you time:]

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Meeting # 3. Epistemic Choices


[suggested, if you have time choose one the following:]

Part II Governance and Change

Meeting # 4. Changing Meaning of Citizenship: Mass Beliefs, and Democracy/Despotism


[suggested, if you have time:]
*Larry Siedentop will be read later but it fits here too esp. on active citizenship Remember that he is a student of Tocqueville .
Meeting # 5. Changing Meaning of Representation: Parties and Party Systems


[If you have time, read one of the following:]

Meeting # 6. Citizenship and Representation: Immigration and Identities


Meeting # 7. Executives and Assemblies

[suggested, if you have time:]
*Juan Linz 1994. "Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy. Does it make a
difference?" In J. Linz and A. Valenzuela, The Failure of Presidential Democracy.
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, esp. 3-48.

Meeting # 8. The Public Service Industry Part I: Conceptual Issues
Emergence of Public Economics and Industry Structures.” Pp. 163-197. In V.
Ostrom. The Meaning of American Federalism: Constituting a Self-Governing
Society. San Francisco: ICS Press. Consider also coproduction as an expression of
citizen participation.

Bernardo Zacka 2019. When the State Meets the Street. Public Service and Moral

[suggest you read one of the following, if you have time:]
Gray.
their Working, Shirking and Sabotage. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press,
1-24.

Meeting # 9. The Public Service Industry Part II. The Experience
UP. A classic, still worth reading. Short and to the point.

Will make available to class, diagrams French administrative organization and evolution
of ideological political families in French politics.

J-C. Thoenig 1978. “State Bureaucracies and Local Government in France.” In Fritz W.


[if you have time read one of the following:]
Centre: Preferences for Government Activity in Britain,1950-2005.” British
Meeting # 10. The Welfare State, Redistribution Part I: Universalism


[If you have time, read also the following:]

Part III. Toward a Polycentric And/Or New Oligarchic Order?
Meeting 11. Democratic Tensions: Universalism vs Hierarchy vs Meritocracy?


Meeting # 12 . Political Economy

(June): 641-672. Nobel Prize speech.


[if you have time, read one of the following:]


Meeting # 13. The European Union: Ideals and Realities