

University of Mississippi
Spring 2012

INST 316: Electoral Systems, Party Systems, and Governance

MWF 9:00-9:50 — Croft 204

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a seminar on electoral systems and party systems, and their relationship to “governance” across different democracies. While democracy is now common in many regions of the world (particularly Europe and Latin America), not all democracies have similar institutions. This course focuses on two key institutions—electoral systems and party systems—that are closely interrelated. Electoral systems are the formal rules by which voters choose their representatives. These formal rules affect how voter preferences translate into seats.

Party systems are the constellation of individual political parties in a country. The structure and historical evolution of party systems—as well as the strategies and trajectories of individual parties—are shaped by (along with other factors) the electoral rules. Lastly, these two variables also affect the quality of “governance” (the way political authority is exercised) in different countries. We will explore the relationship between all three during the semester.

COURSE GOALS

In addition to learning about party systems and electoral systems in various countries, the course will also prepare students to do quantitative and qualitative political analysis appropriate for a Croft senior thesis in the IGP (International Governance and Politics) concentration. Throughout the course, we will focus on common quantitative “metrics” (measurements) used in the study of electoral systems and party systems, as well as appropriate strategies to use them in either large- N (statistical) or small- N (“comparative” or case study) research designs. By the end of the course, you should have a working understanding of how to collect data, measure party system and electoral system indicators, and how to appropriately select cases for a research project.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

The following books are required for this course:

- Farrell, David M. 2011. *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*, 2nd ed. Palgrave Macmillan.
Janda, Kenneth (with Jin-Young Kwak). 2011. *Party Systems and Country Governance*. Paradigm Publishers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Below is a summary of course requirements and their share (in points) of the final grade:

Class Participation	50
Research Portfolio	250
Midterm Exam	100
Final Exam	100
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 500

Participation. Because this is an advanced seminar, active, engaging, and meaningful participation is essential. I expect you to complete the readings and assignments *before* class—and to come ready to discuss them. Participation grades are my subjective evaluation of your overall performance in class.

Exams. This course has two exams, a midterm and a final. Each exam is worth 100 points, and will combine short answer/identification, short essay, problem exercises, and long essay questions. I will hand out study guides the week prior to each exam.

Research Portfolio. Throughout the semester, you will develop a research portfolio on one of the following countries across a twenty-year period (1990-2010):

<i>Latin America</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>Middle East</i>
Brazil	Britain	Japan	Turkey
Chile	France	South Korea	Israel
Costa Rica	Germany	Thailand	
Ecuador	Ireland	Indonesia	
	Sweden		
	Poland		
	Spain		

The portfolio involves a series of specific descriptive and analytical components (each about 2-3 pages):

- Descriptive overview of your country, focusing on political history since 1990. Due February 10.
- Short “reports” (brief descriptions and tables) calculating the effective number of parties and electoral volatility for your country since 1990. These are meant to assess your understanding of and ability to use the quantitative metrics covered in the semester. The effective number of parties report is due February 24; the electoral volatility report is due March 2.
- Descriptive analysis of your country’s electoral system and changes (if any) since 1990. This is meant to assess your understanding of differences in electoral systems, as well as ability to do qualitative research on a specific country. Due the Friday of the week when that electoral system is discussed.
- Short “relational analysis” study exploring a relationship between the electoral system, party system, and governance indicators for your country. Due May 4.

GRADING SCALE

This course uses the university’s new +/- grading scale. The corresponding percentages and point scores for each +/- letter grade are outlined below:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A	93-100	465-500
A-	90-92	450-464
B+	87-89	435-449
B	83-86	415-434
B-	80-82	400-414
C+	77-79	385-399
C	73-76	365-384
C-	70-72	350-364
D	60-69	300-349
F	0-59	0-299

ADDITIONAL ISSUES & CLASS RULES

Please be sure you follow these basic class rules and policies throughout the semester:

Classroom Behavior. I do not allow the use of cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices in class without permission. I also expect you to consistently behave in ways that demonstrate your respect for me and the course, your fellow students, and yourself.

Missing Assignments. If you know in advance that you will miss an assignment deadline, you may submit the assignment early—and then appeal for an extension. If you prepare for contingencies (by not starting to work on assignments the night before they are due), you should be safe. Even if your work is not complete, submitting what you have accomplished prior to the emergency is better than earning a zero. Extensions will only be granted under extreme circumstances, and at my discretion.

Communication. Email is the most common way for students and faculty to communicate outside of class. I try to answer messages promptly, but do not expect emails sent *after 6pm* to be answered until *after 8 am* the following day. Additionally, remember to keep messages professional and respectful (e.g. use salutations, such as “Professor Centellas” or “Dr. Centellas”). Also, check your university email account regularly; I will use that address when sending important messages related to the course.

Student Disability Services. If you have a *documented* disability as described by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 933-112 Section 504) or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and would like to request academic and/or physical accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services at 234 Martindale Center (662-915-7128). Course requirements will not be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided as appropriate. Please consult <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/sds/> for more information on student disability services.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism. As a student at the University, all work submitted under your name, for your credit, is assumed to be your original work. While teachers hope and expect for you to incorporate the thinking of others in your work, you must credit others’ work when you use it. In your written assignments, there are only three methods for properly importing the works of others: quotations, paraphrase, and summary. Broadly speaking, plagiarism is completely avoidable. However, if you are ever unsure if you are committing plagiarism, consult with us prior to submitting the assignment.

The penalty for plagiarism and/or cheating in this class ranges from failure of the assignment to failing the course. Additional penalties are also possible. Students should familiarize themselves with the relevant guidelines and procedures in the *M Book*.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1	1/23	Introduction: Hand out syllabus and go over course requirements
	1/25	Janda, Chapter 1 (The Nature of Governance)
	1/27	Hand out country assignments and discuss research portfolio
Week 2	1/30	Janda, Chapter 2 (Science and Art in Measuring Country Governance)
	2/01	Janda, Chapter 3 (Country Governance: Chicken or Egg?)
	2/03	Democracy assistance/promotion as a career
Week 3	2/06	Janda, Chapter 4 (The Effects of Country Size)
	2/08	Janda, Chapter 5 (The Effects of Country Wealth)
	2/10	Report 1: Country Background
Week 4	2/13	Janda, Chapter 6 (Party System Effects: The Theory)
	2/15	Janda, Chapter 7 (Party Systems: Data and Measures)
	2/17	<i>No class (away at a conference)</i>
Week 5	2/20	Janda, Chapter 9 (The Effects of Competition) Janda, Chapter 10 (The Effects of Aggregation)
	2/22	Workshop: How to calculate the effective number of parties (bring laptop)
	2/24	Report 2: Effective Number of Parties
Week 6	2/27	Janda, Chapter 11 (The Effects of Stability)
	2/29	Workshop: How to calculate electoral volatility (bring laptop)
	3/02	Report 3: Electoral Volatility
Week 7	3/05	Janda, Chapter 12 (Reviewing the Theory and Research) Midterm exam review
	3/07	<i>Midterm Exam Part I (multiple choice)</i>
	3/09	<i>Midterm Exam Part II (short essay—bring a blue book)</i>
Week 8	3/19	Farrell, Chapter 1 (The Study of Electoral Systems)
	3/21	Farrell, Chapter 2 (The Single Member Plurality System)
	3/23	Report 4A: Britain
Week 9	3/26	Farrell, Chapter 3 (Majoritarian Electoral Systems)
	3/28	Correlation analysis: Chi-square test (bring laptop)
	3/30	Report 4B: France

Week 10	4/02	Farrell, Chapter 4 (The List Systems of Proportional Representation)
	4/04	Report 4C: Brazil, Sweden, Turkey
	4/06	<i>No class for Good Friday break</i>
Week 11	4/09	Farrell, Chapter 5 (Mixed Electoral Systems)
	4/11	Report 4D: Germany, Japan, South Korea
	4/13	<i>No class (away at a conference)</i>
Week 12	4/16	Farrell, Chapter 6 (The Single Transferrable Vote System)
	4/18	Correlation analysis: Simple linear regression (bring laptop)
	4/20	Report 4E: Ireland
Week 13	4/23	Farrell, Chapter 7 (The Consequences of Electoral Systems)
	4/25	Farrell, Chapter 8 (Electoral Reform and the Choice of an Electoral System)
	4/27	Report 4F: Chile
Week 14	4/30	Farrell, Chapter 9 (Electoral Systems and Stability)
	5/02	Discuss final summary analysis reports
	5/04	Report 5: Summary Analysis Report Final exam review
Finals Week	5/09	8:00 am—Final Exam (bring a blue book)