



Advancements in Legislative Studies

Instructor Info —



Or Tuttnauer



Office hours: by appointment



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Course Info —



Weekly, Wednesdays



12:00-13:30



A5,6 building B room B143

Course description

This course will review recent advancements in the study of legislative behavior, its determinants, and consequences. After a short introduction, we will read and discuss prime examples of research investigating various parliamentary activities, legislators' careers, electoral effects of parliamentary activities, *et cetera*. Students will be acquainted with studies utilizing methods including text-as-data, survey analysis, natural experiments, and experimental designs. After completing this course, students will be familiar with the central questions being currently asked and answered about parliamentary activity. They will also be able to plan and conduct their own (small-scale) research.

Learning outcomes

After completing this course, students will be:

- Familiar with some of the cutting edge research on parliaments and parliamentary activity.
- Knowledgeable about the most important parliamentary activities carried out by legislators and what affects them.
- Able to form their own hypotheses and carry out preliminary research with a suitable design.
- Able to critically evaluate theoretical arguments and empirical analyses in the field.

Teaching in an online environment

While the course is planned to take place physically on campus, we will be prepared to switch to online learning through Zoom. Further details will be given if and when necessary.

In addition, we'll be using the collaborative reading platform Perusall developed by Gary King to asynchronously discuss the readings before class. Go to the following [link](#) and create an account using your email address. Select "I am a student" and enter the course access code: TUTTNAUER-27VY9.

For each reading, you'll find my comments and annotations. You'll be able to anonymously post your own comments or questions. You can also anonymously respond to other people's comments and up vote helpful comments or suggestions. Of course, you are more than welcome to access the reading materials independently, annotate them offline etc. if that is what you prefer.

Requirements - overview

In order to receive credit for this course, students will need to fulfill the following requirements: Active seminar participation (*Mitarbeit*), one small written assignment, one in-class presentation, and the completion of a term paper. Please note only those students who have successfully completed the participation, writing assignment, and presentation requirements are eligible to receive credit for their term paper. These are therefore prerequisites (*Studienleistung*) for registering and receiving credit for the term paper (*Prüfungsleistung*). Only the final paper is graded.

FAQs

? What prior knowledge do I need?

! Basic concepts in comparative politics such as regime types, party systems, electoral systems, etc. If you want to attend the course but worried that you may not have the required knowledge, please contact me *ahead of time* and I will send you further reading materials.

? Why is the seminal work X by Y is not in the syllabus?

! I tend to prioritize articles over books; newer over older research; studies on parliamentary systems over studies on presidential systems; comparative designs over case-studies; works that focus on the legislators and their behaviour over works on institutions; works that I find interesting. Exceptions apply.

? Does that mean I cannot write a term paper which is a case study / on presidential systems?

! No, it does not mean that! Case studies and works extending the theories/findings reviewed in the course to other systems are VERY welcome.

? What about qualitative/ethnographic research?

! Unfortunately these will not be addressed in this seminar. A) they are too out of my scope of expertise; B) they are usually contained in monographs and are therefore too much to include in this seminar's time frame. BUT - you can write a qualitative term paper, if the method fits the research question...

Course achievement (Studienleistung)

Active seminar participation. Participation in class is fundamental to the success of this seminar. Therefore, students are expected to attend at least 80% of the sessions. Students who attend in 60% or less will not be allowed to submit a term paper and receive a grade in the seminar. For those who attend 60-80%, the instructor will determine whether they could submit extra assignments to compensate for the reduced attendance.

Apart from physically being in class, all students are expected to read the assigned materials for each week and actively participate in the discussion. A complete and enduring lack for engagement will necessitate the submission of extra assignments.

Writing assignment. Each student must write one assignment of maximum 1000 words during the semester, focus on a chapter/article from the reading material. The essay will consist of three parts:

- An exposition of the primary theoretical argument of the paper: research question, main argument, hypotheses, *et cetera*.
- An description of the empirical strategy of the paper: case selection, methods, main results.
- A critical discussion of the paper, directed at either the theory or the methodology (or both). For example: Is the argument based on hidden assumptions which you may or may not accept? Does the research design fit the research question? Is the interpretation of the results correct? Students are encouraged – but do not need to – contrast the paper's argument with those of other texts in the reading list or outside of it.

Submission deadline for each assignment is MONDAY NOON BEFORE the class in which the chapter/article will be discussed. Allotment of the assignment slots among the students will be done with consultation with the instructor.

In-class presentation. Each student must perform a 10-15 minutes presentation in class. This presentation will summarize and discuss one (or more - by consultation with the instructor) of the reading materials for the respective lecture. The presentation will follow the structure of the writing assignment (described above) and include the research question, main argument, hypotheses, research design, and main results, followed by a critical reflection on the reading material. This presentation will then serve as a lead-up to the discussion of the reading material in class.

Written assignment (Prüfungsleistung)

A research design paper of maximum 6,000 words (including footnotes and endnotes, excluding bibliography) on an agreed research question. The paper must be written in English, spellchecked and with proper citations. The paper should be sent as a single PDF file by 23:59 on January 9th, 2023. A doctor's note is required in case of illness or injury. Students bear responsibility for timely submission. Early submission is possible and encouraged. There is no possibility to revise the term paper after submission. There is no resit.

During the semester, students will receive a research proposal form, which they can use to plan and construct their term paper. Submission of the form is not mandatory but is highly encouraged. In any case, the term paper's research question must be approved by the instructor by the end of the semester at the latest.

Academic integrity

All students in this course are expected to strictly adhere to the University Code of Academic Integrity (Richtlinie zur guten wissenschaftlichen Praxis). Students are expected to be independently familiar with the Code and must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other severe academic misconduct (see https://www.uni-mannheim.de/media/Universitaet/Dokumente/Richtlinie_gute_wissenschaftliche_Praxis_en.pdf for additional information).

Schedule and assigned readings

Session 1 (7/9)	Organizational meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Who am I? who are you?</i>> <i>What is this course about? perhaps, also, what is it not about?</i>> <i>What are all the logistical and technical details we need to know before we begin?</i>	
Session 2 (14/9)	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Martin et al. [2014]* Taylor-Robinson et al. [2022]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Why do legislatures matter? Why study them?</i>> <i>What are some of the promising directions current research has been taking in the field?</i>	
Session 3 (21/9)	Parliamentary Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Hix and Noury [2016]* Louwerse et al. [2017]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Mapping party positions out of voting behavior</i>> <i>Detecting government-opposition voting patterns (and explaining them?)</i>	
Session 4 (28/9)	Text Analysis: Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Fernandes et al. [2020]* Slapin and Kirkland [2020]Fernandes et al. [2018]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Using Named Entity Recognition to analyze the regional focus of speakers</i>> <i>Analyzing speech simplicity, length, and use of pronouns</i>> <i>Working with other textual sources</i>	
Session 5 (5/10)	Text Analysis: Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Schwalbach [2022]* Louwerse et al. [2021]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Recovering sentiment from parliamentary speeches</i>> <i>Automated versus manual methods</i>	
Session 6 (12/10)	Debates: Non-verbal Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Dietrich et al. [2019]* Imre et al. [2022]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>What else can we extract from debates other than texts?</i>	
Session 7 (19/10)	Large-scale Comparative Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Tuttnauer and Wegmann [2022]* Wegmann [2022]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Drawing on comparative data and combining multiple data sources</i>> <i>Constructing comparable measures and collecting needed data</i>	

Session 8 (26/10)	Experiments	* Bol et al. [2020] * Wagner et al. [2020]
		> <i>Using field experiments to assess politicians' responsiveness</i> > <i>Using survey conjoint experiments to uncover voters' perceptions of parliamentary activity</i>
Session 9 (2/11)	Causal Inference	* Cirone and Van Coppenolle [2018] * Finseraas et al. [2021] Williams and Indridason [2018]
		> <i>Exploiting natural experiments for causal inference</i> > <i>Taking advantage of randomness created by unique institutional features</i>
9/11 - Term paper consultation		
Session 11 (16/11)	Surveys	* Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan [2017] * Hanretty et al. [2021]
		> <i>Getting at party unity by asking MPs for their views</i> > <i>Comparing findings from voter and elite surveys</i>
Session 12 (23/11)	Qualitative and Mixed Methods	* Mannevu et al. [2022] * Cleary and Öztürk [2020] * Mickler [2018] Crewe [2017]
		> <i>Using semi-structured surveys, alone or together with quantitative analysis</i> > <i>Qualitative comparative analysis</i>
Session 13 (30/11)	Off the Beaten Track	* Skigin [2019] * Marcinkiewicz and Stegmaier [2019]
		> <i>Looking at countries outside of West Europe or North-America</i>
Session 14 (30/11)	Wildcard!	
		> <i>We discuss cool papers you have suggesting during the semester</i>

* References

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