



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2023

7,369: Comparing Political Cultures

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (40%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (60%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[7,369,1.00 Comparing Political Cultures](#) -- English -- [Bertsou Eri](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

This is an advanced course in comparative politics and political culture. Students need not have already taken comparative politics/democratic politics classes, but if they have not, they will need to do additional reading to understand key theories and concepts tackled in the course.

Learning objectives

Students acquire the following knowledge and competences:

- Identify and explain key concepts, relevant topics and current debates in the field of political culture, attitudes and beliefs.
- Compare and contrast diverse political cultures, patterns of political behaviour, civic participation, democratic attitudes and values, across country contexts and generations.
- Gain an understanding of the main methods of data collection and analysis in studies of political culture and political behaviour and the ability to interpret social science research.
- Apply theoretical tools to the analysis of current issues in world affairs and use empirical data from existing research to compare and evaluate the strength of different arguments.
- Synthesize and critically assess theoretical arguments, evidence from empirical research and normative questions, making own original contributions.
- Present arguments and critically assess the relevant literature in academic essays and oral presentations.

Course content

When thinking about the diversity between countries around the world (be it democracies or authoritarian regimes) the role of «political culture» springs immediately to mind. People, countries, sometimes regions within the same country, but also generations, have different attitudes toward their community, the state and politics in general. We find important cultural differences in the levels of political trust, social capital, civic participation and tolerance. Political norms, support for political institutions and the sense of nationalism also vary across countries, across time and across generations. It is in such 'political cultures' that each individual is socialised, that their political and social values are formulated, and ultimately that they participate in the political process and vote. 'No man –or woman- is an island', goes the saying, yet we still often think about values, beliefs and behaviors as shaped by our own intuition, rationality and personal judgment. This seminar aims at **examining interplay between societies and the individual members within them** and explores the best ways to **analyse current political phenomena**.



The main goal of the seminar is to broaden participants understanding of diversity in political culture and its impact in politics and citizen behaviour. This course complements comparative-based approaches to political science and the study of institutions and socio-economic structures.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

This seminar-style course is expected to take place in the form of weekly two-hour meetings, if possible as an in-person class. Teaching will consist of input presentations by the lecturer, input presentations by students and classroom discussion based on the mandatory readings and current affairs. The first part of the course provides a foundation in theories and methods of studying political culture and why this matters. With each week, we advance to more recent debates and events in the study of political behaviour and cultural change.

Course literature

The literature will be made available on canvas. Weekly readings will include two essential readings (book chapter or journal article/report) and a list of further readings. Students are always encouraged to conduct independent research on the topics covered and bring relevant studies/news coverage to the attention of the class.

Additional course information

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Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	40%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

Individually or in Groups

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	60%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

Research Design or Literature Review

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

Written work must be written without outside help according to the known citation standards, and a declaration of authorship must be attached, which is available as a template on the StudentWeb. All written work must be accompanied by a declaration of generative AI model use (ex. ChatGPT) and a 1-page reflection of the student's experience using this technology.

Grading will take into account all aspects of the written work, including analytical thinking, academic language, syntax, structure, referencing and quotations, and supporting research materials.

Documentation (quotations, bibliography, etc.) must be carried out universally and consistently according to the requirements of the chosen/specified citation standard such as e.g. APA or MLA.

The reference sources of information (paraphrases, quotations, etc.) that has been taken over literally or in the sense of the original text must be integrated into the text in accordance with the requirements of the citation standard used. Informative and bibliographical notes must be included as footnotes (recommendations and standards e.g. in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien (latest edition)).

For all written work at the University of St.Gallen, the indication of page numbers is mandatory, regardless of the standard chosen. Where page numbers are missing in sources, the precise designation must be made differently: chapter or section title, section number, article, etc.

Examination content

Examination consists of two parts:

Part 1: Presentation.

Students will make one class room presentation (individually or in groups, depending on the number of participants) on a given topic. The topic will be reflected in the essential and further readings of a given week, but the presentation will be based on a question or debate for which the student(s) must conduct further research and structure their answer. The presentation is NOT an overview of the readings.



Part 2: Examination paper. Students can select one of the following tracks:

- Track A: Term paper. The student develops a research question and writes a research design for an empirical paper addressing their question (3,500 words +/- 10%, excluding list of references). The research question needs to be directly related to one or several topics covered in this course. The research design may eventually become the blueprint of a MA thesis.
- Track B: Literature Review. The student summarize and critically assess the "state of the art" on a specific topic covered in this course (3,000 words +/- 10%, excluding list of references). The aim is to provide a structured summary of the pertinent literature and to identify research gaps that future studies should address. Literature reviews will cover 8-12 publications in a given field. Students may draw on course materials for their paper, but they will need to their own literature research on top.

Examination relevant literature

A general reading list will be published in the StudyNet course room at the beginning of the semester. The specific literature relevant for the term papers depends on the specific topic. Students are expected to consult additional literature from their own research.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 34 (Thursday, 24 August 2023);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 16 October 2023);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 45 (Monday, 06 November 2023);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the de-registration period in CW 45 (Monday, 06 November 2023).