

POL 307
Dept. of Political Science
Summer Session I
Time: MW 9:30-1:10
Location: ESS 181

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Hours: W 1:30-3:30 or by appt.

Syllabus: Politics in Germany

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide a basic understanding of contemporary German politics. The course will examine governmental institutions and policy making within the German polity. There will be a special emphasis on political parties, elections and voting behavior. Students are encouraged to use the Internet to gather information and update their knowledge of the material beyond the assigned readings. Advisory Prerequisite: POL 103.

ASSIGNED READINGS: The amount of reading every week is fairly small because I expect you to surf the web for additional up-to-date information about German politics. Instead of a textbook I assign certain book chapters of classical textbooks and recent working papers. The readings are included in the course package that can be purchased from the office for undergraduate affairs in the Political Science department (SBS S-705). The office is open 10-3 on Monday and Tuesday. In addition, I will hand out in class a little brochure "Facts about Germany" from the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government of Germany free of charge.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Please review the Undergraduate Bulletin's "Academic Policies and Regulations" section for university policy regarding drops, withdrawals, etc. If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry out assigned course work, I urge you to contact the staff in the Disabled Student Services office (DSS), Room 133, Humanities, 632-6748v/TDD. DSS will review your concerns and determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. Of course, all information and documentation of a disability are confidential.

Course Requirements

- *Regular and informed participation in class (together 30 %)*

There will be short homework assignments (up to one page at most) as an opportunity for the student to structure the information obtained from the readings and/or to update the readings. This will help the student to understand the basic concepts and easily recognize the differences of the German political system from the one in this country. The homework should be typed and is due the class after it is assigned. Each homework will be graded and the overall grade for your homework determines 20 % of your course grade. I will give *extra credit* for particularly comprehensive homework or for research including foreign language sources. To encourage students' help developing a productive working atmosphere in class, and their active participation in workshops, discussions and the like, I reserve 10 % of the final grade for the quality of your class participation.

- *Exams (together 35 %)*

A short midterm on June 9 (15 %) and final exam on June 30 (20 %) will be given to encourage students to retain a working knowledge about the key concepts of the political system in Germany.

- *Research Paper (together 35 %)*

The best way to get an understanding of the substantive content of German Politics is to study in depth a topic of your choice. It is important to select such a topic that allows you to make connections between general course material covered in the assigned readings as well as your own literature research including up-to-date information from the web. I urge you to see me during office hours. If you cannot make it during my scheduled hours, we can set an appointment. I will be available throughout the Summer Session I to help with choosing an appropriate topic, finding literature or using information from the web. Your papers, for instance, will benefit from a discussion of your approach.

In order to structure the research process of your paper I want you to write a proposal of your topic. This will help students to start thinking early on about an interesting topic. Your proposal should be typed and short, i.e., not longer than one page. No lengthy literature review is needed at this stage. Briefly, state your topic and your specific research question including a clear thesis and, then, explain why your question is important. Also, you may want to discuss the limitations (time, geographical or substantial) of your chosen approach. The proposal is due on June 7 in class at 9:30 a.m. and is worth 10 % of your final grade.

The Research Paper itself should be only 6-10 pages long (double-spaced). You do not have to write a Masters thesis! Keep this in mind when you are looking for an appropriate topic. However, be sure to cite your sources properly and list all sources in your bibliography. Your research paper is due on June 28 in the last class before the final at 9:30 a.m. and is worth 25 % of your final grade.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

5/24 Introduction

5/26 Basic Law and Constitutional Bodies – An Overview

- Conradt, David P. 1989. *The German Polity*. 4th Edition. New York/London: Longman. pp. 82-85.
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 18-46.
- Press and Information Office. 1996. *Facts about Germany. Political System, constitution and law*. Frankfurt/Main: Societäts-Verlag. pp. 2-19.
- Smith, Gordon. 1989. "Structures of Government" in *Development in West German Politics*. Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson and Peter H. Merkl, (eds.). London: MACMILLAN. pp. 24-39.

5/31 Memorial Day – no class. Enjoy!

6/2 Parties and Ideologies

- Guerot, Ulrike. 1999. "Prospects for German Party System after the 1998 General Elections: Toward a New German Normalcy?" AICGS-Workingpaper.
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 73-103.
- Padgett, Stephen. 1993. *Parties and Party Systems in the new Germany*. Brookfield, VT: Dartmouth Publishing Company. pp. 1-21.

6/7 Voting behavior, Campaigns and Elections

Note: Proposal is due in class at 9:30 a.m.

- Beyme, Klaus von. 1983. *The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany*. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp. 30-40.
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 104-131.
- Padgett, Stephen. 1993. *Parties and Party Systems in the new Germany*. Brookfield, Vt.: Dartmouth Publishing Company. pp. 25-46.
- Press and Information Office. 1996. *Facts about Germany. Political System, constitution and law*. Frankfurt/Main: Societäts-Verlag. pp. 25-32.
- Roth, Dieter. 1998. "Examine the Vote: The Results of Germany's National Election. Election 1998. Germany in the Year of Decision." AICGS-Workingpaper. pp. 1-9.

6/9 *Midterm*

6/14 From Reunification to Germany 2000

- Dalton, Russell J. and Wilhelm Bürklin. 1996. "The Two German Electorates" in *Germans Divided*. Russell J. Dalton (ed.), Pp. 183-207.
- Merkl, Peter H. 1995. "Introduction: Reinventing German National Identity" in *The Federal Republic of Germany at Forty-Five. Union without Unity*. Peter H. Merkl (ed.), New York: New York University Press. pp. 1-14.
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 1-17.
- Survey Germany. 1999. "The Burden of Normality." *THE ECONOMIST*, February 6th 1999. pp. 3-18.
- Welsh, Helga A. 1995. "Shadows of the Past: Germany and the Legacy of the SED Rule" in *The Federal Republic of Germany at Forty-Five. Union without Unity*. Peter H. Merkl (ed.), New York: New York University Press. pp. 113-127.

6/16 Legislative Branch

- Beyme, Klaus von. 1983. *The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany*. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp. 117-134. (Chapter 7)
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 132-156. (Skip pp. 143-148)

6/21 Federalism and Lawmaking

- Beyme, Klaus von. 1983. *The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany*. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp. 159-174. (Chapter 9)
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 143-149.
- Press and Information Office. 1996. *Facts about Germany. Political System, constitution and law*. Frankfurt/Main: Societäts-Verlag. pp. 20-24.

6/24 Executive Branch

- Beyme, Klaus von. 1983. *The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany*. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp. 138-154. (Chapter 8)
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 157-177.

6/28 Judicative Branch and Review for Final

Note: Research paper is due in class at 9:30 a.m.

- Beyme, Klaus von. 1983. *The Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany*. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp. 177-189. (Chapter 10)
- Norpoth, Helmut. N.d. *Germany*. Manuscript. pp. 177-182.
- Press and Information Office. 1996. *Facts about Germany. Political System, constitution and law*. Frankfurt/Main: Societäts-Verlag. pp. 33-40.

6/30 *Final*