Comparative Government: Political Institutions and the Political Process

Lecture
Spring term

Master of Arts (M.A.) Political Science (‘Basismodul’ Comparative Politics)
Recommended for students in the second semester

SWS: 2
ECTS credit points: 8

Overview

This lecture gives an overview of selected theoretical concepts and the main research findings in the field of Comparative Government, specifically focusing on the role of political institutions and their impact for political decision-making at all stages in the political process. The course introduces a number of core themes in the comparative study of political institutions, such as the design of constitutions and their consequences as well as electoral institutions and their effects on turnout and voting behaviour. In addition, the lecture sheds light on the impact of different institutional designs on patterns of party competition, government formation and coalition governance. In a third step, we discuss the effects of political institutions on various aspects of legislative behaviour.

Course requirements and details

- Certificate by written examination.
Course schedule

Session 1  Institutions and responsiveness


Session 2  Institutions and voting behaviour


Session 3  Institutions and the behaviour of parties and their representatives


Session 4  Institutions and party organisation

Session 5  Party competition and election campaigns


Session 6  Government formation


Session 7  Government formation duration and government survival


Session 7  Portfolio allocation and ministerial selection


Session 8  Cabinet structure and ministerial organisation

**Session 9**  
**Coalitions and cabinet governance**


**Session 10**  
**Comparative legislatures I: Legislative organisation**


**Session 11**  
**Comparative legislatures II: Parliamentary speechmaking**


**Session 12**  
**Comparative legislatures III: MP characteristics and legislative behaviour**
