Foundations of Political Science

Seminar, 1st term 2014-2015

Organized by Stefano Bartolini

Please register with Mariana Spratley (mariana.spratley@eui.eu)

Topic
The seminar will critically discuss some of the constitutive elements of politics and political behaviour at both the individual and aggregate level. Particular attention is given to the way in which political aggregate and structures do emerge from the individual level interactions and the condition under which, in turn, such aggregate and structures can be regarded as unitary actors for higher level interaction patterns. The aim of the course is to review the conceptual toolkit of classical political science and to provide a conceptual framework for the interpretation of complex political phenomena.

Audience
The seminar is open to all researchers.

Requirements
The course takes the form of one hour lecture by the teacher, followed by one hour of discussion of the lecture and the readings. The relevant readings for each session will be indicated in the syllabus. Participants may choose to be responsible for one section discussion or to prepare a final deepening paper on one of the conceptual tools of the course.

Schedule
The seminar takes place on Thursdays at 11:00-13:00, in Seminar Room 2 in the Badia (unless specified otherwise below) and will run from October 9th to December 18th.

The full list of the seminar sessions is the following:

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<td>Thursday 9th October</td>
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<td>Thursday 16th October</td>
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<td>Thursday 23rd October</td>
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<td>Thursday 6th November</td>
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<td>Thursday 11th December</td>
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<td>Monday 15th December</td>
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Note than an extra meeting is reserved for the assignments of paper tasks and/or for any emergency cancelling.
Syllabus

1) The nature of politics
   - The motivation of the individual (political action): utility, morality, honour and... “power”?
   - The outcome of the process (behavioural conformity; distribution of values; who gets what, etc.)
   - The distinctive predicaments of political action
   - The specificity of the means
   - Politics as ‘confinement’

2) Political Actors
   - The survival evolutionary value of -self-interested action versus culture and institutions.
   - Type of Actors
   - The formation of collective/corporate actors
   - Archetypical actors’ orientations

3) Actors’ interaction:
   - Coordination problems
   - Negative externalities and the public goods
   - Redistributive (and welfare) problems
   - Legitimacy issues
   - Conflict
   - Exchange
   - Competition
   - Cooperation

4) Institutions
   - What is an ‘institution’
   - Institutions (rules) and organizations (roles)
   - Political Institutions

5) Decision and conflict resolution rules
   - Theory of decisions
   - Individual, Collective and Collectivized decisions
   - Unilateral action
   - Negotiations
   - Voting
   - Hierarchy

6) Internal structuring of political arenas
   - What is a ‘political structure
   - Hierarchy and centre formation
   - Loyalty and system building
   - Voice and Political structuring.

7) Institutional structures
   - Political Citizenship
   - Democratisation
   - Responsible Government and governmental structure
   - Fair representation
   - Executive access
   - Political Structures
   - Electoral (party systems)
   - Corporate (interest intermediation)
   - Territorial (centre-periphery relations)
8) **Variations in forms of political structuring**
   - Social input
   - Cultural input
   - Territorial input
   - Organizational input

9) **Political divides**
   - Functional versus territorial divides
   - Types of functional divides
   - Linkage between social stratification, normative system and and behavioural systems

**Readings**

*Please note that readings will be made available through the EUI Collab tool ([http://collab.eui.eu](http://collab.eui.eu)). You will receive an invitation to the seminar’s Collab project upon registration.*

**Topic 1: The Nature of Politics**


**Topic 2: Political Actors**


**Topic 3: Actors’ interaction**


**Topic 4: Institutions**


**Topic 5: Decision and conflict resolution rules**


**Topic 6: Internal structuring of political arenas**


**Topic 7: Institutional structures**


**Topic 8: Political structures**

Schmitter, Philippe C. (1977), “Modes of Interest Intermediation and Modes of Societal Change in Western Europe”, in Comparative Political Studies, 10(1).


**Topic 9: Variations in forms of political structuring**

Same readings as Topic 8


**Topic 10: Political divides**


Bartolini, Stefano (2005). “La formation des clivages”, in Revue internationale de politique comparée, 12: 9-34. (For those who cannot read French, the following unpublished paper can be distributed: Cleavages, divides and Voting Theory, Conference on “Religiosity, Ideology, and Vote in Europe”, Florence, 7-8 November 2013)