Comparative Constitutional Design

(Provisional Syllabus, 15 November 2018)

Seminar, 2nd term 2018-2019

Organised by Stefano Bartolini

Please register online
Contact: Adele Battistini

Description
Since ever, a large and core area of political science concerned the configuration, the functioning and the outcomes of top political institutions. A large literature has accumulated about the different political components of a constitutional scheme. The seminar aims at reviewing its main contributions linking the constitutional choices on the key elements to the arguments about the negative and positives behavioural incentives they are theoretically associated with and to the outcomes they actually seem to foster. Key topics will include:

Components of the Constitutional design
The electoral laws and the ‘selectorates’ (though usually not constitutional choices);
Executive structures (mono and dual executives)
Mono and bicameralism
Parliamentary key proceedings (investiture, confidence, censure)
Centre-periphery links
Accountability mechanisms and constitutional amendments rules

Combining the components into general Institutional designs
The veto-players structure
The power sharing principle
The logics of Parliamentarism, Presidentialism, semi-Parliamentarism/ Semi-Presidentialism, and Iper/Presidentialism)

Audience
The seminar is devoted to first and second year researchers, but everybody is welcome.

Requirements
This seminar is worth 20 credits. Requirements will depend to a certain extent from the number of participants. By choosing to take this class participants take on the obligation to reading all the materials. Over the course of the seminar, participants must submit at least one 1000-word response papers to the readings for a given session and post that paper on the course website at noon on the day before class. These response papers are fundamental for the holding of a good discussion of the materials.
## Schedule

The seminar takes place on Mondays from 15.00 to 17.00 in Seminar Room 3 in the Badia. The class on Monday 4 March will take place in Seminar Room 1. The full list of the seminar sessions is the following:

| Session 1: | Monday 14 January | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 2: | Monday 21 January | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 3: | Monday 28 January | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 4: | Monday 4 February | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 5: | Monday 11 February | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 6: | Monday 18 February | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 7: | Monday 25 February | Seminar Room 3 |
| **Session 8:** Monday 4 March | **Seminar Room 1** |
| Session 9: | Monday 11 March | Seminar Room 3 |
| Session 10: | Monday 18 March | Seminar Room 3 |

## SYLLABUS AND READINGS

### 1. Introduction - Designing Political Institutions


### 2. The electoral laws


### 3. Executives


Richard Heffernan (2005), ‘Why the Prime Minister cannot be a President: Comparing Institutional Imperatives in Britain and America’, Parliamentary Affairs, 58 (1) pp. 53–70.

4. Legislative bodies


5. Executive-Legislative Relations


6. Centre-periphery link: federalism, regionalism, unitarism

7) Accountability mechanisms, and amendment rules


8) The general institutional design: Veto players and Power Sharing


9-10) Parliamentarism, Presidentialism, Semi-parliamentarism, Iper-presidentialism.


