



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
European Parties, Elections and Societies	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: Dr. Mažvydas Jastramskis Other:	Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius university, Vokiečių str. 10, LT-01130, Vilnius

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face-to-face	3 (fall semester)	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites:	Co-requisites (if relevant):

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	136	32	104

Purpose of the course unit		
The aim of this course is to introduce students to the problems and challenges of representative democracy in Europe, focusing on party systems, elections, and voters in European countries. It also aims to develop the ability to apply relevant theories to analyze various issues within European democracies. The course will develop the following competencies: knowledge of European elections, political parties, and societies; understanding of main theories that explain these phenomena and their interrelationships; and the ability to apply these theories in an independently written essay.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
To provide a comprehensive, research-based knowledge of challenges for party democracy and elections in contemporary Europe	Study of course literature, work in seminars, discussions	Evaluation of work in seminars, test
To gain a deeper understanding of the theories explaining the European elections, political parties, and societies (and their interrelationships)	Study of course literature, work in seminars, discussions	Evaluation of work in seminars, test
To become familiar with the methods, challenges, and potential solutions involved in the research of elections, parties and voter	Study of course literature, work in seminars, final written examination in essay form	Evaluation of work in seminars, evaluation and comments on final written examination in essay form
To analyze a research question related to European parties, elections and voters, applying the theories learned in the course.	Final written examination in essay form	Evaluation and comments on final written examination in essay form

Topic	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. Introduction to the course. Does democracy need parties?	2		2				4	4	Reading and analysis of: Wouter P. Veenendaal, „How democracy functions without parties: The Republic of Palau“. <i>Party Politics</i> 20 (1), 2016, pp. 27–36. James Madison, „Federalist No.10“. In <i>Hamilton, Madison and Jay: The Federalist with Letters of “Brutus”</i> . Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 40–46.
2. Theories of voting behavior.			2				2	4	Reading and analysis of: Amory Gethin, Clara Martínez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty (eds.), <i>Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities: A Study of Fifty Democracies, 1948–2020</i> . Harvard University Press, 2021, pp. 7–24.
3. Political cleavages and social inequalities.			2				2	7	Reading and analysis of: Amory Gethin, Clara Martínez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty (eds.), <i>Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities: A Study</i>

									<i>of Fifty Democracies, 1948–2020.</i> Harvard University Press, 2021, pp. 24–84.
4. Party competition now and then. Historical far right.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Richard F. Hamilton, <i>Who Voted for Hitler?</i> Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 3–8, 420–453.
5. Contemporary far right and working class voters.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Seongcheol Kim, Samuel Greef and Wolfgang Schroeder, <i>The Far Right in the Workplace: A Six-Country Comparison.</i> Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, pp. 11–30, 223–244.
6. Mainstream right in Western Europe.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Tim Bale ir Cristobal R. Kaltwasser (sud.), <i>Riding the Populist Wave: Europe's Mainstream Right in Crisis.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2021, pp. 1–28. Additional reading: Tim Bale ir Cristobal R. Kaltwasser (sud.), <i>Riding the Populist Wave: Europe's Mainstream Right in Crisis.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2021, pp. 38–87.
7. Lithuanian seminar: (new) parties, voters and the electoral system.			2				2	4	Reading and analysis of: Ainė Ramonaitė, “Mapping the political space in

									Lithuania: the discrepancy between party elites and party supporters”. <i>Journal of Baltic Studies</i> , 2020, pp. 1–16.
8. The economic crisis and social democrats.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Björn Bremer, <i>Austerity from the Left: Social Democratic Parties in the Shadow of the Great Recession</i> . Oxford University Press, 2023, pp. 1–14, 102–127. .
9. Progressive policies and social democrats.			2				2	7	Reading and analysis of: Tarik Abou Chadi ir Markus Wagner, „Electoral fortunes of social democratic parties: do second dimension positions matter?“. In Sara B. Hobolt and Toni Rodon (eds.), <i>Domestic Contestation of the European Union Edited</i> . London: Routledge, 2021, pp. 246–272 Tarik Abou Chadi ir Ryan Finnigan, „Rights for Same-Sex Couples and Public Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians in Europe“. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 52(6), 2019, pp. 868–95.
10. Gender quota laws and gender gap.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Ana Catalano Weeks, <i>Making Gender</i>

									<i>Salient: From Gender Quota Laws to Policies.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2022, pp. 1–11, 47–68.
11. Political technologies and decline of democracy in Hungary.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Andrew Wilson, <i>Political Technology: The Globalisation of Political Manipulation.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2022, pp. 1–8, 249–274.
12. Russia's war in Ukraine: societal consequences of propaganda.			2				2	4	Reading and analysis of: Jon Roozenbeek, <i>Propaganda and Ideology in the Russian–Ukrainian War.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2024, pp. 1–5, 101–116. Additional reading: Jon Roozenbeek, <i>Propaganda and Ideology in the Russian–Ukrainian War.</i> Cambridge University Press, 2024, pp. 7–26.
13. Political support and satisfaction with democracy in Europe.			2				2	5	Reading and analysis of: Sergio Martini and Mario Quaranta, <i>Citizens and Democracy in Europe: Contexts, Changes and Political Support.</i> Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, pp. 77–97. <i>Additional reading:</i> Selected a chapter from the book by

									Martini and Quaranta (2020).
14. Nationalism(s) and support for security cooperation in Europe.			2				2	6	<p>Reading and analysis of:</p> <p>Kathleen E. Powers, <i>Nationalisms in International Politics</i>. Princeton University Press, 2022, pp. 1–7, 147–178.</p> <p><i>Additional reading:</i></p> <p>Kathleen E. Powers, <i>Nationalisms in International Politics</i>. Princeton University Press, 2022, pp. 179–204.</p> <p>.</p>
15. Why does democracy need elections?			2				2	5	<p>Reading and analysis of:</p> <p>Emilee B. Chapman, <i>Election Day: How We Vote And What It Means for Democracy</i>. Princeton University Press, 2022, pp. 20–55, 214–219.</p>
Test								8	Preparation for test
Final written examination in essay form								20	At the end of the course, select one of the suggested topics related to European parties, elections and societies, as proposed by the lecturer. Formulate a clear problem or question to address, and write an essay of at least 10,000 characters (including spaces). This essay will be evaluated as final assignment and should demonstrate the knowledge acquired during the course.
Total							32	104	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Work in seminars	35	During the semester	Seminar attendance is assessed on a scale of 5 to 10. A score of 5 is given for attending all seminars (with no unexcused absences) and making very infrequent contributions, which are mostly based on personal opinion. A score of 10 is given for attending all seminars and frequently making well-reasoned, logical contributions based on the assigned readings. Alternatively, missed seminars can be made up by providing the lecturer with written answers to the seminar-specific questions.
Test	25	December	The test consists of 20 multiple-choice questions designed to assess the basic knowledge acquired during the course. The maximum score is 10 points, awarded to the student with the highest number of correct answers. For example, if the highest score is 18 out of 20, that student receives 10 points, and other students are awarded proportionately lower scores. A passing grade (5) is given for at least half of the correct answers.
Final written examination in essay form	40	Submitted at the end of the semester (during the exam session)	<p>The assessment of an essay is based on several key criteria. An unsatisfactory score indicates that none of the criteria have been met, while the highest score (10) is awarded for fully meeting all criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The essay is free of grammatical and stylistic errors. • The essay addresses one of the indicative topics suggested by the teacher and formulates a clear problem or question to be answered. • The knowledge acquired during the course is demonstrated, including the correct use of relevant literature, examples, theoretical arguments, and data. • The essay meets the minimum length requirement of 10,000 characters, including spaces.

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Wouter P. Veenendaal	2016	How democracy functions without parties: The Republic of Palau	Party Politics 20 (1)	Cambridge University Press
James Madison	2003	Hamilton, Madison and Jay: The Federalist with Letters of “Brutus”		Cambridge University Press
Amory Gethin, Clara Martínez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty (eds.)	2021	Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities: A Study of Fifty Democracies, 1948–2020.		PHarvard University Press
Seongcheol Kim, Samuel Greef and Wolfgang Schroeder	2022	The Far Right in the Workplace: A Six-Country Comparison		Palgrave Macmillan
Tim Bale ir Cristobal R. Kaltwasser (eds.)	2021	Riding the Populist Wave: Europe’s Mainstream Right in Crisis.		Cambridge University Press

Ainė Ramonaitė	2020	Mapping the political space in Lithuania: the discrepancy between party elites and party supporters	Journal of Baltic Studies 51(4)	
Björn Bremer	2023	Austerity from the Left: Social Democratic Parties in the Shadow of the Great Recession.		Oxford University Press
Sara B. Hobolt and Toni Rodon (eds.)	2021	Domestic Contestation of the European Union Edited.		Routledge
Tarik Abou Chadi and Ryan Finnigan	2019	Rights for Same-Sex Couples and Public Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians in Europ	Comparative Political Studies 52(6),	
Ana Catalano Weeks	2022	Making Gender Salient: From Gender Quota Laws to Policies.		Cambridge University Press
Andrew Wilson	2022	Political Technology: The Globalisation of Political Manipulation		Cambridge University Press
Jon Roozenbeek	2024	Propaganda and Ideology in the Russian–Ukrainian War.		Cambridge University Press
Sergio Martini and Mario Quaranta	2020	Citizens and Democracy in Europe: Contexts, Changes and Political Suppo		Palgrave Macmillan
Kathleen E. Powers	2022	Nationalisms in International Politics		Princeton University Press
Emilee B. Chapman	2022	Election Day: How We Vote And What It Means for Democracy		Princeton University Press