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Political Parties in a Comparative Perspective
Student Presentations

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Universität Münster
Institut für Politikwissenschaft

21 January 2026

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Last week

Last week

- ...you transformed your expectations into testable hypotheses
- ...you identified your dependent and independent variable and searched for potential indicators for your theoretical concepts
- ...you got to know different methods you could employ to test your theory

Our schedule to the exams

1. 17 December: Research Questions
2. 7 January: Developing an argument
3. 14 January: Choosing the right data/method
4. 21 January: Presenting your ideas to peers
5. next week: individual consultations (on request)

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What did you learn?

Take five minutes to reflect individually on your learning outcomes in the seminar. What did you learn substantively about parties? What did you learn in terms of conducting research? Where do you still have blind spots?

Learning outcomes

What I hope I could convey (as stated in the syllabus):

- key concepts in the study of political parties
- understanding of different approaches regarding parties' origins
- analysis of central functions parties fulfill (recruitment, preference aggregation, competition and governing)
- on a methodological level:
  - how to read academic literature
  - how to analyse political parties (essentially: how to do comparative political research)
- on a practical level: understanding of how local politics is organized

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Feedback form

Everyone should have received a link for the feedback form via mail. Please take your time and complete the form.

Some logistic input

- the exam will be held in Prof. Bischof's office (second floor, room 206) and takes 30 minutes (please be at latest 5 minutes before your time slot starts in front of the room, we'll let you in)

- the oral exam takes place in English

- Elena Leuschner will be the "Beisitzerin"; I will ask questions and evaluate you

- You will receive the grade at the end of the week

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Formal expectations

- submit your presentation at the latest on Friday, 30 January, 23:59 on Learnweb
- present your research project in 10-15 minutes
  - use template on Learnweb for guidance
  - I have to stop you after 15 minutes, so aim for 10-12 minutes
- after your presentation, there will be questions
  - ...on the session you present your oral exam on (know the concepts we discussed and the main article we've read for the class)
  - ...on your research idea

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Substantive expectations

- follow the points we discussed in the context of this seminar, most notably regarding:
    - research question and its relevance
    - relation to existing literature
    - theory (clarify its sub-components and concepts and specify hypotheses)
    - case selection
    - data + methods (which indicators do you use to measure your dependent and independent variables; where do you find these? what's your research method?)
    - open about strengths and contributions

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Substantive expectations

- are you able to justify your argument and design choices?
- can you think of alternative explanations?
- can you relate your research idea to the session we had in class?

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Stylistic expectations

- clarity of your slides
- smooth presentation of your idea
- concise and short replies to the questions in the Q/A

Any open questions?

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Pitching your idea to your peers

Throughout the last months, you compiled everything you need for
your research idea: a question, theory, data and methods. Present
your idea briefly (5 minutes each) to your small group. After your
peers have presented, give them feedback (next slide).

Peer-review

You've listened to your peer's presentation. Help them with finalizing their oral exam:

- Is the research question clear? Does it fulfill quality standards?
- Can you comprehend your peer's theoretical framework?
- Do the hypotheses relate logically to the theory?
- How plausible are the indicators that seek to operationalize the theoretical concepts?
- Is the method clear?
- Do you see any other issues/challenges?

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Common challenges

Have you identified any common problems in your presentations?

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Outlook

- prepare your oral exam and submit the presentation on Friday, 30 January

- those of you who have not done yet, last chance to indicate your preference for a time slot and submit your topic $+$ the session it relates to (deadline: tomorrow evening)

- in the longer run, consider taking other classes at our Chair
  - Prof. Daniel Bischof: 'Was wir von wissenschaftlichen Studien lernen können' and 'Einführung in die Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft'
  - Elena Leuschner: 'Applied Introduction to Data Science in R for Political Scientists'
  - myself: 'Text as data'

Thank you for your attention!
Good luck with your exams!

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Literature

📄 **Hobolt SB and Vries CE** (2015) Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition. *Comparative Political Studies* **48** (9), 1159–1185.