Intitulé du cours : Populism in a global perspective
Course’s title : Populism in a global perspective
Enseignant(s) : Cécile Leconte
Fonction(s) : Maître de conférences
Type de cours : ☒ Séminaire d’ouverture ☒ Semestre 2

Syllabus – Targets:
From the Philippines to Poland, from India to the United States, it seems that we are currently witnessing a global, populist trend with different local manifestations. But what is populism? Is this term relevant to understand the apparent democratic malaise? Why does it emerge in very different historical, political and cultural contexts? Does it represent a threat for democracy or is it a healthy and necessary component of democratic debate? Adopting a global perspective, this seminar aims at better understanding the various forms of populism that have existed across time and space, as well as their consequences for liberal understandings of democracy. The analysis does not only include parties and party leaders but also social movements and organizations (e.g. agrarian, conservative, alter-globalist, progressive, religious movements, etc..), as well as public opinion makers (e.g. essayists). The seminar situates populism in its wider environment, investigating whether recent trends in media systems facilitate the development of populist mobilization. Finally, the seminar analyses the practical consequences of different forms of populism (for public debates, institutions, policies) as well as the way “mainstream” actors (e.g. political parties, media) react to what they perceive as populism.

Evaluation : an oral presentation and a written essay
Course structure:

Class 1. Introduction to the topic and work assignments
- Current academic debates on populism
- A Populist moment?

Class 2. Party-based populism
- Populist leaders: re-interpreting charisma
- Going beyond the ‘usual suspects’: populism within the mainstream

Class 3. Populism and new social movements
- Are the new social movements populist?
- Social movements and the party system: setting the tone?

Class 4. Populism, the media and opinion makers
- Of “TV populism”, talk-back radio and the Web: privileged channel for populist discourses?
- Conspiracy theories in a “post-truth” era

Class 5. The influence of populism on public agendas, policies and institutions
- Populists in power
- Shaping public agendas and the framing of issues

Class 6. The “mainstream” and populism
- Defining outsiders: who is populist?
- Elite-level and civil society reaction to populism

Bibliography:


