

COURSE OUTLINE

French Politics and Institutions

Seminar for International Students, Fall Semester

Presentation

These nine weeks lecture in Political Science aims to analyse the main aspects of the French political institutions and actors, since the birth of the current Fifth Republic, in 1958. The first part of this course aims to present the outlines of the French political order: that is to say, the functioning of the French semi-presidential system and relationships between the main power figures (such as the Prime Minister, the President of the Republic and the Members of Parliament), relationships between central level and sub-central level (since the laws of decentralization) powers, functions of the State and characteristics of the high civil servants (education, career...).

The second part of this seminar will present the ideological framework for French politics. Finally, we will present the main French political actors: political parties and the functioning of political competition; representation of women in politics; the political activists.

This lecture aims to give you the main tools to participate and understand the key debates of the French political life, during your stay in France. So, don't hesitate to participate during this lecture and to ask some questions. I'll be happy to precise some theories or notions that you didn't understand. We can also organise some debates and compare the French political system with the functioning of your own country political system.

Evaluation

- Attendance: 15% of the overall grade
- Written essay: 85% of the overall grade

Instructions

Written essay:

The essay aims to cover a topic in relation to to French political life, history or institutions. The idea is to put what we've learned in class into perspective in order to analyse a subject of your choice that has not been precisely studied in class. The essays are individualized. It is required to do some extended research on the selected topic and to summarize the content of this research in a well-organized paper. (10 000 characters (+/- 10%), spaces included).

Syllabus

Part 1: The French Political System and Institutions

Chapter 1 : The French Fifth Republic : legacy, founding and principles

Chapter 2 : The semi-presidential System

Chapter 3: The practical organization of the State

Part 2: Political Ideas in the French Political Field

Chapter 4: Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism in France

Chapter 5: French Republicanism: conceptualization and implementation

Part 3: Politic Actors in the French political Field

Chapter 6: Political parties and traditional cleavages

Chapter 7: Conventional and unconventional forms of political Participation

Chapter 8: Women in Politics

Conclusion

General Conclusion

General Bibliography

This is only a general bibliography which gives you some tools dealing with the French political life.

Resources:

- Nicholas Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- David S. Bell, *Parties and democracy in France: parties under Presidentialism*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000.
- Brouard Sylvain, Appleton Andrew, Mazur Amy G., *The French Fifth Republic at Fifty. Beyond Stereotypes*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Alistair Cole, *French politics and society*, London, Pearson Longman, 2005.
- Alistair Cole, *Governing and governance in France*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Alistair Cole, Patrick Le Galès, Jonah D. Levy (eds), *Developments in French Politics 4*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Robert Elgie, *Political institutions in contemporary France*, Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Robert Elgie, Steven Griggs, *French politics. Debates and Controversies*, New York, Routledge, 2000.
- Robert Elgie (al.), *Oxford Handbook of French Politics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017.
- John Gaffney, *Political leadership in France: from Charles de Gaulle to Nicolas Sarkozy*, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Emiliano Grossman et Nicolas Sauger, (dir.). *France's Political Institutions at 50*. Routledge, 2009. 216 p. (West European Politics Series).
- Andrew Knapp, *Parties and the party system in France: a disconnected democracy?* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Peter Mair, *The West European party system*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990.
- William Safran, *The French polity*, London, Pearson Longman, cop. 2009.

Academic Reviews:

In English:

- *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*.
- *Democratization*.
- *European Journal of Communication*.
- *French Politics*.
- *Modern and Contemporary France*.
- *Representation*.
- *West European Politics*.

In French:

- *Revue Française de Science Politique*.
- *Politix*.
- *Revue Française de Sociologie*.

Newspapers :

- *Libération ; Le Monde ; Le Figaro ; L'Humanité ; Le Journal du Dimanche, La Croix, Les Echos,*
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