POS

Comparative Analysis of Elections and Electoral Systems

Spring 2020

MW 12:45-2:00pm

Taught by Karen Beckwith
Chair and Flora Stone Mather Professor of Political Science

POS 363 focuses on political parties and elections in countries around the world, taking a comparative perspective, examining elections and electoral system differences across and within democratic political systems, and discussing how preferred outcomes—and what those preferences are—can be shaped within and outside the electoral process (including by political movements).

The course also focuses on political party systems—the numbers and types of competitive political parties—and how party systems change (or stay the same). Established democracies in West Europe and the (relatively new) states in Central Europe transitioning to democracy (or not) face challenges to their established party systems from new political parties, as major parties of the left and right are losing vote share. The course will address different types of political parties, including populist parties, nationalist parties, Green parties, and minor parties. The course will give special attention to the 2019 elections in Austria, Canada, India, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

This course has no prerequisite and fulfills a SAGES departmental seminar requirement.

Professor Beckwith is returning from sabbatical, where she began her next research project, on party system transformation and women’s political inclusion in France, Italy, Sweden, and the US.