

## GV121 Institutions of Democracy 2024

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### Lecturer and Module Supervisor

Dr. Roi Zur

E-mail: [Roi.Zur@essex.ac.uk](mailto:Roi.Zur@essex.ac.uk)

Room: 5.017

Academic Support Hours: Monday 12:30-14:30pm

### Module Administrators

[govquery@essex.ac.uk](mailto:govquery@essex.ac.uk)

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Module available for Study Abroad students:      Yes          No   

**ASSESSMENT:** This module is assessed by 100% coursework

**LISTEN AGAIN:**       Available to all

Coursework material will be available on Moodle.

### ***INSTANT DEADLINE CHECKER COURSEWORK***

#### *SP & ZU variants*

Assignment Title	Due Date 4:30PM	Coursework Weighting	Feedback Due
Online Test	Week 26 – 29/3/24	40%	Week 30 – 26/4/24
Research Essay	Week 27 – 05/4/24	60%	Week 31 – 03/5/24

### **ASSESSMENT including Study Abroad – ZU derivative**

- 1. Online Test:** There will be an online multiple-choice test given in week 26 and worth 40% of the module grade. The exam will include between 20 and 30 question and will be completed in the Moodle page of this module. This exam will cover **all** the information studied in the module, including lectures, readings, discussions, and activities. During the term students will practice answering questions similar to the questions on the exam. **This is an individual exam and students are not allowed to take the exam together or compare their answers.**

- 2. Research Essay:** You will write an essay of approximately 2000 words (excluding reference list) in which you choose one institution (e.g. electoral system) and two countries that vary with respect to the institution you have chosen. The essay will compare and contrast the effects of your chosen institution in your chosen countries. The essay is worth 60% of the module grade and is due in week 27. You are expected to (after presenting your research question) present a thesis that answers the question and support this thesis with **independent research**. You should also build your thesis on theoretical arguments and empirical evidence from the **academic literature** (both from the syllabus and additional academic resources).

## TOP READS

Taylor, Steven L., Matthew S. Shugart, Arend Lijphart, and Bernard Grofman. **A different democracy: American government in a 31-country perspective**. Yale University Press, 2014.

## MODULE DESCRIPTION

This module is an introduction to the study of (political) institutions. Whenever political actors interact, they do so within the context of certain rules (e.g., voting under a specific electoral system). These “rules of the game”, as Douglass North has defined institutions, structure the incentives and behaviour of individual political and economic actors. In this module, we will first learn about political and economic interactions in the absence of institutions, and then about how the addition of institutions changes political and economic outcomes. We will also explore the different effect of various institutions on political and economic behaviour and ultimately policy outcomes. Finally, we will learn why different institutions emerge and what leads rules to change.

### *Aims*

To provide students with a thorough knowledge and understanding of political institutions.

### *Outcomes*

At the end of this module, students should understand:

- the logic of collective action
- the different political systems and institutions in different countries
- the consequences of institutions
- the emergence and change of institutions

## MODULE STRUCTURE AND TEACHING

This module will be delivered with a two-hour weekly seminar. Attending the lectures, reading the assigned materials, and participating in the class/online discussion are required and essential for satisfactory progress. There will be a Moodle site assigned to this module,

and all relevant materials – lecture notes, class exercises, (link to) readings – will be placed there. An outline of the module is provided in the table below:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	16	Institutions of Democracy – Introduction
2	17	Delegation and Collective Decisions
3	18	Electoral Systems I
4	19	Electoral Systems II
5	20	Political Parties
6	21	Legislatures and Coalitions
7	22	Executives
8	23	Presidential vs. Parliamentary systems
9	24	Institutional Stability and Change
10	25	Conclusions and Review

### **What we expect of you during lecture and classes:**

- To attend all lectures and classes after having done the required reading
- To pay attention and take notes as necessary.
- To think about the readings and lectures notes before the class and be ready to discuss them: try to identify the key assumptions in the texts; map the structure of the argument; underline the conclusions. Highlight to yourself points you don't understand. (If you don't understand it, there's great likelihood others have not understood it either, so don't be shy to ask.) Ask yourself whether you agree with the text, whether you can identify weaknesses or gaps in the argument, and what could someone who disagrees with it argue against it.
- To offer your participation as required (answering questions, asking questions etc.). Learning about and discussing these texts is a communal endeavour and it is a matter of good citizenship to contribute. Further, part of what we want you to achieve, and what we mark you for, is clear and confident oral presentation. You are expected to answer questions, raise new points, and contribute to the progression of discussion in class.

### **COURSEWORK SUBMISSION**

#### **How to submit your essay using FASER**

You will be able to access the online submission system via your myEssex portal or via <https://FASER.essex.ac.uk>. FASER allows you to store your work-in-progress. This facility provides you with an ideal place to keep partially completed copies of your work and ensures that no work, even drafts, is lost. If you have problems uploading your coursework, you should contact [Itt@essex.ac.uk](mailto:Itt@essex.ac.uk). You may find it helpful to look at the FASER guide <http://www.essex.ac.uk/it/elearning/faser/default.aspx>. If you have any questions about FASER, please contact your administrator or refer to the handbook.

**Under NO circumstances is your coursework to be emailed to the administrators or the lecturer. This will NOT be counted as a submission.**

### **Coursework deadline policy for undergraduates**

There is a single policy at the University of Essex for the late submission of coursework in undergraduate courses. Essays must be uploaded before 09.45 on the day of the deadline.

All coursework submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of zero. The mark of zero shall stand unless the student submits satisfactory evidence of extenuating circumstances that indicate that the student was unable to submit the work prior to the deadline. For further information on late submission of coursework and extenuating circumstances procedures please refer to <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ.aspx>.

Essay feedback will be given via FASER.

ALL submissions should be provided with a coversheet (Available from Moodle).

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a very serious academic offence and whether done wittingly or unwittingly it is your responsibility. **Ignorance is no excuse!** The result of plagiarism could mean receiving a mark of zero for the piece of coursework. In some cases, the rules of assessment are such that a mark of zero for a single piece of coursework could mean that you will fail your degree. If it is a very serious case, you could be required to withdraw from the University. It is important that you understand right from the start of your studies what good academic practice is and adhere to it throughout your studies.

The Department will randomly select coursework for plagiarism checks and lecturers are very good at spotting work that is not your own. **Plagiarism gets you nowhere; DON'T DO IT!**

Following the guidance on referencing correctly will help you avoid plagiarism.

Please familiarise yourself with the University's policy on academic offences:  
<http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/academic-offences.aspx>.

### **Extenuating circumstances for late submission of coursework**

The university has guidelines on what is acceptable as extenuating circumstances for later submission of coursework. If you need to make a claim, you should upload your coursework to FASER and submit a late submission of coursework form which can be found here: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/late-submission.aspx>. This must be done within seven days of the deadline. FASER closes for all deadlines after seven days. The Late Submissions committee will decide whether your work should be marked and you will be notified of the outcome.

If you experience significant longer-term extenuating circumstances that prevent you from submitting your work either by the deadline or within seven days of the deadline, you should submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form for the Board of Examiners to consider at the end of the year <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ.aspx>.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

### READING

The full reading list is available on [Talis](#), here you can see the required readings for each week of the module. Readings listed as 'A different democracy' are chapters from:

Taylor, Steven L., Matthew S. Shugart, Arend Lijphart, and Bernard Grofman. **A different democracy: American government in a 31-country perspective**. Yale University Press, 2014.

#### **Session 1 (Week 16). Institutions of Democracy - Introduction**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 1**

#### **Session 2 (Week 17). Delegation and Collective Decisions**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 3**
- Elinor Ostrom. 2000. "Collective Action and the Evolution of Social Norms." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14:3, 137-58.

#### **Session 3 (Week 18). Electoral Systems I**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 5**
- Pippa Norris. (1997). *Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems*.

#### **Session 4 (Week 19). Electoral Systems II**

- Orit Kedar, Liran Harsgor & Raz A. Sheinerman. 2016. "Are Voters Equal under Proportional Representation?" *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Orit Kedar, Liran Harsgor & Or Tuttnauer. 2021 "Permissibility of Electoral Systems: A New Look at an Old Question" *Journal of Politics*.
- Anna Catalano Weeks. 2022. *Making gender salient from gender quota laws to policy*. **Chapter 2.**

#### **Session 5 (Week 20). Political Parties**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 6**
- Susan Stokes. "Political parties and democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2.1 (1999): **243-267**.
- Jae-Jae Spoon. 2023. Parties and representation. In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Parties*. **Chapter 21.**
- Anika Gauja. 2023. Party Organization. In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Parties*. **Chapter 4.**

#### **Session 6 (Week 21). Legislatures and Coalitions**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 7**
- Sona N. Golder & Jacquelyn A. Thomas. 2014. "Portfolio Allocation and the Vote of No Confidence" *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Thürk, M. (2022) "Small in Size but Powerful in Parliament? The Legislative Performance of Minority Governments." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.

### **Session 7 (Week 22). Executives**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 8**
- Russell, Meg, and Ruxandra Serban. "The Muddle of the 'Westminster Model': A Concept Stretched Beyond Repair." *Government and Opposition*.
- Wegmann, S. (2022). *The power of opposition: how legislative organization influences democratic consolidation*. **Chapters 1 and 3**.

### **Session 8 (Week 23). Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems**

- Juan Linz. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism" *Journal of Democracy*.
- Donald L Horowitz. 1990. "Comparing Democratic Systems" *Journal of Democracy*.

### **Session 9 (Week 24). Institutional Stability and Change**

- Milan Svobik. 2008. "Authoritarian Reversals and Democratic Consolidation" *American Political Science Review*.

### **Session 10 (Week 25). Conclusions and Review**

- A different democracy: **Chapter 10**