Description: Political parties are endogenous to democracy. This is true despite great misgivings of political theorists about the effects of parties, and despite the fact that parties are rarely the product of formal arrangements. Constitutions, for example, are generally silent on the topic of political parties. Parties also form the basis of dominance of many authoritarian regimes. Because of their pervasiveness and influence, parties are among the most widely studied phenomena in politics. Theorists have reflected on them, and analysts studied them, since their origins in the 17th century.

Given the long history of writings on parties, it is surprising that, four centuries later, many controversies remain unsettled. Why do parties arise? Why do some political systems have many parties and others just two, and what difference does this make for the quality of governance and representation? What factors shape the ideological character of parties? What is the relative weight of social cleavages versus strategic action in shaping party systems? Are parties good for citizens in democracy? Are they good for the populations of authoritarian states? Why do some parties appeal to voters by promising particular programs, whereas others use clientelist methods to mobilize electoral support? These are the kinds of questions we will address.

Assignments: You will be asked to complete three sets of assignments for this course:

1. **Attendance and participation** (15% of final grade): Come prepared and actively take part in discussions.

2. **Two review papers** (25% of final grade): You will write reviews of two recommended readings on two different weeks, due at the beginning of the session in which those readings are assigned. These reviews should critically assess the reading and its commonalities or tensions with other readings. Your review should be no longer than 5 pages, double-spaced. You will also be expected to present the readings you choose to the rest of the class (handouts are encouraged!).

3. **Term paper** (60% of final grade): Write a term paper due May 19 (e.g., a critical analysis of literature, an application and extension of a theoretical approach to a case drawing from secondary literature, a research proposal that builds on the readings in this course, etc.). Your paper should be no longer than 25 pages, double spaced. You will be expected to circulate and discuss in class a detailed outline, summary memo, or draft of the paper on April 21 or 28.
Readings: Chapters from edited volumes are available on the course website on Learn@UW. I expect you know how to track down books and journal articles on your own.

Course outline

Week 1 (January 20): Introduction

Week 2 (January 27): Social Cleavages

Required

Recommended

Week 3 (February 3): Parties within Institutions

Required

Recommended

Week 4 (February 10): Parties outside Institutions

Required
Recommended

Week 5 (February 17): Electoral Rules and Parties

Required

Recommended

Week 6 (February 24): Party Competition and Ideology

Required

Recommended

Week 7 (March 3): Party Organization

Required

**Recommended**

**Week 8 (March 10): Party System Institutionalization**

**Required**

**Recommended**

**Week 9 (March 17): Partisanship**

**Required**
Recommended

Week 10 (March 24): Clientelism

Required

Recommended

Week 11 (April 7): Ethnic Parties

Required

Recommended
Week 12 (April 14): Change

Required

Recommended

Week 13 (April 21): Student presentations

Week 14 (April 28): Student presentations

Week 15 (May 5): Parties and Democracy

Required

Recommended

Term paper due May 19