

Office hours:

This is a 1st trimester course, and during the first trimester 2012, my office hours will be Tuesdays 1:10 to 2:00 pm and Tuesdays 4:10-5:00 pm. You are also welcome to telephone or email me to arrange an appointment.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS**Lecture time:**

Tuesdays, 2:10 to 4:00 pm.

Lecture venue:

MY LT 101 (which is on the ground floor of the Murphy building).

COURSE DELIVERY

Students are expected to attend one two-hour lecture-seminar a week. Nigel Roberts will lead the lecture-seminars for the first half of course; during the second half of the course the lecture-seminars will be led by students presenting information about the electoral systems and the most recent elections in a range of modern democracies.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Whenever it's necessary to do so, additional information about POLS 358 will be posted as announcements on the POLS 358 Blackboard website. *It is essential that all students consult Blackboard regularly, preferably at least once a day.*

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

This course examines a branch of politics where there have been major changes - not only in New Zealand (with the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional, or MMP, electoral system), but also internationally (for example, a large number of states in eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Africa have recently implemented new voting systems). The course analyses different types of electoral systems and various ways in which they can be categorised. 100% internal assessment.

COURSE CONTENT

An outline of the structure and contents of the course can be found on page 7.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students passing the course should have a thorough understanding of

- the criteria by which electoral systems can be assessed;
- various ways in which electoral systems can be classified;
- the different dimensions that affect the workings of electoral systems;
- New Zealand's Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) electoral system; and
- a range of overseas electoral systems — including both long-standing and newly-established systems.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

For more details regarding attributes gained by students who successfully complete a major in Political Science and/or International Relations, please consult our website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/about/psir-overview.aspx>

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

Over the course of the trimester students are expected to spend 200 hours on POLS 358, including: class contact hours, preparation for seminars, revising for weekly in-class tests, and the completion of assignments.

READINGS

The most highly recommended text for the course is:

Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems: A Study of Twenty-Seven Democracies, 1945-1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). This book is now out of print and thus cannot be purchased from bookshops in Wellington. As a result, I have put **four copies of it on reserve** in the VUW Library.

Other useful texts for POLS 358 are:

Report of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System: Towards a Better Democracy (Wellington: Government Printer, 1985).

The Guide to the Electoral Referendum (Wellington: Electoral Referendum Panel, 1992).

The Referendum. The Guide. (Wellington: Electoral Referendum Panel, 1993).

Referendum '93: Media Handbook (Wellington: Electoral Referendum Panel, 1993).

Five 2011 New Zealand voting systems' referendum fact sheets – *The MMP Voting System: Mixed Member Proportional*; *The FPP Voting System: First Past the Post*; *The PV Voting System: Preferential Voting*; *The STV Voting System: Single Transferable Vote*; and *The SM Voting System: Supplementary Member Voting 2011* – are available as PDF files at <<http://www.referendum.org.nz/resources>>.

Jonathan Boston, Stephen Levine, Elizabeth McLeay, and Nigel S. Roberts, *New Zealand Under MMP: A New Politics?* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996).

Helena Catt, Paul Harris, and Nigel S. Roberts, *Voter's Choice: Electoral Change in New Zealand?* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1992).

David Farrell, *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction* (Basingstoke, Hants.: Palgrave, 2nd edition, 2011).

Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell, eds., *The politics of Electoral Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Dieter Nohlen, Michael Krennerich, and Bernhard Thibaut, eds., *Elections in Africa: A Data Handbook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Dieter Nohlen, Florian Grotz, and Christof Hartmann, eds., *Elections in Asia and the Pacific: A Data Handbook — Volumes I and II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly, eds., *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design* (Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2nd edition, 1997).

Andrew Reynolds, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis, eds., *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook* (Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2005).

Rein Taagepera and Matthew Soberg Shugart, *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

Electoral Studies is the pre-eminent journal in its field and is essential reading for the course. Issues are held in the University Library.

Representation is another very useful journal for students of comparative electoral systems. It is often more readable (*i.e.*, less technical) than *Electoral Studies*, and copies are also held in the University Library.

Internet sources:

<http://fruitsandvotes.com/> is Matt Shugart's elections and electoral systems blog-site. Professor Shugart co-authored *Seats and Votes*, a classic in electoral systems literature, so it should come as no surprise

that his blog is both exceptionally good and extremely useful.

<http://ElectionResources.org/> is the URL for Manuel Alvarez-Rivera's *Election Resources on the Internet* website and is extremely useful.

<http://psephos.adam-carr.net/> is the URL for Adam Carr's election archive; it is also a very useful source for election results in a wide range of countries.

<http://www.politicsresources.net/election.htm> is the URL for Richard Kimber's handy guide to *Elections and electoral systems around the world*.

<http://www.aceproject.org/> is the URL for International IDEA's ACE project about election-related news and information for over 200 countries and territories from a global network of regional centers, and has a lot of useful information.

<http://www.unc.edu/~asreynol/ballots.html> has a very useful collection of ballot papers from a large number of countries.

Reference staff in the University Library are also happy to show students how to use the Library's computerised data bases and the Reuters news service.

Note: All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

The course will be assessed on the following basis:-

- Two essays: each must be a minimum of 2,000 words in length, and each essay will count for 30% of the overall grade awarded to students.
- There will also be eleven weekly class tests. Students are required to sit a minimum of eight of the eleven class tests — including at least four from each half of the course. Marks from students' two best test scores in the first half of the course and from students' two best test scores in the second half of the course will count for 40% of the overall grade awarded to students.

The purpose of the two essays is to ensure that students develop an accurate and detailed understanding both of the ways in which electoral systems can be compared and of the ways in which key electoral systems function. The aim of the weekly tests is to assess the ability of students to recall, integrate, and use the knowledge they acquire during the course.

Full details of the topics for the essays, and the dates on which they are due, are given on page 8.

Printed copies and electronic copies of your essays must be submitted by their due dates. Extensions will be granted only to those who meet the University's *aegrotat* rules (e.g., students with a medical certificate, a family bereavement, or critical personal circumstances beyond their control). Late essays must be emailed to Professor Roberts; they must also be handed directly either to Professor Roberts or to a Political Science and International Relations Administration Assistant who will record on the essays the date and time they were received.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

All Political Science and International Relations Programme assignments must be handed in together with a signed Assignment Cover Sheet, a copy of which is appended to this course outline. Students are required to submit **both hard copies and electronic copies** of their POLS 358 essays.

PENALTIES

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays – a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 2% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 8 days. Work that is more than 8 days late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. However, penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds (for example, illness [presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary] or other similar contingencies). In all such cases, prior information will be necessary.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in POLS 358 each student must:

- attend at least nine of the POLS 358 seminars;
- sit a minimum of eight of the weekly class tests, including at least four tests from each half of the course;
- present an in-class seminar during the second half of the course;
- complete and submit both the essays for the course; and
- obtain at least a D-grade for the overall weekly class tests' mark.

A student who has obtained an overall mark of 50% or more, but failed to satisfy the mandatory requirements for the course, will receive a K grade for the course, while a course mark of less than 50% will result in the appropriate fail grade (D or E).

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator, tutors and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source;
- The work of other students or staff;
- Information from the internet;
- Software programs and other electronic material;
- Designs and ideas; and
- The organisation or structuring of any such material.

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

USE OF TURNITIN

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.

Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION (6 March 2012)

As well as introducing students to the course and its requirements, this seminar will also consider criteria for assessing electoral systems. See especially *Report of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System: Towards a Better Democracy*, chapter 2.

2. THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (13 March to 24 April 2012)

The remaining seminars during the first half of the course will be devoted to assessing various ways in which electoral systems can be classified, as well as to examining key structural variables that affect the outcome of elections.

This section of the course will initially refer to Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly, eds., *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*, and to Andrew Reynolds, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis, eds., *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*; and then draw primarily on the analysis and classifications contained in Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*.

On a week-by-week basis, this part of the course will examine:

- The classification of electoral systems. See Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly, eds., *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*, pp. 17-94 and pp. 139-142, and Andrew Reynolds, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis, eds., *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*, pp. 27-126 and pp. 166-173. (13 March 2012)
- Factors which affect the way in which electoral systems function, and different types of electoral systems. See Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*, chapters 1 and 2. (See also Rein Taagepera and Matthew Soberg Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, chapters 1 to 6.) (20 and 27 March 2012)
- Assessing the effects on the way electoral systems function of the variables studied on 20 and 27 March. See Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*, chapters 3 to 7. (3 and 24 April 2012)

3. THE STRUCTURE AND OPERATION OF INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (1 May to 5 June 2012)

During the second half of the course, we will examine the structure and workings of specific electoral systems. Each student will lead a seminar discussion describing and analysing the functioning of the electoral system(s) in one country. (The allocation of countries to students will be finalised on 20 March.) Because we will have to examine roughly 12 countries' electoral systems during each of the six two-hour seminars in this part of the course, your seminar presentations will be *no longer than six minutes* per student. Your seminar must include a PowerPoint presentation. It can contain more information than you present to the class during your allotted six minutes, and it will be put onto the POLS 358 Blackboard intranet website for all students to consult.

Remember, too, that your second essay will stem directly from your seminar presentation — it will describe, analyse and assess the functioning of the electoral system[s] in the country of your choice.

Countries that have reasonably recently had elections – and countries that will soon be having elections – that are of considerable interest to students of electoral systems include:

Argentina (23 October 2011), Australia (21 August 2010), Austria (28 September 2008), Belgium (13 June 2010), Brazil (3 October 2010), Canada (2 May 2011), Chile (13 December 2009), Costa Rica (7 February 2010), Czech Republic (28-29 May 2010), Denmark (15 September 2011), Fiji (6 to 13 May 2006), Finland (17 April 2011), France (10 and 17 June 2007), Germany (27 September 2009), Greece (4 October 2009 and possibly April 2012), Hungary (11 and 25 April 2010), Iceland (25 April 2009), India (April-May 2009), Ireland (25 February 2011), Israel (10 February 2009), Italy (13 and 14 April 2008), Japan (30 August

2009), Malta (8 March 2008), Mexico (5 July 2009), Netherlands (9 June 2010), Norway (14 September 2009), Portugal (5 June 2011), Russia (4 December 2011), Samoa (4 March 2011), Scotland and Wales (5 May 2011), South Africa (22 April 2009), South Korea (April 2012), Spain (20 November 2011), Sweden (19 September 2010), Switzerland (23 October 2011), Taiwan (14 January 2012), Turkey (12 June 2011), United Kingdom (5 May 2011), United States (2 November 2010).

ESSAYS AND TESTS:

As outlined on page 4, you will be required to write two essays for POLS 358, namely:-

- The first essay will be an essay of at least 2,000 words on one of the following topics:
 - (1) (a) Critically assess the utility of the diagram illustrating the classification of “Electoral Systems for Legislative Office” contained in Pippa Norris, “Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems”, *International Political Science Review*, vol. 18, no. 3, 1997.
 - (1) (b) Compare and contrast the effects that the Sainte-Laguë, the d’Hondt, the Hare, the Droop, and the Imperiali formulae for allocating seats to political parties would have had on the results of the 2011 New Zealand general election.
 - (1) (c) The New Zealand Electoral Commission has to review aspects of this country’s MMP electoral system. The terms of reference for the review are on the Electoral Commission’s website (<http://www.elections.org.nz/elections/2011-general-election-and-referendum/mmp-review.html>). Write a submission for the review.

The first essay must be handed in (and, *remember*, you are required to submit **both hard copies and electronic copies** of your POLS 358 assignments) **by no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, 27 April 2012.**

- The second essay will also be at least 2,000 words long and will stem directly from your seminar presentation. It will describe, analyse and assess the functioning of the electoral system(s) in a country of your choice. It will, *inter alia*, use data from the latest lower house elections in the country that you choose to examine.

The second essay must be handed in (and, *remember*, you are required to submit **both hard copies and electronic copies** of your POLS 358 assignments) **by no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, 8 June 2012.**

There will not be an end-of-trimester exam for POLS 358. Instead, as was explained on page 4, there will be eleven weekly class tests. Students are **required to sit a minimum of eight of the eleven class tests — including at least four from each half of the course.** Each test will be worth ten percent, and marks from students’ two best test scores in the first half of the course and from students’ two best test scores in the second half of the course will count for 40% of the overall grade awarded to students.

Nigel S. Roberts
9 February 2012

Page 1 photographs (clockwise from the top left-hand corner):

Distributing ‘how-to-vote’ cards in the 2007 Australian federal elections; a poster advocating votes for different left-wing parties in the 2006 Italian upper- and lower-house elections; American voters filling in their 2006 mid-term election ballot papers; a mural explaining how Vanuatu voters cast a single non-transferable (SNTV) vote; a Rimutaka electorate MMP ballot paper from

the 2011 New Zealand general election; and an elector casting his vote in one of France's 577 electoral districts during the second round of the 2007 French parliamentary elections.