

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HA3028 Political Parties and Elections

Pre-requisites : HA1012

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

A study of democracy cannot take place without analyzing political parties and elections. Political parties, in the West at least, have contributed enormously to the flourishing and stability of democracy. Parties link the state and society, take part in elections and contribute towards the structuring (and re-structuring) of political processes and institutions. Yet, the nature of political parties differ throughout time and space; similarly, the nature of elections differ throughout democracies – there is significant diversity in the way the electoral systems are structured, the legislations governing elections, the frequency of elections, the way campaigns are conducted, *inter alia*. As such, there is a need to understand the differing types of parties and elections, the impact that they have on society and political systems, who runs in elections, how voters make their choices, and the threats to our existing understandings of democracy and elections.

This module studies the development of political parties and electoral systems, emphasizing the analytical component (how and why) in addition to the standard descriptive approach (what).

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the major issues pertaining to parties and elections.
2. Compare and contrast the different types of electoral institutions and their impact on outcomes.
3. Compare and contrast the various electoral systems and parties discussed.
4. Examine the academic literature on parties and elections.
5. Debate on major issues pertaining to parties and elections, and therefore, democracy.

Course Content

1. Why Parties? (Why Study Them, Why Have Them)
2. Who Participates and Why
3. Parties and Elections in the West
4. Parties and Party Systems
5. Electoral Systems
6. Electoral Institutions
7. Impact of Electoral Rules on Party Systems
8. Voter Participation and Turnout
9. Who do Voters Choose
10. Electoral Campaigns
11. Polling
12. Identity Politics
13. Democratic Deficit

Course Assessment

Class Participation	: 20%
Video	: 30%
Short paper 1	: 25%
Short paper 2	: 25%
Total	-----
	100%