Course Description: This course aims at an institutional analysis of the German political system. It starts with an analysis of the core constitutional decisions taken during the founding period of the Federal Republic between 1945 and 1949. The course will then focus on the core elements of the German polity such as the German executive system, the legislature, and German federalism. We will explore how the particular institutional framework in German politics compares to other systems such as the American political system, what particular effects it has on political behaviour and processes, and why it was chosen and sustained in German politics in the first place. We will furthermore explore the continuities and discontinuities in the German polity since its founding in 1949 to present days. Special attention will be given to the impact of the processes of unification, European integration and economic globalization on the German polity.

Goals: Assuming that you have read the material and participated regularly in class you will by the end of this class
- have a good knowledge of the political history, culture and institutions of Germany
- be aware of major issues in German politics
- know basic concepts and theories for analyzing political systems
- know the major differences between the German and the American political system
- have improved your research and writing skills


These books are available for purchase at the Campus store. Texts which are not in the required textbooks will be placed on the blackboard and on course reserve (Olin Library).
In addition, following current events in German politics is highly recommended. There are several useful sources on the web you can turn to if you read English only. Check for example http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/; http://www.germnews.de/dn/ and http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/default.stm. If you master some German, quality newspapers such as DIE ZEIT, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung or Suddeutsche Zeitung are good references.

Requirements/Format/Grading policy: Requirements are one midterm examination, a short research paper, a very short final quiz, and participation in a debating session.

Participation in Class 10%
In this course we deal with political processes and conflicts that are structured by institutional constraints and that in turn affect the development of the institutional framework of German politics itself. Given the highly dynamic nature of the German Polity, there is abundant space for debate and controversy. My role will be one of lecturing on the main properties of the institutions we are going to deal with and on the politics related to these institutions. Your role will be to engage with the contending arguments in the assigned readings, to ask smart questions, to voice your own ideas on the questions raised by the readings and to discuss some of these questions in class with your fellow students. You can interrupt my lecture with questions at any time. We will also have some space for discussion at the end of each lecture. Active participation is an essential element for the success of the class and can easily tip the balance of your final grade. Regular attendance is expected.

Mid-term Exam 30%
In this exam, your basic knowledge about the characteristics of the German System, acquired during the first half of the course, will be tested. Date: 10/21

Debating Session 10%
Teams of several students will get together, adopt a perspective on a contested current issue in German politics and present main reasons for their point of view. In each session, two teams will compete. Each team shall prepare responses for arguments by fellow students and teacher. The presentation should be supported by a 1p. hand-out with the structure of the presentation and important facts.

Final Quiz 20%
This short quiz (partly based on multiple choice questions) will test the knowledge acquired in the second half of the course. Date: 12/4

Research Paper 30%
I will distribute three research questions on November 13th. You can choose one of these questions as a topic for your research paper. Your 10 – 12 page paper should demonstrate some library-research. It should be constructed around a hypothesis and a clear argument. Your aim should be to go beyond pure description, to make an argument, and to support this argument through some theoretical and empirical evidence. The paper is due on Dec 16th.
Plagiarism: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask or consult the Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others, which can be found in the Policy Notebook for the Cornell Community and also on the web at http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html.

Course Schedule

Introduction (August 28)

Week 1 (September 2 – September 4): The Founding of the FRG

- Topic 1: The Basic Constitutional Framework
  
  Schmidt, pp. 9-25

- Topic 2: The Historical Setting
  
  Conradt, pp. 1-17

Week 2 (September 9 – September 11): The German Question

- Topic 1: The German Question 1945 - 1989
  
  Larres, pp.9-33
  Conradt, pp. 19-46

- Topic 2: Why Unification?
  
  Larres, pp. 33-59

Week 3 (September 16 – September 18): Germany in Europe

- Topic 1: Germany in Europe: A Semi-Sovereign State?
  
  The European Union. A Guide for Americans

- Topic 2: The Europeanization of the German Polity?
  
  Padgett, pp. 161-183
Weeks 4 and 5 (September 23 – October 2): Political Culture and Political Economy

- **Topic 1: The German Political Economy**
  - Larres, pp. 63-87
  - Conradt, pp. 47-77
  - Padgett, pp. 121-142; 143-160

- **Topic 2: Guest Lecture by Prof. Bassam Tibi (AD White Visiting Professor) on German political culture (September 25).**

- **Topic 3: The German Political Culture: From Subject to Citizen?**
  - Conradt, pp. 79-120

- **Topic 4: German Political Elites**
  - Schmidt, pp. 183-196

Week 6 (October 7 – October 9): Executive Politics

- **Topic: Still a Chancellor-Democracy?**
  - Conradt, pp. 202-222
  - Schmidt, pp. 26-40

Week 7 (October 16): Legislative Politics

- Conradt, pp. 188-197, 221-226
- Schmidt, pp. 74-105

!  Fall Break, October 11 – October 15. We will have no class on October 14.

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Midterm Examination. Tuesday, October 21, in class.

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Week 8 (October 23): Legislative Politics

- Conradt, pp. 188-197, 221-226
- Schmidt, pp. 74-105
Weeks 9 and 10 (October 28 – November 6): Veto Politics

- **Topic 1: Federalism**
  - Schmidt, pp. 56-66
  - Conradt, pp 197-202; 259-284
- **Topic 2: The German Constitutional Court**
  - Schmidt, pp. 106-130

Week 11 (November 11 – November 13): Electoral Politics

- **Topic 1: The Type of Electoral System**
  - Conradt, pp. 161-168
  - Schmidt, pp. 131-134
- **Topic 2: Campaigning and Campaign Styles**
  - Conradt, pp. 169-170
- **Topic 3: Electoral Behavior**
  - Conradt, pp. 170-186
  - Schmidt, pp. 149-159

Topics for Research Papers will be announced. Thursday, November 13

Week 12 (November 18 – November 20): Party Politics

- **Topic 1: The Party State**
  - Conradt, pp. 121-124
• *Topic 2: The Party System*
  - Conradt, pp. 124-145
  - Schmidt, pp. 134-149

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**Final Quiz. Tuesday, November 25, in class**

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! Thanksgiving Recess, November 26 - December 1. We will have no class on Thursday 27.

Week 13 (December 2 – December 4): Debating Sessions

• *Topic 1: TBA*
• *Topic 2: TBA*

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**Your research paper is due December 16**

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