

## **Course Description:**

Theories on international relations provide a state-centered perspective, according to which state actors – leaders, governments or countries – are the central units of analysis. In parliamentary democracies, however, we mostly find multiparty governments, in which office-holders are of party representatives with diverging policy interests. This raises an important delegation problem, in particular when party office-holders have important agenda-setting powers and informational expertise that allow them to pursue own party interests. Because this delegation problem is more pronounced in international affairs, the question is whether party politics is dominating international relations.

This class aims to provide an alternative view on international relations by introducing a party politics perspective. Accordingly, the class will start with an introduction into the main international relation theories and then move towards a party politics and coalition perspective. Finally, we will look for applications to the study of international relations.

The class assumes students have taken the basic module in international politics. The class is divided into three segments, (i) theories of international relations and party politics (ii) parties, coalitions, and policy making, (iii) implications of party politics for international relations. For section (ii) we will consider the theoretical and empirical body of comparative work, which studies how institutions affect coalition politics. We will also look at some of the most prominent models of policymaking in coalition governments. For section (iii), I have collected a short list of applications, but we have to do a search for more applications to international relations. Please look at these and think about your own preferences before we meet in class for the first time.