University of the West of Scotland

Module Descriptor

Session: 2023-24

Title of Module: Democracy & European Political Parties			
Code: PLTC09020	SCQF Level: 9 (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)	Credit Points: 20	ECTS: 10 (European Credit Transfer Scheme)
School:	School of Education and Social Sciences		
Module Co-ordinator:	Mark McNally		

Summary of Module

This module will introduce students to some of the most important debates on democracy and the role of political parties in contemporary European politics. The first part of the course will explore the role of political parties in modern liberal democracy and their internal organizational structures. This provides the context for examining the role of political parties in a so-called 'crisis of democracy,' considering

(a) to what extent they have contributed to this 'crisis';

(b) or if have the capacity to provide solutions to the current difficulties of liberal democratic governance and are changing and adapting to do so.

The second part of the module will provide students with an opportunity to study a number of specific political parties across European democratic systems within the above framework of analysis (for example, in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, France and the Netherlands). Key questions for consideration include:

- How successful is the relevant party at fulfilling its democratic functions in its particular representative system?
- Has this party contributed to democratic crisis in its particular national context?
- How coherent, practical and sincere are its ideas for democratic reform and transformation and how successful has it been at achieving these?
- To what extent are the party's ideological commitments undermine or even threaten democratic governance?

The module concludes by considering, in light of the course, whether political parties can continue to make meaningful contributions to democracy and its revitalization today.

Module Delivery Method

Face-To-Face	Blended	Fully Online	HybridC	Hybrid 0	Work-Based Learning
☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
See Guidance Note for details.					

Campus(es) for Module Delivery

The module will **normally** be offered on the following campuses / or by Distance/Online Learning: (Provided viable student numbers permit) (tick as appropriate)

Paisley:	Ayr:	Dumfries:	Lanarkshire:	London:	Distance/Online Learning:	Other:
☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Add name

Term(s) for Module Delivery

(Provided viable student numbers permit).

Term 1	☐	Term 2	☒	Term 3	☐

Learning Outcomes: (maximum of 5 statements)
These should take cognisance of the SCQF level descriptors and be at the appropriate level for the module.
At the end of this module the student will be able to:

L1	Explain the theory and institutions of liberal democracy and evaluate the democratic functions assigned to political parties
L2	Communicate effectively in oral form using appropriate technology the role of political parties in the crisis of democracy
L3	Conduct an inquiry-based project into a political party, analyzing and evaluating its contribution to democratic politics
L4	Communicate effectively in written form complex ideas related to the course content
L5	Click or tap here to enter text.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills

SCQF Headings	During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	SCQF Level **9**

2

	Developing an understanding of the relationship between the theory and institutions of liberal democracy and political parties; Exercising critical understanding of the crisis of liberal democracy and the role of political parties in it; Demonstrating a detailed and in-depth critical understanding of one political party and its contribution to democratic politics.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF Level **9** Articulating well-sourced interpretations and evaluations of complex ideas related to democracy and political parties; Applying acquired concepts to explain, generalize and evaluate the crisis of liberal democracy; Applying acquired concepts and principles to interpret and evaluate the practices, proposals and policies of one political party in terms of its contribution to democracy; Retrieving, interpreting, analyzing and organizing information acquired through library and online sources.
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF Level **9** Defining and synthesizing complex ideas and their realization in institutional form; Critical evaluation of political parties in relation to the democratic quality of their practice; Reasoned and well-sourced argument informed by a variety of academic sources.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF Level **9** Effective oral and written communication skills; The formal presentation of interpreted and critically analyzed information; The use of IT systems (hardware and software) to interpret, evaluate and present information in a suitable form.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with others	SCQF Level **9** Working independently towards specified targets and deadlines; Working effectively on group tasks and taking responsibility for a specified role; Demonstrating initiative and leadership in collective tasks;

	Exercising autonomy and initiative in the conduct of a clearly-defined project.	
Pre-requisites:	Before undertaking this module the student should have undertaken the following:	
	Module Code:	**Module Title:**
	Other:	Social Science Programme study at L8, or equivalent
Co-requisites	**Module Code:**	**Module Title:**

*Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Normally totalling 200 hours): (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture/Core Content Delivery	24
Tutorial/Synchronous Support Activity	12
Asynchronous Class Activity	58
Independent Study	106
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
	Hours Total 200 hrs
**Indicative Resources: (eg. Core text, journals, internet access)	

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Aylott, N. and Bolin, N. (2020) Managing Leader Selection in European Political Parties. London: Palgrave.

Stoker, G. (2017) Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work. 2nd Edition. London: Palgrave.

Dalton, R. (2013) Political Parties and Democratic Linkage: How Parties Organize Democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dalton, R. (2019) Citizen Politics - International Student Edition: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies. 7th Edition. Washington: CQ Press.

(**N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the [Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure](#): Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

Attendance at all on-campus and online sessions; completion of module-related reading and tasks; submission of assessments.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: [UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.](#)

Aligned with the overall commitment to equality and diversity stated in the Programme Specifications, the module supports equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds and with different learning needs

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	Social Sciences

Assessment Results (Pass/Fail)	Yes ☐ No ☒
School Assessment Board	Undergraduate Social Sciences
Moderator	Anna McKeever
External Examiner	J Halsall
Accreditation Details	N/A
Changes/Version Number	1.08

Assessment: (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
This section should make transparent what assessment categories form part of this module (stating what % contributes to the final mark).   Maximum of 3 main assessment categories can be identified (which may comprise smaller elements of assessment).   **NB: The 30% aggregate regulation (Reg. 3.9) (40% for PG) for each main category must be taken into account. When using PSMD, if all assessments are recorded in the one box, only one assessment grid will show and the 30% (40% at PG) aggregate regulation will not stand. For the aggregate regulation to stand, each component of assessment must be captured in a separate box.**   Please provide brief information about the overall approach to assessment that is taken within the module. In order to be flexible with assessment delivery, be brief, but do state assessment type (e.g. written assignment rather than "essay" / presentation, etc) and keep the detail for the module handbook. Click or tap here to enter text.
Assessment 1 Audio-visual Presentation 30%
Assessment 2 Case Study 70%
(N.B. (i) **Assessment Outcomes Grids** for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.   (ii) An **indicative schedule** listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Assessment Outcome Grids (See Guidance Note)

Component 1							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Presentation	√	√				30	1

Component 2							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
			√	√	√	70	2

Component 3							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Combined Total for All Components						100%	XX hours

Change Control:

What	When	Who
Further guidance on aggregate regulation and application when completing template	16/01/2020	H McLean
Updated contact hours	14/09/21	H McLean
Updated Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure	19/10/2023	C Winter
Updated UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code	19/10/2023	C Winter
Guidance Note 23-24 provided	12/12/23	D Taylor
General housekeeping to text across sections. .	12/12/23	D Taylor

Version Number: MD Template 1 (2023-24)