

Political Science

Also relevant for: Social Sciences

Course: Political Science

Group of courses: Law, Economics and Social Sciences

Provided by: M. A. Christiane Bomert, Prof.'in Dr. Gabriele Wilde

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Course objectives:

In addition to gaining a systematic overview of the historical developments of the feminist political approach, students should become familiar with central theoretical concepts and methods of feminist political science. The aim is to enable students to apply these concepts and methods in the different areas of political science (Political Theory, Comparative Politics/ Comparative Government, Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany, International Relations, European Governance, Methods) theoretically and empirically and to take a critical perspective in thinking and acting politically.

The starting point is the teaching of gender competence in political science, which enables students to understand gender as a constituted (power) structure that plays a decisive role in the development of social or political structures and processes. This involves recognising how both political science and political practice shape gender relations at various levels and the extent to which political processes, structures and content are influenced by the gender relations in which they are anchored (cf. Kurz-Scherf 2006: 244).

Teaching content/subject-specific gender studies content:

Initially, feminist political science was concerned with identifying the manifold interrelations of gender and politics in the various areas of society and in their historical dimensions. Today's research perspective predominantly reflects the organisation of gender relations as a political process and their establishment as a fundamental structure of power. Equally, this perspective is based on social theory and a conception of the political that combines social gender structures with state and political action and contributes to insights into the extent to which political action and measures enable gender exploitation, violence and discrimination and what role gender structures play in the legitimacy and stability of political systems and orders.

By anchoring political questions and their scientific research approaches in social theory, feminist political science analyses central questions on the significance of social power and inequalities for the formation and constitution of political orders. In the following, feminist approaches and methodological implementations in the different areas of political science (Harders 2012: 152-154ff) are presented in brief. The divergence of theoretical perspectives that becomes visible here and the multitude of methodological approaches show that gender studies in political science can no longer be taken as a common theoretical or scientific paradigm (Rosenberger and Sauer 2004, p. 9). Rather, it is evident that feminist political science approaches discourses of mainstream and malestream political science in many ways (cf. Braun/Fuchs/Lemke/Töns 2000: VII).

Political Theory

- basic concepts of politics: critical re-reading or deciphering of androcentric manifestations of concepts such as power, justice, state, law, politics, institution, participation, representation, public sphere/privacy, violence, democracy
- gender and knowledge production, theory of science, reflection of the category of gender, politicisation of the body, processes of subjectivation, feminist theory, theories of discourse and hegemony, gender relations as power relations
- criticism of (androcentric) traditions in Political Theory (images of women, naturalisation of supposed gender characters and women being "apolitical") as well as introduction of feminist approaches and authors

- Contemporary Political Theory, in particular feminist state and democracy theory, theories of gender justice, citizenship, gender democracy, theorisation of state, politics and gender from a poststructuralist perspective
- critical developments in political science reflections on gender relations in queer studies, intersectionality research and feminist postcolonial studies

Comparative Politics/Comparative Government

- institutional foundations: European welfare states and gender regimes in comparison, gender and the constitutional state, the women's movement in past and present, modern social movements and gender in national and transnational contexts
- political processes: approaches of policy learning, norm diffusion, decision theories, articulation/problem definition and agenda setting as well as implementation of policies, learning in multi-level systems, processes of translation/adaption/compliance and negotiation
- policy field analyses, in particular in selected gender-relevant policy fields such as labour, women's, family, university, education, health and social policies as well as financial policy (gender budgeting, international financial architecture), migration, human rights, anti-discrimination, climate, foreign and security policies
- European domestic policies: articulation and implementation of gender norms in/by EU institutions (Commission, EP, ECJ, Council), political participation and representation of gender as well as opportunities for civil society participation at national and European levels, role of gender policies (gender mainstreaming and diversity management) of the nation states at European level, gender policy effects of the EU enlargement process, development of theories of European integration against the background of governmental changes, the emergence of neoliberal, informal political structures and the loss of significance of parliamentary institutions through Europeanisation
- international comparison of gender regimes, culture and gender
- international comparison: gender relations in authoritarian and hybrid regimes, the role of women and women's movements in authoritarianism and democracy, transformation of social gender relations through processes of globalisation, political and social transformations, Europeanisation and neoliberalisation, gender relations in war and peace, gender and violence, gender and globalisation
- gender relations in the regional studies: all regions, all policy areas and institutional foundations, perception of the "South" by the North, gender hierarchies, stereotypes, classicism and racism

Domestic Policy and the Political System of the Federal Republic of Germany

- institutional foundations: gender cultures in institutions, gender history of institutions (active and passive voting rights, representation of women), analysis of gender regimes and identity policies
- political decision-making and representation of interests: representation and participation of women in the political system and in its central institutions/organisations (parties, associations, parliaments, elections), role of women's movements, self-organisation, digitisation, (feminist) criticism and resistance
- policy analyses: in particular welfare state policy (labour, social, family, equality policies), university, education and health policies as well as financial and security policies, migration/integration policies
- politics in multi-level systems/Germany in the European Union: role of national policies for institutional and policy-dependent developments of EU gender policies, implementation of EU gender policies/gender mainstreaming

Foreign Policy and International Relations

- basic questions and theories of IR: feminist criticism and development of central theoretical approaches (neorealism, idealism, institutionalism/regime theory, constructivism)
- foreign policy: visibility and representation of women in diplomacy and foreign policy, gender mainstreaming in foreign policy
- institutions and processes of cross-border policy: visibility and representation of women in international organisations and processes, globalisation/migration and gender (e.g. global labour relations, immigration societies, migration, EU enlargement, transnational feminist interventions, global inequality/exploitation, poverty), international and transnational women's movements, transnationalisation of gender norms, especially of women's human rights, special role of the United Nations and the major women's conferences, UN Decade for Women, implementation and impact of CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), development policy, ecological and economic crises, supranational governmentality
- security policies, peace and conflict research: conceptual criticism of terminology (war, violence, peace, security), en-gendering of concrete processes of conflict management, discourses of legitimisation, mediation and peace-making, role and situation of women, men, boys, girls in concrete conflicts and wars; nationalism, militarism
- sustainability and climate policies: nature/culture hierarchy, social nature relations and justice

Methods

- theoretical foundations: criticism of androcentrism and positivism, gender images in epistemology and the history of science, criticism of methodological nationalism, the relationship between science and practice, criticism as a feminist political scientific attitude
- qualitative and quantitative methods (including statistical methods) in policy research: mixed methods and triangulation, intensive examination of source research (reconstruction and deconstruction), interview research and action research; reflection on the role of researchers and gender in the research process
- new theoretical and methodological tools: development of a feminist social theory, e.g. by linking critical social theory with hegemony theory and governmentality
- methods of comparison: have been developed recently, especially within the framework of feminist policy research, methodological debate in regional studies

In practice

- acquisition of gender competence for work in (international) political institutions and organisations, media and political education, especially with regard to the establishment of democratic gender relations and the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender equality policy
- acquiring knowledge about gender dimensions in different policy fields, raising awareness of (global) inequalities and discrimination, especially in connection with other structural categories such as ethnic/religious affiliation, social stratum and class (intersectionality)
- knowledge of concrete company programmes and measures such as "total e-quality", "Audit Familie und Beruf" (family and career audit), "Familiengerechte Hochschule" (family-friendly university) or "Diversity-Management-Pläne" (diversity management plans), acquisition of knowledge about the problems of developing and implementing gender-sensitive and gender-equitable measures and about corresponding action potential

The learning content gives an overview of the variety and divergence of topics, questions and research approaches in feminist political science in which the common concern is the criticism of the – mostly

androcentric – foundations, premises and concepts of the discipline of political science (cf. Rosenberg/Sauer 2004: 9).

Integration of gender studies content into the curriculum:

The contents, questions and research approaches of feminist political science described above reflect the potential systematic integration and consideration of the category of gender in each of the above-mentioned areas of political science can have. Nevertheless, a rather hesitant establishment of feminist perspectives in higher education in political science can still be observed today. If a distinction is made between "an explicit anchoring of gender aspects or independent gender modules" and a "cross-sectional anchoring of gender references" (Jung et al. 2010), a quite heterogeneous picture emerges for Germany: although gender references are increasingly found in the individual module descriptions, they only occur occasionally in the course descriptions of Bachelor's and Master's study degree courses in Germany (cf. *ibid.*). Implementation of feminist political science through independent gender modules is rare in political science Bachelor's and Master's degree courses, e.g. at the Philipps University Marburg (basic and advanced modules at Bachelor's level (Politics and Gender Relations I and II); elective module at Master's level (Gender Research)). In addition to a regular (political science) study degree course, it is also possible to obtain a (general) Gender Study Certificate as an additional qualification in German-speaking countries. Here, the contents of feminist political science can be integrated. The (electronic) study guide *Gender in Political Science* (Jung et al. 2010; see below) provides an overview and information on modularised study courses (Bachelor and Master) in political science.

At Bachelor's level, feminist political science theory building and research can be integrated in the introductory courses and lectures, e.g. through a thematic focus on feminist theory as part of a lecture "Introduction to Political Theory", as feminist approaches to civil society as part of a seminar on "Current Theories on the Civil Society in Political Science" or as "Privacy and the Public Sphere as Hegemonic Discourses of De(gendering)" as part of introductory courses on contemporary and current democracy theories. Alternatively, seminars on gender studies in political science can be offered, e.g.: "Introduction to Feminist International Relations", "Introduction to Feminist Democracy Theory", "Feminist Criticism of Science and Qualitative Methods" or "Introduction to Feminist Economic Criticism". These can be differentiated with regard to the above-mentioned areas. It is also possible to conceptualise lectures or lecture series – involving additional researchers – in which information on the integration of gender and gender relations in the scientific analysis of neighbouring disciplines are provided.

At Master's level, specific feminist political theory concepts, methodological reflections and methodological approaches can be further deepened. This can be implemented as part of the above-mentioned areas or in specific seminars on gender studies in political science. Possible topics are "Governmentality and Gender", "Postcolonial Theories" or "Theories and Policies of European Gender Studies".

Degree Stage:

The category of gender (and the imparting of gender competence in political science) should be systematically integrated and taken into account in each of the above-mentioned areas of Political Science.

Introductory contents of feminist political science can be implemented in the first to third semester at Bachelor's level. More in-depth study content can be part of fourth to sixth semester at Bachelor's level or be implemented at Master's level.

Utilized Literature:

Braun, Kathrin, Gesine Fuchs, Christiane Lemke und Katrin Töns. 2000. Feministische Perspektiven der Politikwissenschaft. München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag.

Kurz-Scherf, Ingrid. 2006. Lernziel Genderkompetenz. In: Kurz-Scherf, Ingrid, Imke Dzewas, Anja Lieb und Marie Reusch, Eds. 2006. Reader Feministische Politik & Wissenschaft. Positionen, Perspektiven, Anregungen aus Geschichte und Gegenwart. Königstein/Ts.: Ulrike Helmer Verlag. S. 243-247.

Harders, Cilja. 2012. Politikwissenschaft, Politologie. In: Netzwerk Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung (Eds.): Geschlechtergerechte Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung – eine Handreichung. Essen. S. 152-154.

Rosenberger, Sieglinde und Birgit Sauer, Eds. 2004. Politikwissenschaft und Geschlecht. Konzepte – Verknüpfungen – Perspektiven. Wien: Facultas.

Jung, Tina, Lukas Bürger, Katja Chmielewski, Julia Garscha, Laura Hanemann und Melanie Kryst, 2010. Studienführer Gender in der Politikwissenschaft; Marburg. Online.ULR: <http://www.uni-marburg.de/genderzukunft/studium/studienfuehrer-gender/studienfuehrergenderpowi> [Access 09.05.2018]

Basic Literature/Recommended Reading:

Benhabib, Seyla, Judith Butler, Drucilla Cornell und Nancy Fraser, Eds. 1993. Der Streit um Differenz. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer Verlag.

Braun, Kathrin, Gesine Fuchs, Christiane Lemke und Katrin Töns. 2000. Feministische Perspektiven der Politikwissenschaft. München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag.

Klinger, Cornelia, Gudrun-Axeli Knapp und Birgit Sauer. 2007. Achsen der Ungleichheit. Zum Verhältnis von Klasse, Geschlecht und Ethnizität. Frankfurt a. M., New York: Campus Verlag.

Krause, Ellen. 2003. Einführung in die politikwissenschaftliche Geschlechterforschung. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

Ludwig, Gundula. 2015. Geschlecht, Macht, Staat. Feministische staats-theoretische Interventionen. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Pateman, Carole. 1988. The Sexual Contract. Stanford: University Press.

Rosenberger, Sieglinde und Birgit Sauer. 2004. Politikwissenschaft und Geschlecht. Konzepte – Verknüpfungen – Perspektiven. Wien: Facultas.

Rudolph, Clarissa. 2015. Geschlechterverhältnisse in der Politik. Eine genderorientierte Einführung in

Grundfragen der Politikwissenschaft. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Winker, Gabriele und Nina Degele. 2010. Intersektionalität. Zur Analyse sozialer Ungleichheiten. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Young, Iris Marion. 2000. Inclusion and Democracy. Oxford/New York: University Press.

Journals:

[femina politica. Zeitschrift für feministische Politikwissenschaften](#)

[Feministische Studien. Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung](#)

[International Feminist Journal of Politics](#)

[Politics and Gender](#)

[Feminist Studies](#)

[Feminist Theory](#)