

Guide for evaluation of exams for STV2370 fall 2021

The evaluation of the exams shall relate to the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge

You will:

- be familiar with central theories in comparative politics
- know empirical examples that both support and contradict these theories
- understand concepts related to theory development such as deterministic and probabilistic theories, assumptions, and scope conditions

Skills

You will:

- be able to think critically about theoretical explanations
- recognize assumptions in theoretical explanations
- understand empirical consequences of theoretical explanations
- know how to apply theories to new contexts
- be more confident in thinking about how theories can be modified

Competence

You will:

- improve your systematic and critical thinking
- gain experience in writing academic texts

The evaluation consists of a 3-hour written exam and a term paper. One overall grade is given. In case of conflicting grades, the final exam is given more weight.

Both the term paper and exams are graded on the letter scale descending from A (the best grade), to E (the lowest pass grade) and F (fail):

Grade	General qualitative description (Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions/UiO)	Description of grades for Bachelor's degree courses (political science)
A Excellent	Excellent performance, clearly outstanding. The candidate demonstrates excellent judgement and a high degree of independent thinking.	The candidate demonstrates an excellent mastery of the course curriculum. When discussing subject-related issues, the candidate applies concepts, theories and empirical knowledge with a very high degree of certainty and in a manner that shows independent thinking and reflection. Correct use of sources and references.
B Very good	Very good performance. The candidate demonstrates very good judgement and degree of independent thinking.	The candidate demonstrates very good mastery of the course curriculum. When discussing subject-related issues, the candidate applies concepts, theories and empirical knowledge with a high degree of certainty and in a manner that shows independent thinking and reflection. Correct use of sources and references.
C Good	Good performance in most areas. The candidate demonstrates good judgement and independent thinking with respect to the most important considerations.	The candidate demonstrates good mastery of the course curriculum. When discussing subject-related issues, the candidate applies concepts, theories and empirical knowledge with certainty and in a manner that shows independent thinking. Correct use of sources and references in general.
D Satisfactory	Satisfactory performance, but with significant shortcomings. The candidate demonstrates limited judgement and independent thinking.	The candidate demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the course curriculum. Concepts, theories and empirical knowledge are applied inconsistently, and there are some deficiencies in the use of sources and references.
E Sufficient	Performance that meets the minimum criteria, but no more. The candidate demonstrates very limited judgement and independent thinking.	The candidate clearly demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the course curriculum, and shows substantial weaknesses in the application of concepts, theories and empirical knowledge, as well as a poor understanding when discussing subject-related issues.

Grade	General qualitative description (Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions/UiO)	Description of grades for Bachelor's degree courses (political science)
F Fail	Performance that does not meet the minimum academic criteria. The candidate demonstrates a lack of both judgement and independent thinking.	The candidate shows no mastery of even elementary parts of the course curriculum, and demonstrates wide gaps in knowledge or an erroneous representation and application of key concepts and theories.

GUIDELINES RELATED TO THE TERM PAPER

The students were told to write a term paper about some political event or issue that seems interesting and puzzling, and to try to use political science theory from on or off the syllabus to explain this puzzle. The paper should have a word count of 2500-3000 words and meet the [formal submission requirements for the department](#).

GUIDELINES RELATED TO THE 3-HOUR EXAM

Short questions

Answer *both* of the short questions:

1. According to Ahuja and Chhibber (2012), poor people in India choose to vote in elections not because of a sense of duty or because they care about the outcome of the elections, but because it is the one day when someone cares about their existence. List three observable implications of this argument. How well do you think this argument works to explain turnout in other parts of the world?

Observable implications (2 points for each sensible observable implication, up to 6 points total):

- in surveys, poor people will say that they vote out of a sense of recognition and not out of duty.
- poor people will vote even if they have very little civic training.
- poor people will vote even if it is costly for them (i.e., stand in line in the heat for a long time).
- poor people will vote even they have no chance of influencing the outcome in the elections.
- turnout will be high even in countries with large poor populations.

Other parts of the world (4 p):

- it seems to rely on the idea that people feel marginalized and not seen, so it is perhaps more likely to be the case in places with large poor populations (but perhaps there are sub-groups of people who feel marginalized everywhere)

- doesn't seem to explain it very well: in other parts of the world it is usually the case that poorer populations turnout in lower numbers.
- Nice if they mention scope conditions or relate it to middle-range theories

2. In her article on sexual violence as a strategy of war, Elisabeth Jean Wood (2018) argues that rape is more likely to occur in conflict situations where leaders either tolerate it or promote it. Draw on at least one other reading from the syllabus to develop a tentative explanation (hypothesis) for why leaders might tolerate or promote sexual violence as a strategy of war. (10 points)

There are several possible answers here, but in class we discussed how Wilkinson's article on elite incentives to support ethnic violence can help explain this. Bottom-line: if leaders need something from the population (votes, money, support) they are more likely to protect them.

The Magaloni et al article is also a great source of hypotheses. Their article is related to when leaders in cartels want to give assistance to the population, pretty much exactly the same hypotheses can be

Answer one of the following essay questions (30 points):

1. There was a lot of buzz around the Green Party in Norway's 2021 elections, but they ended up with only 3 seats in parliament. How can the readings we have done for this course on voting and protest help us understand this outcome?

There are many possible answers here, but the point is to engage multiple readings. The most obvious thing to turn to is the voting literature (week 2,3,4), but since I explicitly mention the protest literature, they need to mention at least one of those to get full points. They should be evaluated on both the understanding of the readings themselves and on their ability to apply the thoughts to a new case:

Voting literature:

- Grofman et al on Duverger's Law: it can be explained by the mechanical mechanism (didn't make the 4% threshold), perhaps to a lesser extent by the psychological mechanism since
- All of the economic voting literature and also Kasara & Suryanarayan suggests that people vote pocket-book, so even if they may care about the environment they often do end up voting out of economic concerns (for those in power). Norway has been doing pretty ok economically, so we should not expect voters to turn to alternatives.
- Turnout may matter (Medema 2013 or Brady et al). We know that younger people vote less (and support the Green Party).

Protest literature:

- The Green Party has a base in social and protest movement. But protesting rests a lot on gaining the esteem of others (McClendon, 2014), so perhaps people are less supportive (as they do not get the recognition) when others don't observe them.

- Since polls indicated strong results, people may have refrained from voting Green as then they think enough others are doing it, which refers to strategic logic as in the article on protest participation on Hong Kong by Cantoni et al. 2019.
- It could be that the grievances or salience of environmental issues were not as high and voters valued other policy areas as more important (Chenoweth and Ulfelder, 2017).

2. Across the world, states have tried to control the spread of Covid-19 with the help of restrictions and regulations. Draw on the article by Levitsky and Murillo (2009) and other readings from our course to discuss challenges related to enforcing such regulations, and variation across the world in how successful this has been.

Here too, there are many things to draw on. The week on weak enforcement is the most obvious one to turn to. Since I explicitly ask them to engage with the Levitsky & Murillo article we should expect more than a mere mention of that article, ideally engaging actively with the idea of institutional weakness along the dimensions of stability and enforcement. For full points they need to discuss both challenges overall and variation across the world (as requested). Here are some logical things to mention:

- North 1990: on definition of institutional culture and path dependency in weak compliance.
- Levitsky and Murillo (2009): In most of the world, it is problematic to assume that institutions are strong and that rules correspond to behavior. They propose two new variables to study institutions: stability and enforcement. Thinking about stability is useful in the context of Covid-19 regulations because of how often these change. People might fail to comply because they don't know the rules. Enforcement is useful in the context of thinking when and why people choose to comply and when and why states are able to enforce. These ideas can help us understand variation across the world because of variation in both state capacity to enforce and approach when it comes to changes regulations all the time.
- Htun & Jensenius (2020) chapter is useful for thinking about how it might be hard to enforce regulations in the private sphere (e.g. distance requirements in personal homes).
- Holland article is useful for thinking about how in some contexts politicians have limited interest in enforcing because they are worried it will rub people the wrong way or they realize the state is not offering an alternative ways for people to have an income.
- The readings on protest / collective action are useful for understanding how people may group-think: if others observe me I am more likely to comply, if enough of others comply I might not bother to do it. Drawing on McClendon (2014), for example, there may be group pressure to comply (or not comply) with these regulations, where these mechanisms should be higher in denser and more homogenous groups.
- Restrictions and regulations could also serve as a focal point for mobilization as it could be perceived as a form of repression, as discussed in the Chenoweth and Ulfelder (2017) article, supported by the fact that there have been anti-Covid restrictions demonstrations worldwide.