# Grading guidelines for the Written Exam (4 hours)

## General information

The students got the following instructions:

- Answer 4 out of 6 short-answer questions and 1 out of 2 long-answer questions.
- When answering questions, you should define all relevant concepts.
- You may write in English, Norwegian or another Scandinavian language.
- You do not need to include formal references or a bibliography, but if you quote specific authors word for word, remember to put this text into quotation marks and report the source to avoid plagiarism. Responses are automatically checked for plagiarism in Inspera.
- This is an individual assessment, and you must not communicate with others during the exam period. Student responses will also be checked against each other for plagiarism in Inspera.

The number of questions is the same as for previous "school exams" (not higher), as we assume having access to the literature means that students will spend more time on each question (even if they have been encouraged to think about this as a school exam given the time constraints).

The short-answer questions (responses) should count for 40% of the grade and long-answer questions (responses) should count 60%. The short answers count equally. However, it is OK if the responses vary somewhat in length across these questions. Moreover, the home exam format implies analytical short-answer questions, and we have experienced (in 2020 and 2021) that students often spend too much time (words) on them compared to the long-answer questions. Even if allocating time is always a part of the test, the written home exam format is particularly challenging. Thus, one should not apply the 40/60 per cent rule very strictly (mechanically) and consider the submission as whole when grading too. Hard work should pay off. That said, an unanswered question will be considered an F when calculating the grade for the exam (as a whole).

This is the second time the course is given in English. We received many questions concerning language before the exam. Students were told that they would not be graded on grammar or writing style. Moreover, upon request, we suggested that they could put an English term in brackets if they were uncertain about their translation into Norwegian/Scandinavian.

The purpose of this exam is mainly to test the students acquired knowledge, understanding and skills as defined by the course's leaning outcomes:
https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/statsvitenskap/STV1300/

The long-answer questions emphasize to test students' level of comprehension and analytical skills, in addition to knowledge. The short-answer questions are thematically narrower and

will above all test knowledge about different topics (and thus parts of the syllabus; breadth). But they do also in many cases include an "analytical component" since this is a home exam and students can, in theory, look up definitions etc. Hence, they will have to reflect and discuss a bit here too to fully answer the question.

The instructions suggest candidates should define all "relevant" concepts (even when we do not ask for definitions) but note we can generally not expect as detailed definitions and explanations as those presented below.

You find the reading list here: STV1300 S22 Introduction to Comparative Politics (exlibrisgroup.com)

The grading should follow the general guidelines for the Department of Political Science at the University of Oslo: https://www.uio.no/studier/eksamen/karakterskala/fagspesifikk-karakterbeskrivelse/sv-isv.html

What will distinguish the responses in terms of quality is the level of detail and clarity, level of understanding, analytical skills, and the ability to discuss in an independent manner. One should not reward provision of irrelevant information even if it is based on the syllabus. Indeed, the best ones will have prioritized the (limited) time to focus on aspects to the point. The top-level students have perhaps chosen to give somewhat longer answers to the short-answer questions that open for more discussion, but answers count equally. A clear and well-structured presentation should generally be rewarded, especially in the case of the long-answer question.

# Specific information

Below we indicate what we expect from responses to the various questions at the different levels.

## Answer 4 out of 6 short-answer questions:

1. **What is the difference between the *majoritarian* and *consensus* "visions" of democracy? If you preferred a majoritarian view, what type of the electoral system and party system would you adopt/stimulate and why?**

   Key readings: Clark, Golder, and Golder ch. 13, 14, 16, Enyedi and Bertoa (2020).

   Political institutions affect how democracy works and may push the system, as a whole, in different directions. If we look across various political institutions, we can see that they either tend to concentrate power or disperse power. This distinction mirrors two alternative views pf democracy/institutional logics: "majoritarian" vs. "consensus" system. If countries tend to have "majoritarian" features across most institutions, they get closer to what the ideal model we call "majoritarian democracies", if they tend to have

"consensus" features across institutions, they get closer to what the ideal model we call "consensus democracies".

Majoritarian systems concentrate power and is supposed to work in the following way:
- Teams of politicians compete for the support of voters.
- The team selected by a majority of voters gets full control over policy.
- Voters observe social, economic, and political outcomes and decide whether to retain or replace the team that are held responsible for producing those outcomes.
- Institutions are designed to maximize clarity of responsibility and accountability.

This means that you would prefer a majoritarian, not proportional, electoral system and a two-party, not a fragmented multiparty, system if you have a strictly majoritarian view of democracy. A majoritarian electoral system is one in which the candidates or parties that receive the most votes win more than half of the votes (absolute majority) or more votes than anyone else (plurality).

Thus, the winning party/candidates have not always obtained a majority of the votes but may end up with a majority of the seats. Majoritarian systems lead to less proportional distribution of seats (compared to votes) than PR systems and thus to fewer parties. According to Duverger, such systems discourage the formation and electoral success of new parties in two related ways:

- First, the mechanical effect of these systems leaves small parties with fewer seats in the legislature than the votes cast for them would have produced in a PR system.
- Second, the strategic effect of these systems leaves small parties with fewer votes than the latent support for their policies in the electorate would suggest they could attract.

Consequently, majoritarian systems indirectly, via the nature of the party system (degree of fragmentation), encourages one-party governments (not coalition governments), which in turn maximize clarity of responsibility and accountability in line with the majoritarian view of democracy.

The key point is how electoral system affects the party system that in turn affect the nature of government. Note that we cannot expect detailed definitions and justifications of the why a majoritarian view calls for majoritarian electoral system and two-party system. A top-level response will demonstrate conceptual understanding of the democracy views, electoral and party systems and include the key points. It will generally be precise and to the point, and not spend time on less relevant elements.


2. **What are the key differences between government formation in presidential systems and parliamentary systems?**

Key readings: Clark, Golder, and Golder ch. 12.

One could argue that the key differences are whether the government depends on the support of the legislature or not and what role the head of state plays.

The key characteristic of the government formation process in a parliamentary democracy is that the government must enjoy the "confidence" of the legislature both to come to power and to stay in power. A new government needs the support of a legislative majority. In some countries, a potential government must explicitly demonstrate that it has such support before it can take office by passing a formal investiture vote. But this is not a necessary condition: even without this the government must still have the implicit support of a legislative majority since the legislature may call a vote of no confidence at any time.

Thus, the Head of State formally appoints the government based on the composition of the parliament, while the "formateur" puts the government together, i.e., nominate cabinet members. This is the person designated to form the government; often the Prime Minister designate. There are no rules as to who should be in this legislative majority, this part is about but politics: party goals, ideological distance, strategic choices, and relationships between individual political leaders. Who are willing and able to collaborate and gain stable support? This can be a time-consuming, complicated process.

In contrast, in a presidential system, the government in presidential democracies cannot be dismissed by the legislature even if a majority of legislators want this to happen. There is no vote of no confidence and thus the government is not dependent on (implicit) support of the legislature. The president is both the «chief executive» and Head of State. The president is always the "formateur", and forms and appoint the government and appoints (and dismisses) whomever he wants to the cabinet. However, a president might need formal acceptance from the legislature for ministerial appointments. The fact that the president is always the "formateur" means that the president's party must be included in the cabinet regardless of its legislative size. The cabinet will always include members from the presidents' party but may include members from other parties.

These are the key differences that should briefly be summarized to provide a good answer. An additional "bonus" point is related to the "reversion point" of the government formation process: If the government formation process fails in a parliamentary democracy, then we get new elections, a new round of bargaining, or a caretaker government. If the government fails to win opposition support in a presidential democracy, then the president's party just rules "on its own".

3. **What problem is known as "agency loss" in the chain of delegation from voters to elected representatives and why does it occur? Mention two remedies that may reduce the problem.**

Key readings: Clark, Golder, and Golder ch. 12.

Delegation occurs when one person or group (principal) relies on another person or group (agent) to act on the principal's behalf. We can view all representative democracies as different systems of delegation. While it has its advantages, there are also several possible principal-agent, or delegation, problems. What political scientists refer to as "Agency loss" is the difference between actual consequence of delegation and what the consequence would have been had the agent been perfect. Put differently, agency loss is the distance between the outcome of agent's choices/actions and the principal's

preferences. If the agent works in line with the principal's interest, then there is no agent problem.

Agency loss is a risk when the agent has:
- (1) more information than the principal
- (2) other preferences than the principal

Thus, it arises due to conflicting interests and asymmetric information, i.e., we know less about the political conditions and the agent's actions/efforts than the agent himself. If principals don't have all the information, then two specific problems arise:
- Adverse selection: principal can't observe whether agent has the right preferences or skills
- Moral hazard: principal doesn't have complete information about the agent's actions

Thus, it is always useful to know something about decisions one delegates, and we should look for agents we think have the same preferences as we have. Hence, principals can use two main mechanisms to gain information about the agents before and after the agent acts:

- Ex ante mechanisms: before the agent acts
  - Screening: sets up a competition among candidates for the agent position. Parties' careful internal nomination process and screening of candidates before putting together a party list or selecting a candidate for a district is one example.
  - Selection: by means of competition between candidates, agents learn even more about the agent type.
- Ex post mechanisms: after the agent acts
  - Police patrol system: principals directly and actively monitor the agent's actions. One example is a weekly question hour in Parliament, were representatives as principal control the cabinet members as agents.
  - Fire alarm system: principal relies on others' information about agent's performance. The Office of the Auditor General, Riksrevisjonen, is an example of such a monitoring device.

A good response explains delegation and what agency loss means and mention a couple of the remedies listed above (like parties' careful candidate selection and a weekly question hour in Parliament). The explanations for why this helps is not strictly necessary, but top-level answers would include at least some of the reasoning linking remedies to the reasons for why agency loss occurs.

4. **What is a "social movement"? Use a few real-world examples to illustrate the difference between social movements and interest groups.**

   **Key readings:** Tarrow (1993), Tilly (2004), Yoho (1998)

To answer this, one needs to combine the readings on interest groups and social movements. As it developed in the West after 1750, the social movement emerged from an innovative, consequential synthesis of three elements, according to Tilly:

- A sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities.
- Employment of combinations from among the following forms of political action: creation of special-purpose associations and coalitions; public meetings; solemn processions; vigils; rallies; demonstrations; petition drives; statements to and in public media; pamphleteering (he social movement repertoire)
- Participants' concerted public representations of WUNC: worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment on the part of themselves and/or their constituencies.

According to a common view, they try to exert influence public on the behalf of a broader spectrum of the citizenry, both home and abroad. The concept is often restricted to groups representing people outside established institutions, attempting to change the economic, social or political structure by means of non-institutionalized forms of claim-making.

Moreover, "social movement" is commonly defined as a network connecting formal organizations and individuals. As wholes, social movements tend to lack clearly defined leadership. Instead, they rely on informal "political entrepreneurs" (Tarrow). The lack of formal leadership is clearly illustrated by Diani's definition that was quoted in a lecture: "a social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations engaged in a political and cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity".

Moreover, it is generally emphasized that social movements operate outside the institutional channels. Meanwhile, interest groups are often defined by having a formal organization and by attempts to seek access to and influence political institutions' decision-making (Yono): an association of individuals or organizations, usually formally organized, that attempts to influence public policy. Thus, interest groups and social movements both try to influence politics but in different ways. A traditional example of an interest group is a business association, and a modern example of a social movement could be "gay rights movement".

Detailed elaboration cannot be expected, but a good answer demonstrates a general understanding of the concept of social movement and how it is different from "interest group". It is also possible problematize the boundaries between the general concepts as interest groups may be parts of social movements: a trade union belonging to the "trade union movement" historically or an environmental organization belonging to the "environmental movement". Doing this should be rewarded.


5. **Name the elements that are common to all definitions of civil wars and list two optional elements. According to this definition, would you classify the storming of the US Capitol in January 2021 as civil war or not? Justify your explanation.**

Key readings: Fearon and Laitin (2003)

Common to all definitions of civil war are the following elements:

- It has to take place within a state and not between two states. That means that at least one of the sides/belligerents has to be a non-state actor, e.g., a rebel group. If there are only states involved, we would call it an interstate war.

- The conflict has to be fought between two or more organized actors. That element is necessary to exclude single acts of political terrorism, where the target is a state, but the perpetrator is only one person.
- The fighting needs to result in regular battle violence that causes fatalities for at least one side. This element is necessary to distinguish civil wars from other forms of violence, such as terror attacks conducted by larger groups.

The explanations for the elements are not strictly necessary for a good response, but top-level answers should include at least some of the reasoning. Optional elements to a civil war definition are:

- War goals: the goal of the rebel organization fighting the war has to be to either take over the government or the control over territory, e.g., in secessionist conflicts.
- Intensity of violence: some definitions have a threshold of at least 25 battle deaths to classify a conflict as "civil conflict" and a threshold of more than 1000 battle deaths to classify a conflict as "civil war"
- The level of international involvement: when a state intervenes on behalf of one (or several) sides in a conflict, civil conflicts/war can be called "internationalized intrastate wars" to distinguish them from "pure" civil wars that are only fought between two sides that come from the same country

Was the storming of the US Capitol in 2021 a civil war? According to this definition, no. While it took place within a state, it missed elements of regular, continued battle violence between two sides. Moreover, one side (the protestors) wasn't formally organized (even though there were some levels of organization it didn't amount to a fully formed rebel organization). It also didn't meet the threshold of violence that typically defines a civil war.

6. **According to Weyland, why do revolutions tend to fail? Name two cognitive heuristics (or "cognitive shortcuts") that he argues influence revolutionaries' decision-making and explain how these heuristics affect revolutionaries' chances of succeeding.**

Key readings: Weyland (2016)

According to Weyland, most revolutions tend to fail because counterrevolutionaries learn faster and better adapt to shifting circumstances than revolutionaries. They are less likely to rely on cognitive heuristics and shortcuts that make revolutionaries overestimate their chances, and more likely to use rational decision making, they are overall better equipped than revolutionaries.

Point students should mention:

- Revolutions tend to diffuse. Revolutionary success in one country tends to inspire revolutions in other countries. Early success inspires imitation. An early success makes it seem like everything is possible for revolutionaries. But eventually regimes catch up and they effectively organize a counter revolution.

  Name the cognitive heuristics that affect revolutionaries' decision-making:

- Availability heuristics: people pay a lot of attention to drastic, recent events, and much less attention to less dramatic events. Revolutionary successes are especially dramatic events. Groups that attempt revolution focus on past instances of success and less on past instances of failures (where revolution did not happen and/or failed). This makes them overestimate their own chances of success
- Representativeness heuristic: people emphasize similarities and discount differences; they assume their own situation is representative of a broader population. Revolutionaries will overestimate the similarities between the cases they know and underestimate the differences. They may not see critical aspects of their situation that makes it less likely they will succeed.

The answers (quality) will vary in terms of how accurately they present the points above.

## Answer 1 out of 2 long-answer questions:

1. **"Established democracies are suffering from a 'participation crisis' (i.e., decline in political participation making democracy suffer)". Discuss.**

The question is not explicitly discussed during in class, although we have touched upon the debate on the importance of popular participation for democracy. Thus, it is a challenging question that requires making links between different readings/lectures.

Students will need to define democracy and political participation, distinguish between different forms of participation, present empirics on the developments in participation patterns and evaluate how to what extent we are talking about a "crisis".

Some would probably begin by defining democracy. Measures of democracy vary because concept definitions emphasize different components and the same components measured differently. Some would perhaps use Dahl's minimalist and procedural definition as starting point ("polyarchy"):

Contestation: «The extent to which citizens are free to organize themselves into competing blocs in order to press for outcomes and policies they desire»

Inclusion: «…has to do with who gets to participate in the political process. Political regimes in which the barriers to the naturalization of immigrants are low and all adult citizens are permitted to vote will rank high regarding inclusion.

Thus, voting rights and voter turnout is at the core of democracy. When studying democracies as such, and the quality of democracy, it is also possible to emphasize popular participation more strongly. Thus, it is relevant to point to the general debate on participation and democracy that was mentioned in lecture 8 to begin with: The more people who participate in a democracy, the more democratic it becomes? Or can citizen participation be bad for representative democracy?

Most importantly, students should evaluate how forms of participation has developed over time. To do this, they need to define participation. A narrow definition suggests: "Those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take" (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 2). But wider concepts exist as well, like "citizens' activities aiming to affect politics" (van Deth

2016/2021) or "all power structures". But the broader, the less analytically precise and the harder to "operationalize", van Deth argues. According to van Deth (2016/21), main features of participation are:

- Involves an activity (action)
- Is voluntary (not ordered by someone)
- Involves people in unprofessional roles
- Concern government, politics, or the state in the broad sense
- Latent concept, multiple specific manifestations?

This covers a wide range of activities; voting, petitions, reader letters, demonstrations, boycotts, trade union organizing, strikes, etc. (Voluntary) participation may happen in authoritarian settings, but mainly in democracies. Another way of presenting this, mentioned in the lectures only, is to say that:

Sites of participation may vary:

- society
- political institutions
- elections

Modes of participation may vary:

- ad hoc & weakly organized (e.g., attending a demonstration)
- organized & regular (e.g., membership in political parties)

Van Deth uses the following bullet points to identify conventional (organized and regular) forms of participation (= minimalist definition):

- Rule 1: Is it an activity or action?
- Rule 2: Is the activity voluntary?
- Rule 3: Is the activity conducted by nonprofessionals?
- Rule 4: Is the activity located in the sphere of government/state/politics?

Then Rule 5: Is the activity targeted at the sphere of government/state/politics opens the concept to less conventional forms, like demonstrations.

Probably students will focus on the conventional forms and they do not need to present the conceptual debate in detail to do that.

Many will most likely begin by looking at voter turnout. Voter turnout is the extent to which eligible voters use their vote – cast a vote - on election day. How has the level of turnout developed in democracies?

Blais' article present figures 1979-2004: In a typical legislative election of 2004 was three-quarters of eligible citizens turn out to vote (the mean is 75.5 percent and the median 76.5 percent). There were as many countries with mean turnout in the 80 percent range (n=31) or in the 60 percent range (n=25) as in the 70 percent range (n=29). And there were extreme countries with very high and very low turnout. Turnout varies immensely across countries. There is no concentration around the mean (or median). The mean voter turnout has declined by 7 or 8 points between the1990s and 2004. Then this material was supplemented in the

lecture with figures from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA: https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/voter-turnout-trends-around-the-world.pdf These (on legislative elections) show that the trend of decline has continued. Despite the growth in the global voter population and the number of countries that hold elections, the global average voter turnout has decreased significantly since the early 1990s. and continued its decline to reach 66 per cent in the period of 2011–15. At the same time there are regional differences. Thus, it is possible to nuance the "decline story" a little bit, but important to note that the mandatory readings do not have completely up-to-date figures.

Party membership and activity is another conventional form that is discussed in detail. Key findings summarized are:

- Do not have as much data for party membership as for voter turnout.
- A minority of voters are party members; tension between being an active voter and a loyal supporter as member?
- In 1950s and 1960s parties in established democracies could enrolled more than 10 % of the electorate.
- By the 1980s, the figures had begun to drop.
- Decline partly due to better records (national party registers), partly due to actual decline.
- Early 21st century: few democracies with more than 8% party members.
- But: variation exists within and between countries.

Hence, again there is decline in participation, but it is possible to nuance a bit.

As for more unconventional forms they have not been presented with similar individual-level data, but the readings show the existence of other unconventional forms and how these have changed over time. Thus, even if fewer citizens are members of political parties than before, they are not necessarily absent from politics.

Students may also use what they have learned about factors that explain variation political participation at different levels as discussion points. For instance, we know that individuals' resources matter. A sophisticated response might use this type of information to nuance the discussion: if participation declines in a "biased" manner, this might make it worse news for democracy, than it if declines across the board?

Higher voter turnout is in most cases a sign of the vitality of democracy, while lower turnout is usually associated with voter apathy and mistrust of the political process. At the same time, it is also a freedom to abstain from voting and it can be a way to give feedback to the system. Moreover, it is disputed whether more participation is always better. The impact on democracy of decline in voter turnout and other forms of conventional political participation was briefly discussed towards the end of lecture 8:

- Global decline in voter turnout is seen as a sign of democratic ill-health and problem. Voting is at the core of democracy. The same could be argued for party membership if we think about party membership organizations as mechanisms to keep political/party leaders accountable between elections and closer to the people.

- But some argue that citizen participation is not always good for democracy due to lack of knowledge.

- Dalton (2018): both critiques are flawed; the problem is "the participatory gap".

However, Dalton is not mandatory reading, so we do not expect them to use this (not needed for an A).

The most important thing is that they discuss both parts of the claim in Q1: is there a general significant decline in political participation? And does the decline make democracy suffer? The first is most important, as they have more to build on here, for the latter part, the answers will vary more. What will distinguish the responses in terms of quality is the level of detail and clarity, level of understanding, analytical skills, and the ability to discuss in an independent manner. A top-level response will often stand out as particularly well-structured.


2. **How does democracy (or its absence) affect the likelihood of a revolution?**

This question is not discussed explicitly in the class. It is a challenging question that requires making links between material from different lectures.

The lecture on revolutions begins by explaining there are two main explanations for why revolutions occur: grievance-based explanations and endogenous explanations.

Students should explain what grievance-based explanations are. They state that shifts in economic and political circumstances, e.g., unemployment, food scarcity, drought etc cause grievances that encourage people to mobilize. Students may point to some limitations of these types of explanations: they are not very good at predicting revolution.

Grievance-based explanations predict that revolutions would be more likely to occur in dictatorships, here citizens have less of a voice, than in democracies. This point was not explicitly stated in class and requires students to make connections between different lectures. Here students can use chapter 9 of Clark and Golder: entitled Democracy and Dictatorship, does it make a difference? If democracy promotes growth and government performance, then there should be fewer grievances in democracies, and therefore fewer revolutions. Clark and Golder say democracies have better government performance, lower child mortality, and so on. If democracy overall improves material well-being, then we should expect fewer revolutions in democracies (Clark and Golder, page 451)

Next students should explain what endogenous explanations are, they are explanations that focus on dynamics generated by the protest itself, e.g., demonstration effect, and positive feedback. A good answer will explain what preference falsification is (this was covered in class) and mentions why preference falsification makes it hard for revolutionaries to coordinate and organize (the student can also mention preference falsification also makes revolution hard to predict).

How regime type affects endogenous explanations requires some careful thinking. There are different ways one could answer this. Here are some points that students could raise:

Preference falsification is higher in dictatorships than in democracies, therefore it should be easier for revolutionaries to organize in democracies than in dictatorships. So perhaps democracies are more prone to revolutions? More likely, the dynamics of mobilization should be different in democracies versus dictatorships. Since there is less preference falsification in democracies, there should be fewer unexpected outbursts of protests. Mobilization might be

more predictable and more regularized. This is one theoretical prediction of endogenous model. This prediction is not explicitly stated in class, but it can be derived from the course material (students can also connect to the social movement literature).

Additionally, students can mention that there are many definitions of revolution. For instance, students can argue that "social revolutions" (Skocpol 1979) are unlikely to occur in democracies. A good answer goes as follows. The students define what a social revolution is. Social revolution requires both a change in state institutions and a transformation in the social order, e.g., redistribution in wealth, change of mode of production etc (this was covered in class). Skocpol argued that social revolutions tend to happen in regimes that are reliant on feudal patterns of agrarian production, this makes the state vulnerable to peasant revolt and class-based mobilization (this was mentioned in class). Since feudalism is incompatible with democracy this would suggest that social revolutions don't happen in democracies (this last connection was not made explicitly in class, but some students will be able to see it).

What will distinguish the responses in terms of quality is the level of detail and clarity, level of understanding, analytical skills, and the ability to discuss in an independent manner. A top-level response tends to stand out as particularly well-structured.