



## ELECTORAL SYSTEMS FROM AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

### INTRODUCTORY COURSE FOR GRADUATES

St. Joseph University, Beirut  
(17-20 October, 2016)

Lead instructor **Prof. Rafael López-Pintor**  
*Emeritus Tenured Professor, Universidad Autonoma of Madrid, Spain*  
*UNDP Senior Election Advisor, Arab States*

Assisted by **Rita Chemaly and Wissam Lahham**  
*Lecturers at the Political Science Institute – USJ, Beirut*

#### NATURE OF THE COURSE

Knowing, assessing, advising, policy advocacy, and legal engineering...

The course is meant as a short, intensive and highly participatory learning experience for graduates in the Arab world. The pedagogical thrust of the course is twofold. First, it is to provide a quick transmission of the essentials on the structure and functioning of electoral systems from a comparative international perspective. Second, the applied perspective is used in the sense of enhancing among democracy students and practitioners of a sensitivity towards the practical use of electoral systems as instruments for inclusion, representation and delivery capacity of democratic government.

#### MAIN PARAMETERS OF THE COURSE

- A class of 20-25 graduates selected from a MA program at St. Joseph University and UNDP Regional Electoral Support Program for Middle East and North Africa.

- The course will be run by a lead instructor accompanied by a support team of four: two assisting instructors and two working group managers/moderators.
- Duration of the course: 3 days in a row, 6 hours per day splitting into three sessions between 09:00 and 16:00. Each day, Session 1 in the morning shall be a lecture by lead instructor followed by open dialogue. Session 2 shall be devoted to topical discussion in working groups. Session 3 shall be devoted to a practical assessment exercise.
- Working languages of the course: English for lecture sessions; Arabic, English or French for the working group sessions depending upon preferences of participants if and only if all participants of a group would be using the same language.

### **DAY 1 (Monday 17 October)**

#### ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AS RULES OF THE GAME FOR ELECTIONS

08:30 - 09:00: Morning coffee

09:00 - 09:15: Introductory session

09:15 - 10:30: Lecturing session

- The rules of the electoral game, where are they embodied?
- The place of elections in democracy: On the essence of democracy as government of the people.
- The functions of the electoral system in the working of the democratic system of government.
- Main elements of the electoral systems: Registration of voters and candidates (the *demos* and the *cratos*); formula of representation (generally considered the kernel of the system); district type, size and districting method; threshold of representation; counting, transmission and releasing of results; rules on electoral dispute resolution.
- The relevance of type of EMB for the working of the electoral system. Institutional models and standard of behaviour of the administrator of elections. Does it make a difference? Looking back to history.

10:30 - 12:00: Working group session

(10.30 - 11:30 Group Discussion; 11:30 - 12:00 Plenary with group rapporteurs)

12:00 - 13:00: Lunch

13:00 - 15:45: Assessment session on the electoral system of given countries  
(13:00 - 13:15 setting the working groups, 13:15 - 15:45 assessment exercise)

15:45 16:00: Brief rap up session

## **DAY 2 (Tuesday 18 October)**

ELECTORAL SYSTEM FAMILIES AROUND THE WORLD: PROPORTIONAL, MAJORITY AND MIX.

08:30 - 09:00 : Morning coffee

09:00 - 10:30 : Lecturing session

- Electoral system families and variations or modalities within each family, mainly depending on formula and district.
- Electoral systems around the world.
- The electoral systems of the Arab World: Commonalities and differences.

10:30 - 12:00 : Working group session

(10.30 - 11:30 Group Discussion; 11:30 - 12:00 Plenary with group rapporteurs)

12:00 - 13:00 : Lunch

13:00 - 15:45 : Assessment session on the electoral system of given countries  
(13:00 - 13:15 setting the working groups, 13:15 - 15:45 assessment exercise)

15:45 16:00 : Brief rap up session

## **DAY 3 (Wednesday 19 October)**

GETTING TO THE CORE: INCLUSION AND REPRESENTATION

08:30 - 09:00 : Morning coffee

09:00 - 10:30 : Lecturing session

- Demographic vs. territorial representation (the meaning of “an equal vote” and the confusion about it).
- Getting into issues of gender and minority representation: Legal, administrative and organisational/logistical instruments to make it working (voters and candidates).

- Inclusion of the poor, the illiterate and persons with disabilities in the electoral system (voters and candidates).
- Dealing with voter lists as the practical demarcation of the *demos*.
- Dealing with the EMB as the administrator of the electoral system.
- Dealing with electoral dispute resolution (EDR) and electoral justice in making effective the electoral system.
- Is there a more democratic electoral system, and if so which one?
- Linking the different formulae of representation with the service to vested interests of politicians and the influentials.
- Assessing formulae of representation as linked to the legitimacy of the political system: Media and political finance of parties and candidates as most relevant factor in the functioning of electoral system for democracy. Political power outside and/or above the state. New and old contextual factors: Is it different today from the situation in earlier democracies?
- Issues of electoral reform (mapping of agents and factors in a context for electoral reform; some historical examples and lessons learned). Electoral reform in the Arab world.

10:30 - 12:00 : Working group session

(10.30 - 11:30 Group Discussion; 11:30 - 12:00 Plenary with group rapporteurs)

12:00 - 13:00 : Lunch

13:00 - 15:45 : Assessment session on the electoral system of given countries

(13:00 - 13:15 setting the working groups, 13:15 - 15:45 assessment exercise)

15:45 16:00 : Closing session

(\* ) **Rafael López-Pintor** (Spain) is International Political Consultant; Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and Doctor of Law from the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, Spain. Former tenured professor at the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid, Spain. Currently senior election advisor to UNDP for the Arab States. Has been UN Director of Elections in El Salvador and Mozambique, and Deputy Chief Observer in EU observation missions in number of countries including Nicaragua, Guatemala and Ethiopia. Consultant on elections to the UN, EU, OSCE, USAID, IFES, IDEA in more than 30 countries worldwide, among others besides those already mentioned: Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine

among Arab countries; Angola, Lesotho, Liberia in Africa; Albania and Kosovo in the Balkans; Azerbaijan and Afghanistan in Central Asia; Cambodia and Nepal in South Asia. Among his publications, *Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance* (New York, UNDP, 2000); and (with J. Fischer) *Getting to the CORE. A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections*. New York: UNDP, 2006); 14 Working Papers on Electoral Systems and Electoral Management in the *Issue Brief Series* (UNDP, 2015).