

CONSTITUTIONALISM IN EUROPE

Contribution to the course *Constitutional Law* from a comparative perspective**Final exam observations**

Dear participants of the course Constitutional Law,

I have corrected your answers to my questions nos. 4 and 5 in the final examination. The results are mixed. While there is a high number of excellent answers, there is also a high number of answers that document that their author did not prepare the exam. They do not refer at all to what we have discussed in the online lectures or what is laid down in the course materials. Typical mistakes and misunderstandings show that some course participants did not even know about the course materials, while others studied them for the first time during the exam. This is different from the experience with the final examination in the course Administrative Law, which had been passed only six days before.

If you did not have the time or the power to prepare appropriately for the final examination, I can understand that well in the present Covid-19 crisis situation in Indonesia. In the six days between the exams in the courses Administrative Law and Constitutional Law much happened that may have directed your focus on other problems. Do not mind, you will prepare the exams more thoroughly in the next semester. However, in some cases there were other reasons for a not so good result, and you should study them carefully so that you avoid certain mistakes in the future:

1. Many of you focused too much on the answer to question 4 and neglected the answer to question 5. This proves *inefficient time management*, since you could achieve almost twice as many points with the latter. You need to *plan the answers* to all questions *before starting the writing down* and even set deadlines for the writing of each of them, so that you do not waste your time on not so important questions or aspects.
2. *Many of you misunderstood question 5*: It was about the basic idea of the "rule of law", not of the constitution as a legal institution or the question of a "European constitution"! Moreover, one of the sub-questions asked you to explain shortly the principle of proportionality "*and*" (= plus, not "or") three other important elements but many of you presented it as one of three elements so that the presentation of the fourth element was missing. Others presented the obligation of public institutions to follow the law (the subjection of all public institutions to the law), although the question explicitly excluded this element ("besides..."). In an academic exam please *always read the questions carefully and answer precisely - and only - what exactly is asked for!* With a good planning before the writing down of your answers you can avoid such mistakes.
3. Some of you answered the questions correctly but *just "copied & pasted"* their words literally from the course materials (slide 2 resp. diagram 2). Even if your remarks as such were totally correct you could only achieve a part of the possible points for it, since "copy & paste" is *inadmissible in any academic exam*. This was even emphasized in the instructions at the beginning of the questions. You may adopt some important terms or phrases but all in all *you need to formulate and briefly explain in your own words!*
4. Some answers consisted of only one big, unstructured paragraph with a lot of heterogeneous information. In any academic text, including academic exams, you need to *structure your answer* in a clear and consistent way that shows to the reader the red line of thoughts!

I have filled out again a *correction sheet for every single exam*. Those among you who are interested to see how I have graded and what are the strong and weak points of their answers are *welcome to contact me* and I will send them the correction sheet for their paper.

Do not worry, the next exams in the next semester will offer you the opportunity to improve your performance and avoid these mistakes. Best wishes for your further studies,

Thomas Schmitz

More information on my course contribution at www.thomas-schmitz-yogyakarta.id. For any questions, suggestions and criticism please contact me in my office (Building A, room A.IV.11) or via e-mail at tschmit1@gwdg.de.