

PSC 503: Comparative Politics

Fall 2007

Tuesday 9:00-11:50 AM

502 Park Hall

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Office hours: Wednesday 1:00 – 3:00 PM, and by appointment

Course Description

This pro-seminar is a graduate-level introduction to comparative politics. As the core seminar in the field of comparative politics, this course is designed to introduce students to the central methodological, theoretical, and empirical controversies in the field. To prepare students in the use of the comparative method, the primary focus is on contemporary approaches and issues, even though students will also become familiar with long-standing paradigms and theoretical concepts that have shaped the development of the field. Through a broad introduction of a diverse body of literature, students are expected to develop a critical appreciation of key debates and the main conceptual tools commonly employed in the cross-national analysis of political phenomena. To this end a variety of debates highlighting divergent comparative techniques and theories will be examined.

The course begins by introducing the central theoretical concepts in comparative politics, which highlights the importance of theory building in the scientific study of political behavior and institutions across countries. Then we will spend two weeks examining the diverse methodological approaches employed by researchers in the field. The remainder of the course will investigate the key substantive topics in comparative politics ranging from the development of the state and the institutions that compose it to political culture and mass behavior. By the end of the course, you should have a solid understanding of the major theories and methods in comparative politics, comprehend how scholars apply them to various research debates within the field, and be able to apply those theories and methods (at least conceptually) in your own comparative research. For those students pursuing a doctoral degree and selecting comparative politics as a field, this course will serve as the foundation for preparing for your comprehensive exams.

Students are expected to come to class each week prepared to discuss the readings. You should complete the assigned readings prior to each class session, taking notes on the central theoretical arguments and empirical findings in each piece, recording your critical comments, and reflecting on the scholarly connections among the readings. The class meetings will be run as seminars where the students are expected to actively participate in the discussion.

Attendance and participation in class discussions will count for 15% of the course grade. Writing assignments and in-class presentations will constitute the remainder of the course grade. These assignments are designed to develop a mastery of the readings and a critical understanding of the comparative method. The class discussions will be built around "talking points" submitted by students on the day prior to each class meeting (15%). Students will also be required to prepare (and briefly summarize in class) an annotated bibliography that extends one of the week's readings (20%). At the end of the semester, each student will prepare a research proposal that considers a research question stemming from the literature covered in the course (25%). Students will also have to present their proposal to the class. Finally, there will be a take-home final exam composed of essay questions designed to test for a

comprehensive understanding of the course readings (25%). This exam will be completed during finals week and will be open-note and open-book.

Weekly talking points: After the first week, each student will be required to submit **three** “talking points” on each week’s readings. These are due by email (send them to hpalmer@buffalo.edu) by **Monday at 9:00 AM prior to the class session in which the readings will be discussed**. These talking points should be the three most interesting questions or arguments identified by the student in the week’s readings. They should be written in the form of a short paragraph summarizing the question or argument. No more or less than three distinct talking points should be submitted each week. Each talking point should refer to one or more specific sections of the weekly readings (with appropriate page references). Each talking point should refer to a different chapter or article from the weekly readings. Talking points in excess of 160 words will not be accepted. Talking points that arrive late will also not be accepted.

Annotated bibliography: Each student will be required to prepare an annotated bibliography that extends the readings for one of the weeks from September 25th to November 13th (inclusive). This is a bibliographic listing of 8-12 journal articles and book chapters addressing a specific topic or research question relating to the week’s readings. It should be relatively obvious how these articles and chapters are connected theoretically and methodologically. The annotations should be about 3-5 sentences, summarizing as concisely as possible the main point(s) of the work. For books, the annotation should focus on the section that is most relevant to the research topic or question, and if the relevant section includes multiple chapters, a separate annotation should be written for each chapter. Students will be required to summarize their annotated bibliography in a 5-8 minute presentation to the class as well as to distribute hard copies of their bibliography to the other students. **No more than three students will be allowed to prepare a bibliography for any particular week. Weeks can be claimed on a first-come, first-serve basis by email until 4:00 PM on September 14th. After that time, any students who have not claimed a week will be assigned one.**

Research proposal: Each student will be required to write a research proposal focusing on an original scientific question relating (at least indirectly) to the comparative politics literature covered in the course. A research proposal is essentially a “data-light” or preliminary version of a research design that focuses on the theory and provides only a conceptual discussion of the empirical analysis. The research proposal should discuss the theoretical motivation for the proposed research, citing the relevant literature to which the research seeks to contribute. It should clearly explain the original theoretical argument made and explicitly posit the key testable hypotheses derived from this theory. The proposal should also discuss the dependent variable(s) and central explanatory variables that would be employed in an empirical investigation of these hypotheses. In addition to submitting a written version, students will make an 8-12 minute presentation of their research proposal to the class.

Required Texts

- Bates, Robert H. 2001. *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*. New York: W.W. Norton. ISBN: 0393974014
- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. ISBN: 0472068350
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN: 0691034710
- Mainwaring, Scott, and Matthew Soberg Shugart. 1997. *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0521576148

These texts should be available for purchase at the campus bookstore. You can also purchase them from on-line retailers.

Most of the other required readings can be downloaded using the UB library's Electronic Journals archive. Books included in the readings will be placed on reserve in the library. If you cannot find a reading, let me know ASAP.

Course Schedule and Readings

August 28: Introduction and Review of Scientific Method

September 4: Theoretical Foundations

- Almond, Gabriel A. 1956. Comparative Political Systems. *Journal of Politics* 18: 391-409.
- Easton, David. 1957. An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems. *World Politics* 9: 383-400.
- Almond, Gabriel A. 1965. A Developmental Approach to Political Systems. *World Politics* 17: 183-214.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review* 53: 69-105.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1994. The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited. *American Sociological Review* 59: 1-22.
- Kohli, Atul, Peter Evans, Peter J. Katzenstein, Adam Przeworski, Suzanne Hoerber Rudolph, James C. Scott, and Theda Skocpol. 1995. The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium. *World Politics* 49: 1-49.

September 11: Quantitative vs. Qualitative Approaches to Comparative Politics

- Jackman, Robert. 1985. Cross-National Statistical Research and the Study of Comparative Politics. *American Journal of Political Science* 29: 161-82.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Read chapters 1-3; skim chapters 4-6.
- Laitin, David D. 1995. Disciplining Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 89: 454-56.
- Caporaso, James A. 1995. Research Design, Falsification, and the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide. *American Political Science Review* 89: 457-60.
- Collier, David. 1995. Translating Quantitative Methods for Qualitative Researchers: The Case of Selection Bias. *American Political Science Review* 89: 461-66.
- Rogowski, Ronald. 1995. The Role of Theory and Anomaly in Social-Scientific Inference. *American Political Science Review* 89: 467-70.
- Tarrow, Sidney. 1995. Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide in Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 89: 471-74.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1995. The Importance of Research Design in Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 89: 475-81.

September 18: Research Design in Comparative Politics

- Geddes, Barbara. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Read chapters 3-5; skim chapters 1 & 2.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. *American Political Science Review* 65: 682-93.
- Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics. *American Political Science Review* 64: 1033-53.
- Collier, David, and James E. Mahon. 1993. Conceptual "Stretching" Revisited: Adapting Categories in Comparative Analysis. *American Political Science Review* 87: 845-55.

Adcock, Robert., and David Collier. 2001. Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research. *American Political Science Review* 95: 529-46.

September 25: Political Institutions and the State

Bates, Robert. 1981. *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 1-29).

North, Douglass. 1981. *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 20-44).

March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. 1984. The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life. *American Political Science Review* 78: 734-49.

Remmer, Karen. 1997. Theoretical Decay and Theoretical Development: The Resurgence of Institutional Analysis. *World Politics* 50: 34-61.

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics. *American Political Science Review* 85: 77-96.

Riker, William H. 1980. Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions. *American Political Science Review* 74: 432-46.

Bland, Douglas. 2000. A Unified Theory of Civil-Military Relations. *Armed Forces & Society* 26: 7-26.

October 2: Politics of Economic Development

Bates, Robert H. 2001. *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*. New York: W.W. Norton. Entire book (pp. 17-115).

Gasiorowski, Mark J. 2000. Democracy and Macroeconomic Performance in Underdeveloped Countries: An Empirical Analysis. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 319-49.

Weyland, Kurt. 1998. The Political Fate of Market Reform in Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. *International Studies Quarterly* 42: 645-74.

Diamond, Jared. 1999. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W.W. Norton. Read chapters 4 & 14; skim rest of book.

October 9: Regime Change and Democratization

Deutsch, Karl W. 1961. Social Mobilization and Political Development. *American Political Science Review* 55: 493-514.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1965. Political Development and Political Decay. *World Politics* 17: 386-430.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1971. The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics. *Comparative Politics* 3: 283-322.

Lijphart, Arend. 1969. Consociational Democracy. *World Politics* 21: 207-25.

Londregan, John B., and Keith T. Poole. 1990. Poverty, the Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power. *World Politics* 42: 151-83.

Gates, Scott, Havard Hegre, Mark P. Jones, and Havard Strand. 2006. Institutional Inconsistency and Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800-2000. *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 893-908.

October 16: Political Culture and Mass Attitudes

Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 & 13 (pp. 1-44 & 337-74).

Laitin, David D. 1988. Political Culture and Political Preferences. *American Political Science Review* 82: 589-93.

Inglehart, Ronald. 1988. The Renaissance of Political Culture. *American Political Science Review* 82: 1203-30.

- Granato, James, Ronald Inglehart, and David Leblang. 1996. The Effect of Cultural Values on Economic Development: Theory, Hypotheses, and Some Empirical Tests. *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 607-31.
- Jackman, Robert W., and R. A. Miller. 1996. A Renaissance of Political Culture? *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 632-59.
- Greif, Avner. 1994. Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: A Historical and Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies. *Journal of Political Economy* 102: 912-50.
- Duch, Raymond M., and Harvey D. Palmer. 2004. It's Not Whether You Win or Lose, But How You Play the Game: Self-Interest, Social Justice, and Mass Attitudes toward Market Transition. *American Political Science Review* 98: 437-52.

October 23: Social Movements and Revolutions

- Kitschelt, Herbert P. 1986. Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest. *British Journal of Political Science* 16: 57-85.
- Norris, Pippa, Stefaan Walgrave, and Peter Van Aelst. 2005. Who Demonstrates? *Comparative Politics* 37: 189-205.
- Gurr, Ted R. 1968. A Causal Model of Civil Strife. *American Political Science Review* 62: 1104-1124.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 3-43).
- Popkin, Samuel. 1979. *The Rational Peasant*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 1-31).
- Fearon, James, and David Laitin. 1996. Explaining Interethnic Cooperation. *American Political Science Review* 90: 715-35.

October 30: Elections and Voting

- Jackman, Robert. 1987. Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 81: 405-24.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1990. The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, 1945-1985. *American Political Science Review* 84: 481-96.
- Cox, Gary W. 1999. Electoral Rules and Electoral Coordination. *American Political Science Review* 93: 145-61.
- Iversen, Torben. 1994. Political Leadership and Representation in West European Democracies: A Test of Three Models of Voting. *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 45-74.
- Powell, G. Bingham, and Guy D. Whitten. 1993. A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting: Taking Account of the Political Context. *American Journal of Political Science* 37: 391-414.
- Remmer, Karen L. 1993. The Political Economy of Elections in Latin America, 1980-1991. *American Political Science Review* 87: 393-407.
- Palmer, Harvey D., and Guy D. Whitten. 1999. The Electoral Impact of Unexpected Inflation and Economic Growth. *British Journal of Political Science* 29: 623-39.

November 6: Party Systems

- Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan. 1967. Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction. In Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, New York: Free Press, pp. 1-64.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 2000. Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 845-79.
- Amorim Neto, Octavio and Gary W. Cox. 1997. Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 149-74.

- Ordeshook, Peter, and Olga Shvetsova. 1994. Ethnic Heterogeneity, District Magnitude, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 100-23.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1988. Left-Libertarian Parties: Explaining Innovation in Competitive Party Systems. *World Politics* 40: 194-234.
- Chibber, Pradeep, and Ken Kollman. 1998. Party Aggregation and the Number of Parties in India and the United States. *American Political Science Review* 92: 329-42.
- Laver, Michael. 2005. Policy and the Dynamics of Political Competition. *American Political Science Review* 99: 263-81.

November 13: Executives, Legislatures, and Representation

- Mainwaring, Scott, and Matthew Soberg Shugart. 1997. *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Read chapters 1, 2, 4, 5 & 11 (pp. 12-109, 160-224, 394-439); skim rest of book.
- Stepan, Alfred, and Cindy Skach. 1993. Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Presidentialism versus Parliamentarism. *World Politics* 46: 1-22.
- Tsebelis, George. 1995. Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartism. *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 289-325.

November 20: Work on Research Proposals

NO CLASS.

November 27: Research Proposal Presentations

December 4: Is Comparative Politics Research Scientific?

- Blyth, Mark. 2006. Great Punctuations: Prediction, Randomness, and the Evolution of Comparative Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 100: 493-98.
- Riker, William H. 1982. The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 76: 753-66.

December 12: Answers to take-home final exam questions are due by 4:00 PM