

PSC 622: Comparative Political Behavior

Fall 2008

Tuesday 9:00-11:50 AM

502 Park Hall

Dr. Harvey D. Palmer

514 Park Hall

hpalmer@buffalo.edu

Office hours: Wednesday 10:00 – Noon, and by appointment

Course Description

The course is a graduate-level introduction to the subfield of comparative mass political behavior, which studies the role played by the mass public in politics and elections. The seminar discussions will focus on research questions relating to cross-national differences and similarities in public opinion formation, political culture and values, voting behavior, and other forms of political participation. Much of the theory of mass political behavior comes directly from or builds upon theoretical arguments in the American politics literature. Consequently, research on comparative political behavior investigates whether generalized theories of mass behavior hold across political systems, which often involves the development of theoretical explanations for cross-national heterogeneity in causal relationships associated with political institutions and context.

The analytical approach adopted in the course is strictly comparative. The seminar discussions will review research whose fundamental goal is increasing our knowledge of mass political behavior by comparing countries and their political systems. In turn, idiosyncratic factors that are specific to a particular case or country are treated as “noise” that confounds the investigation of general causal relationships rather than as novel sufficient conditions warranting special attention. Many of the course readings consider multiple countries in their empirical analyses and even the single-country studies are primarily concerned with the broader implications for mass political behavior across comparable countries rather than any country-specific result. Most of the research examines democracies (since the mass public plays a far more significant role in these systems) but the countries compared range from advanced industrial democracies in Western Europe to nascent democracies with developing economies in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

In the course schedule below, the required readings for each week are listed under the subject heading of the seminar discussion. Additional “background” readings are also listed for students who have not taken the pro-seminar in comparative politics (PSC 503) and want to review some of the seminal research to which the required readings respond. **Students are expected to come to class each week prepared to discuss the required readings.** You should complete these 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 20% of the course grade. The class discussions will be built around talking points submitted by students on the day prior to each class meeting. The talking points will count for 30% of the course grade. Students are also responsible for writing a research paper due at the end of the semester. The research paper will develop a theoretical argument relating to a topic covered in the course and then evaluate that argument with empirical evidence. My expectations regarding the sophistication of the empirical analysis will be consistent with the student’s level of methods training. First-year students can employ small-N research designs and

bivariate statistics, while more advanced students will be expected to estimate multivariate statistical models. About a month before the paper is due, students will prepare a research design and present it to the class. The research paper and research design presentations count for 40% and 10% of the course grade, respectively. Further information about the research paper will be provided later in the semester.

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 10:00 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.

Required Text:

Clarke, Harold, David Sanders, Marianne Stewart, and Paul Whiteley. 2005. *Political Choice in Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199266549 (paperback).

Recommended Text:

Dalton, Russell. 2006. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (4th edition). Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN: 1568029993 (paperback).

These texts should be available for purchase from on-line retailers.

You should be able to download the other required readings using the UB Library’s Electronic Journals archive. If you cannot find a reading, let me know ASAP.

Course Schedule and Readings

August 28: Introduction

No required reading.

Background reading:

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. *American Political Science Review* 65: 682-93.

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.

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

September 2: Nature of Mass Opinion

Zaller, John. 1991. Information, Values, and Opinion. *American Political Science Review* 85: 1215-37.

Dalton, Russell. 2000. Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 912-40.

- Converse, Philip, and Georges Dupeux. 1962. Politicization of the Electorate in France and the United States. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26: 1-23.
- Gordon, Stacy, and Gary Segura. 1997. Cross-National Variation in the Political Sophistication of Individuals. *Journal of Politics* 59: 126-47.
- Palmer, Harvey, and Raymond Duch. 2001. Do Surveys Provide Representative or Whimsical Assessments of the Economy? *Political Analysis* 9: 58-77.
- Duch, Raymond, and Harvey Palmer. 2002. Heterogeneous Perceptions of Economic Conditions in Comparative Perspective. In Han Dorussen and Michael Taylor (eds.), *Economic Voting* (New York: Routledge).

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapter 2.
- Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. 1992. A Simple Theory of the Survey Response. *American Journal of Political Science* 36: 579-616.
- Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

September 9: Culture, Values, and Tolerance

- Laitin, David. 1995. The Civic Culture at 30. *American Political Science Review* 89: 168-173.
- Eckstein, Harry. 1988. A Culturalist Theory of Political Change. *American Political Science Review* 82: 789-804.
- Muller, Edward, and Mitchell Seligson. 1994. Civic Culture and Democracy. *American Political Science Review* 88: 635-52.
- Whitefield, Stephen, and Geoffrey Evans. 1999. Political Culture versus Rational Choice: Explaining Responses to Transition in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. *British Journal of Political Science* 29: 129-54.
- Inglehart, Ronald, and Paul Abramson. 1994. Economic Security and Value Change. *American Political Science Review* 88: 336-54.
- Abramson, Paul, and Ronald Inglehart. 1992. Generational Replacement and Value Change in Eight West European Societies. *British Journal of Political Science* 22: 183-228.
- Rohrschneider, Robert. 1993. Environmental Belief Systems in Western Europe. *Comparative Political Studies* 26: 3-29.
- Peffley, Mark, and Robert Rohrschneider. 2003. Democratization and Political Tolerance in Seventeen Countries. *Political Research Quarterly* 56: 243-57.
- Gibson, James, and Amanda Gouws. 2001. Making Tolerance Judgments: The Effects of Context, Local and National. *Journal of Politics* 63: 1067-90.
- Weldon, Steven. 2006. The Institutional Context of Tolerance for Ethnic Minorities. *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 331-49.

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapters 5 & 6.
- Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 & 13 (pp. 1-44 & 337-74).
- Laitin, David, and Aaron Wildavsky. 1988. Political Culture and Political Preferences. *American Political Science Review* 82: 589-97.

September 16: Sociological Models of Voting

- Clarke, et al. 2005. *Political Choice in Britain*. Chapters 1-3.
- Converse, Philip. 2006. Researching Electoral Politics. *American Political Science Review* 100: 605-12.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1979. Religious vs. Linguistic vs. Class Voting. *American Political Science Review* 73: 442-58.

- Baker, Andy, Barry Ames, and Lucio Renno. 2006. Social Context and Campaign Volatility in New Democracies. *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 382-99.
- Iversen, Torben, and Frances Rosenbluth. 2006. The Political Economy of Gender: Explaining Cross-National Variation in the Gender Division of Labor and the Gender Voting Gap. *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 1-19.
- Nieuwbeerta, Paul, and Wout Ultee. 2003. Class Voting in Western Industrialized Countries, 1945-1990. *European Journal of Political Research* 35: 123-60.
- Posner, Daniel. 2007. Regime Change and Ethnic Cleavages in Africa. *Comparative Political Studies* 40: 1302-27.
- Whitten, Guy, and Harvey Palmer. 1996. Heightening Comparativists' Concern for Model Choice: Voting Behavior in Great Britain and the Netherlands. *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 231-60.

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapters 7 & 8.
- 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.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1987. Networks in Context: The Social Flow of Political Information. *American Political Science Review* 81: 1197-1216.

September 23: Parties, Candidates, and Issues

- Clarke, et al. 2005. *Political Choice in Britain*. Chapters 4-6.
- Converse, Philip. 1969. Of Time and Partisan Stability. *Comparative Political Studies* 2: 139-71.
- Richardson, Bradley. 1991. European Party Loyalties Revisited. *American Political Science Review* 85: 751-75.
- Huber, John, Georgia Kernell, and Eduardo Leoni. 2003. Institutional Context, Cognitive Resources, and Party Attachments across Democracies. *Political Analysis* 13: 365-86.
- Weyland, Kurt. 1999. Neopopulism in Latin America and Eastern Europe. *Comparative Politics* 31: 379-401.
- Rohrshneider, Robert. 1993. New Party versus Old Left Realignments. *Journal of Politics* 55: 682-701.
- Rabinowitz, George, and Stuart Elaine Macdonald. 1989. A Directional Theory of Issue Voting. *American Political Science Review* 83: 93-121.
- Westholm, Anders. 1997. Distance versus Direction: The Illusory Defeat of the Proximity Theory of Electoral Choice. *American Political Science Review* 91: 865-84.
- Blais, Andre, Richard Nadeau, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte. 2001. The Formation of Party Preferences: Testing the Proximity and Directional Models. *European Journal of Political Research* 40: 81-91.

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapters 9 & 10.
- Achen, Christopher. 1992. Social Psychology, Demographic Variables, and Linear Regression: Breaking the Iron Triangle in Voting Research. *Political Behavior* 14: 195-211.
- Franklin, Charles, and John Jackson. 1983. The Dynamics of Party Identification. *American Political Science Review* 77: 957-73.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Chapters 1-4.

September 30: Rosh Hashanah

NO CLASS.

October 7: Government Performance and Economic Voting

- 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.
- Sanders, David, David Marsh, and Hugh Ward. 1993. The Electoral Impact of Press Coverage of the British Economy, 1979-87. *British Journal of Political Science* 23: 175-210.
- Stevenson, Randolph, and Lynn Vavreck. 2000. Does Campaign Length Matter? Testing for Cross-National Effects. *British Journal of Political Science* 30: 217-35.
- Duch, Raymond. 2001. A Developmental Model of Heterogeneous Economic Voting in New Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 98: 895-910.
- Duch, Raymond, and Randy Stevenson. 2005. Context and the Economic Vote. *Political Analysis* 13: 387-409.
- Remmer, Karen L. 1991. The Political Impact of Economic Crisis in Latin America in the 1980s. *American Political Science Review* 85: 777-800.
- Pacek, Alexander, and Benjamin Radcliff. 1995. The Political Economy of Competitive Elections in the Developing World. *American Journal of Political Science* 39: 745-59.
- 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.
- Palmer, Harvey D., and Guy D. Whitten. 2000. Government Competence, Economic Performance and Endogenous Election Dates. *Electoral Studies* 19: 413-26.
- Tavits, Margit. 2007. Clarity of Responsibility and Corruption. *American Journal of Political Science* 51: 218-29.

Background reading:

- Kramer, Gerald. 1971. Short-Term Fluctuations in U.S. Voting Behavior, 1896-1964. *American Political Science Review* 65: 131-43.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael. 1986. Comparative Economic Voting. *American Journal of Political Science* 30: 315-46.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael, and Mary Stegmaier. 2000. Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes. *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 183-219.

October 14: Strategic Voting

- Niemi, Richard, Guy Whitten, and Mark Franklin. 1992. Constituency Characteristics, Individual Characteristics and Tactical Voting in the 1987 British General Election. *British Journal of Political Science* 22: 229-40.
- Franklin, Mark, Richard Niemi, and Guy Whitten. 1994. The Two Faces of Tactical Voting. *British Journal of Political Science* 24: 549-57.
- Belanger, Eric. 2004. Anti-Partyism and Third-Party Vote Choice: A Comparison of Canada, Britain, and Australia. *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 1054-78.
- Blais, Andre, Robert Young, and Martin Turcotte. 2005. Direct or Indirect? Assessing Two Approaches to the Measurement of Strategic Voting. *Electoral Studies* 24: 163-76.
- Gschwend, Thomas. 2007. Ticket-Splitting and Strategic Voting Under Mixed Electoral Rules. *European Journal of Political Research* 46: 1-23.
- Duch, Raymond, and Harvey Palmer. 2002. Strategic Voting in Post-Communist Democracy? *British Journal of Political Science* 32: 63-91.
- Meirowitz, Adam, and Joshua A. Tucker. 2007. Run Boris Run: Strategic Voting and Information Transmission in Sequential Elections. *Journal of Politics* 69: 88-99.
- Carrubba, Cliff, and Richard Timpono. 2005. Explaining Vote Switching Across First- and Second-Order Elections. *Comparative Political Studies* 38: 260-81.

Background reading:

- Cox, Gary W. 1999. Electoral Rules and Electoral Coordination. *American Political Science Review* 93: 145-61.
- Cain, Bruce E. 1978. Strategic Voting in Britain. *American Journal of Political Science* 22: 639-55.

October 21: Support for Democracy

- Gibson, James, Raymond Duch, and Kent Tedin. 1992. Democratic Values and the Transformation of the Soviet Union. *Journal of Politics* 54: 329-71.
- Seligson, Mitchell, and John Booth. 1993. Political Culture and Regime Type. *Journal of Politics* 55: 777-92.
- Evans, Geoffrey, and Stephen Whitefield. 1995. The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies. *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 485-514.
- Gibson, James L. 1996. A Mile Wide But an Inch Deep(?): The Structure of Democratic Commitments in the Former USSR. *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 396-420.
- Mishler, William, and Richard Rose. 1997. Trust, Distrust and Skepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Societies. *Journal of Politics* 59: 418-51.
- Bratton, Michael, and Robert Mattes. 2001. Support for Democracy in Africa: Intrinsic or Instrumental? *British Journal of Political Science* 31: 447-74.
- Anderson, Christopher J., and Christine A. Guillory. 1997. Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy. *American Political Science Review* 91: 66-81.
- Anderson, Christopher J., and Yuliya V. Tverdova. 2003. Corruption, Political Allegiances, and Attitudes Toward Government in Contemporary Democracies. *American Journal of Political Science* 47: 91-109.
- Espinal, Rosario, Jonathan Hartlyn, and Jana Morgan Kelly. 2006. Performance Still Matters: Explaining Trust in Government in the Dominican Republic. *Comparative Political Studies* 39: 200-23.

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapter 12.
- Muller, Edward N., Thomas O. Jukam, and Mitchell A. Seligson. 1982. Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior. *American Journal of Political Science* 26: 240-64.

October 28: Support for European Union

- Gabel, Matthew, and Harvey Palmer. 1995. Understanding Variation in Public Support for European Integration. *European Journal of Political Research* 27: 3-19.
- Gabel, Matthew. 1998a. Public Support for European Integration. *Journal of Politics* 60: 333-64.
- McLaren, Lauren M. 2002. Public Support for the European Union: Cost/Benefit Analysis or Perceived Cultural Threat? *Journal of Politics* 64: 551-66.
- Rohrschneider, Robert. 2002. The Democracy Deficit and Mass Support for an EU-wide Government. *American Journal of Political Science* 46: 462-75.
- Tucker, Joshua, Alexander Pacek, and Adam Berinsky. 2002. Transitional Winners and Losers: Attitudes toward EU Membership in Post-Communist Countries. *American Journal of Political Science* 46: 557-71.
- Tverdova, Yuliya, and Christopher Anderson. 2004. Choosing the West? Referendum Choices on EU Membership in East-Central Europe. *Electoral Studies* 23: 185-208.
- Ray, Leonard. 2003a. When Parties Matter: The Conditional Influence of Party Positions on Voter Opinions about European Integration. *Journal of Politics* 65: 978-94.
- Gabel, Matthew, and Kenneth Scheve. 2007. Estimating the Effect of Elite Communication on Public Opinion Using Instrumental Variables. *American Journal of Political Science* 51: 1013-28.

November 4: Voter Turnout

- Clarke, et al. 2005. *Political Choice in Britain*. Chapters 7 & 8.
- Powell, G. Bingham, Jr. 1986. American Voting Turnout in Comparative Perspective. *American Political Science Review* 80: 17-43.
- Jackman, Robert. 1987. Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 81: 405-24.
- Aldrich, John H. 1993. Rational Choice and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science* 37: 246-78.
- Niemi, Richard, and Joel Barkan. 1987. Age and Turnout in New Electorates and Peasant Societies. *American Political Science Review* 81: 583-88.
- Gray, Mark, and Miki Caul. 2000. Declining Voter Turnout in Advanced Industrialized Democracies, 1950-97. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 1091-122.
- Fornos, Carolina A., Timothy J. Power, and James C. Garand. 2004. Explaining Voter Turnout in Latin America, 1980 to 2000. *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 909-40.
- Pacek, Alexander, and Benjamin Radcliff. 1995. Turnout and the Vote for Left-of-Centre Parties. *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 137-43.
- Aguilar, Edwin, and Alexander Pacek. 2000. Macroeconomic Conditions, Voter Turnout, and the Working-class/Economically Disadvantaged Party Vote in Developing Countries. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 995-1017.

Background reading:

- Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapter 3.
- Rosenstone, Steven J., and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan.

November 11: Research Design Presentations

November 18: Social Capital and Non-Electoral Participation

- Finkel, Steven E. 1987. The Effects of Participation on Political Efficacy and Political Support: Evidence from a West German Panel. *Journal of Politics* 49: 441-64.
- Jennings, M. Kent. 1997. Political Participation in the Chinese Countryside. *American Political Science Review* 91: 361-72.
- Booth, John, and Patricia Bayer Richards. 1998. Civil Society, Political Capital, and Democratization in Central America. *Journal of Politics* 60: 780-800.
- McDonough, Peter, Doh C. Shin, and Jose Alvaro Moises. 1998. Democratization and Participation: Comparing Spain, Brazil, Korea. *Journal of Politics* 60: 919-53.
- Seligson, Amber L. 1999. Civic Association and Democratic Participation in Central America: A Test of the Putnam Thesis. *Comparative Political Studies* 32: 342-62.
- Bratton, Michael. 1999. Political Participation in a New Democracy: Institutional Consideration from Zambia. *Comparative Political Studies* 32: 549-88.
- Gibson, James L. 2001. Social Networks, Civil Society, and the Prospects for Consolidating Russia's Democratic Transition. *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 51-68.
- Finkel, Steven E. 2002. Civic Education and the Mobilization of Participation in Developing Democracies. *Journal of Politics* 64: 994-1020.

Background reading:

- Brady, Henry, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation. *American Political Science Review* 89: 271-94.
- Brehm, John, and Wendy Rahn. 1997. Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital. *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 999-1023.

Putnam, Robert. 2001. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

November 25: Work on research papers

NO CLASS (enjoy Thanksgiving).

December 2: Political Protest

Muller, Edward N., and Mitchell A. Seligson. 1987. Inequality and Insurgency. *American Political Science Review* 81: 425-51.

Klosko, George, Edward Muller, and Karl Dieter Opp. 1987. Rebellious Collective Action Revisited. *American Political Science Review* 81: 557-64.

Muller, Edward N., Henry A. Dietz, and Steven E. Finkel. 1991. Discontent and the Expected Utility of Rebellion. *American Political Science Review* 85: 1261-82.

Gibson, James L. 1997. Mass Opposition to the Soviet Putsch of August 1991: Collective Action, Rational Choice, and Democratic Values in the Former Soviet Union. *American Political Science Review* 86: 338-56.

Finkel, Steven E., and Edward N. Muller. 1998. Rational Choice and the Dynamics of Collective Political Action. *American Political Science Review* 92: 37-50.

Benson, Michelle, and Thomas Rochon. 2004. Interpersonal Trust and the Magnitude of Protest. *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 435-57.

Sorens, Jason. 2005. The Cross-Sectional Determinants of Secessionism in Advanced Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies* 38: 304-26.

Background reading:

Dalton. 2005. *Citizen Politics*. Chapter 4.

Norris, Pippa, Stefaan Walgrave, and Peter Van Aelst. 2005. Who Demonstrates? *Comparative Politics* 37: 189-205.

Popkin, Samuel. 1979. *The Rational Peasant*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1.

December 10: Research papers are due by 4:00 PM