

PSC 503: Comparative Politics

Spring 2017

Park 502: Thursday 12:15-3:05 PM

Dr. Harvey D. Palmer

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Office hours: By appointment only (email me to schedule a time)

Times when I am most likely to be in my office and available to talk: Tuesday 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM and
Wednesday Noon-2:00 PM

Course Description

This course is a graduate-level introduction to (pro-seminar in) comparative politics. As the core seminar in the field of comparative politics, this course is designed to expose 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 involving competing theories and alternative comparative techniques will be examined.

The course begins by introducing some core theoretical concepts in comparative politics, which highlight 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 prominent subfield topics in comparative politics, so by the end of the course, you should have a solid understanding of the major theories and methods in comparative politics, comprehend how scholars have employed them in 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.

Attendance and participation in class discussions will count for 15% of the student's final course grade. Writing assignments and in-class presentations will constitute the remainder of their 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" (20% or 2% each) submitted by students on the day prior to each class meeting with assigned readings. During the semester, students will also prepare annotations for an assigned set of additional readings (14%) and work in teams to complete a case-study project (15%). In the second half of the semester, each student will complete an independent research project with the final product being a paper that considers a research question relating (at least indirectly) to the literature covered in the course (36%). As part of this assignment, students will have to present a research proposal to the class.

Participation: Students are expected to come to class each week prepared to actively 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. **I will rarely lecture, so the class meetings will be run as seminars where the students are expected to actively participate in the discussion.** If

students do not participate voluntarily, I will be forced to call on them in class to summarize and comment on the required readings for the week.

Weekly talking points: After the first week, each student will be required to submit **TWO** “talking points” on each week’s readings. These are due by email (hpalmer@buffalo.edu) by **Noon on the Wednesday prior to the class session in which the readings are assigned**. The talking points should discuss three questions or arguments in the week’s readings that the student believes are particularly interesting. They should be written in the form of a short paragraph summarizing the question or argument. The best talking points will also provide a constructive reaction, typically based on a methodological or theoretical critique, extension, or adaptation.

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 cite a different chapter or article from the weekly readings (even though comparisons among readings are encouraged). Talking points should be written clearly but concisely. The length of each talking point should not exceed 150 words. There are 10 talking point assignments; each will be graded from 1-11 so that the total score for the semester will include 10 extra credit points (which is analogous to dropping one assignment). **Talking points that arrive after the class session will not be accepted; those that arrive late but before the session will be penalized one point (out of 11).**

MSSD project: Students will work in teams of 2 (or 3) to conduct a case study investigating a bivariate relationship using a simple “most similar systems” design (MSSD). Student teams will first identify 6-10 countries with political systems that are similar in their political institutions and level of development but different with respect to their assigned explanatory variable. Student teams will then select a dependent (outcome) variable that can be measured at the national level in order to investigate whether this variable differs as expected across their 6-10 cases in a systematic manner consistent with their explanatory variable having a causal effect. This assignment will be coordinated and further explained in the first session and developed over the subsequent sessions with student teams discussing their progress and receiving feedback in class. The project submission **due on March 13th by 5 PM** will be a 3-5 page report justifying the case selection as MSSD, describing how the cases differ on the assigned explanatory variable, and summarizing the collected evidence (or lack thereof) of a bivariate relationship between this explanatory variable and the team’s selected dependent variable. Use of tables and figures is encouraged.

Additional reading summary: Each student will summarize a set of additional @ readings from a particular week that is assigned to them – see the *Schedule of Course Readings and Assignments* section below for the assignment options. A separate annotation should be prepared for each article or book chapter. Each annotation should be 300-600 words in length, identifying the literature to which the research contributes and summarizing: 1) the key theoretical arguments; 2) the modeling strategy or research design employed; and 3) the most important finding(s). Readings will be assigned to students during the first two class sessions. **Students are required to email their @reading summary to their fellow students and me by 5 PM on the day before class (Wednesday) and will be expected to discuss those readings in class.**

Independent Study Project: Each student will complete an independent research project consisting of three components that will be graded: 1) written submission of three research questions; 2) 8-12 minute class presentation of their research proposal; and 3) a research paper. Expectations for each of these components are explained in more detail below. The research questions will count for 4% of your final grade, while the research proposal presentation will constitute 12% and the final paper 20%.

Research questions: Each student will submit three research questions by Noon on March 20th. The research questions should address a topic that the student is interested in investigating for their research

paper. Taking into account my comments, the student will select one of these questions as the basis for their paper, informing me of this decision in an email by April 6th.

Research proposal presentation: Each student will present a proposal for their research paper to the class. These presentations will be scheduled on April 20th (and April 21st given the size of the class). The proposal should outline the research to be conducted for the final paper. More specifically, it should state the central research question, how your proposed research will address this question, the hypotheses posited to be investigated in your analysis, and the design of your analysis (e.g., what cases you intend to compare, how will you measure your dependent variable and key explanatory variables). This presentation should be 8-12 minutes long. PowerPoint presentations are allowed but need to be emailed to me the day before the presentation. All students are expected to submit a 1-2 page summary of their proposal and are encouraged to use this as a visual aid during their presentation.

Final paper: Each student will write a research paper focusing on an original scientific question relating (at least indirectly) to the comparative politics literature covered in the course. The paper should be 20-26 pages in length. Most of the paper (2/3rds to 3/4ths) should be a research design that focuses on the theory and provides a conceptual discussion that informs the (proposed) empirical analysis. It should clearly explain the original theoretical argument made and explicitly posit the key testable hypotheses derived from this theory. The research design should also discuss the theoretical motivation for the proposed research, citing the relevant literature to which the research seeks to contribute. The remainder of the paper will present an empirical investigation of the key testable hypotheses. This section should define (as explicitly as possible) the dependent variable(s) and central explanatory variables that are (or would be) employed in the empirical investigation. My expectations for this investigation will depend on the student's status in the graduate program. MA and first-year PhD students are expected to present at least a bivariate statistical analysis and then discuss possible extensions that would employ more sophisticated methods. More senior PhD students will be expected to conduct a statistical analysis that is comparable to what is expected in published research (and a dissertation).

Late work: Students are strongly encouraged to submit coursework on time. No overdue work will be accepted for the weekly talking points. Late work for the other written assignments other than the final paper will be accepted until May 15th. Late work for the final paper will result in an Incomplete grade being assigned for the course. The terms/plan for resolving this Incomplete must be discussed with me by June 1st or it will be converted to an "F" grade.

Course Assessment

The required coursework is designed to measure each student's progress in achieving the learning outcomes for this course. I will evaluate course assignments by assigning a numeric grade as well as providing written and oral feedback. Numeric grades will be translated into letter grades for students so that they can accurately gauge their performance during the semester. Grades in the "A" to "C-" range indicate achievement of the learning outcome targeted by the coursework while grades in the "D+" to "F" range indicate failure to meet the expectations of that outcome. The table below presents the course learning outcomes and what coursework assesses their achievement.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Measure(s)
Be able to describe the field of comparative politics and understand its major theoretical and methodological debates	Weekly talking points, additional reading summary
Be able to define key concepts in comparative politics	Participation, weekly talking points, MSSD project

Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical and empirical analyses of political phenomena	Participation, weekly talking points
Demonstrate the ability to apply conceptual frameworks developed by comparative politics to new areas of analysis	Weekly talking points, MSSD project, final paper
Be able to effectively communicate ideas and arguments orally and in writing	Participation, weekly talking points, class presentations, final paper
Design comparative research connecting dependent and independent variables and outline a research strategy	Final paper

Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is using someone else's words, ideas, or writing without proper citation such that the reader perceives it as your own. Students should familiarize themselves with the UB Graduate School's policies on academic integrity available at: <http://grad.buffalo.edu/Academics/Policies-Procedures/Academic-Integrity.html>.

Special Needs

Students with special needs should bring this to my attention (as well as to that of the Office of Disability Services in 25 Capen Hall) in the **first** week of classes. I will make every effort to accommodate the special needs of such students. Students dealing with stress-related problems should visit the Counseling Center, 120 Richmond Quad.

Course Readings

I will (eventually) post all of the required readings on the UBLearns site for this course. Most of these readings are from journal articles and hence can be downloaded using the UB Library's Electronic Journals archive. **As noted above, the readings preceded by the "act sign" @ are additional (recommended) readings.**

Two of the more lengthy readings are taken from the following two books:
 Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
 King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

These books are recommended for PhD students who plan to take the comprehensive exam in Comparative Politics (and strongly recommended for those who also intend to seek an academic career). You should be able to purchase these books from on-line retailers. I did not place an order at the campus bookstore but can if necessary.

Schedule of Course Readings and Assignments

February 2: Introduction/Organizational Meeting

February 8: Talking points for 2/9 due by Noon

February 9: Theoretical Foundations

- 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.
- 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.
- Kohli, Atul, Peter Evans, Peter J. Katzenstein, Adam Przeworski, Suzanne Hoeber Rudolph, James C. Scott, and Theda Skocpol. 1995. The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium. *World Politics* 49: 1-49.
- Blyth, Mark. 2006. Great Punctuations: Prediction, Randomness, and the Evolution of Comparative Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 100: 493-98.

February 15: Talking points for 2/16 due by Noon; @reading summary due by 5:00 PM

February 16: 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.
- Stepan, Alfred, and Cindy Skach. 1993. Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Presidentialism versus Parliamentarism. *World Politics* 46: 1-22.

Annotate1: _____

- @Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics. *American Political Science Review* 85: 77-96.
- @Remmer, Karen. 1997. Theoretical Decay and Theoretical Development: The Resurgence of Institutional Analysis. *World Politics* 50: 34-61.

February 23: NO CLASS – work on your MSSD projects

March 1: Talking points for 3/2 due by Noon; @reading summary due by 5:00 PM

March 2: 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 University Press. Chapters 1-3 [skim Chapter 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.

Annotate2: _____

@King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 4 & 5.

March 8: Talking points for 3/9 due by Noon; @reading summaries due by 5:00 PM

March 9: Research Design in Comparative Politics

Geddes, Barbara. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press, chapters 1 & 2.

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

Lieberman, Evan S. 2005. Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research. *American Political Science Review* 99: 435-52.

de Rooij, Eline, Donald Green, and Alan Gerber. Field Experiments on Political Behavior and Collective Action. *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 389-95.

Annotate3: _____

@Geddes, Barbara. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press, chapters 3 & 4.

Annotate4: _____

@Geddes, Barbara. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press, chapter 5.

@Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics. *American Political Science Review* 64: 1033-53.

Annotate5: _____

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

@Rohlfing, Ingo. 2008. What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research. *World Politics* 41: 1492-1514.

March 13: MSSD Project is due by 5:00 PM

March 15: Talking points for 3/16 due by Noon; @reading summary due by 5:00 PM

March 16: Political Culture and Mass Values

Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 & 13 (pp. 1-44 & 377-401).

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

Rodrik, Dani. 2000. Participatory Politics, Social Cooperation, and Economic Stability. *American Economic Review* 90(2): 140-4.

Boix, Carles, and Daniel N. Posner. 1998. Social Capital: Explaining its Origins and Effects on Government Performance. *British Journal of Political Science* 28(4): 686-93.

Annotate6: _____

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

@Jackman, Robert W., and R. A. Miller. 1996. A Renaissance of Political Culture? *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 632-59.

Annotate7: _____

@Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. What Is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter? *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 397-424.

@Huber, John. 2012. Measuring ethnic voting: Do proportional electoral laws politicize ethnicity? *American Journal of Political Science* 56(4): 986-100.

March 20: Research questions for final paper are due by Noon

March 23: NO CLASS -- Spring Break

March 29: Talking points for 3/30 due by Noon; @reading summaries due by 5:00 PM

March 30: Democratization

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

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

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1994. The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited. *American Sociological Review* 59: 1-22.

Przeworski, Adam, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. 1996. What Makes Democracies Endure? *Journal of Democracy* 7(1): 39-55.

Annotate8: _____

@Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review* 53: 69-105.

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

Annotate9: _____

@Doucouliagos, Hristos, and Mehmet Ali Ulubasoglu. 2008. Democracy and Economic Growth: A Meta-Analysis. *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 61-83.

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

April 6: NO CLASS – work on your research proposal presentations

April 12: Talking points for 4/13 due by Noon; @reading summary due by 5:00 PM

April 13: Politics of Economic Development

Rodrik, Dani. 2000. Institutions for High-Quality Growth: What They Are and How to Acquire Them. *Studies of Comparative International Development* 35(3): 3-31.

Ross, Michael L. 2001. Does Oil Hinder Democracy? *World Politics* 53(3): 325-61.

Bates, Robert H. 2000. Ethnicity and Development in Africa: A Reappraisal. *American Economic Review* 90(2): 131-4.

Acemoglu, Daron, James Robinson, and Simon Johnson. 2001. The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation. *American Economic Review* 91.

Annotate10: _____

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

@Alesina, Alberto, and Dani Rodrik. 1994. Distributive Politics and Economic Growth. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 109: 465-90.

Annotate11: _____

@Ross, Michael L. 2004. How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? *International Organization* 58(1): 35-67.

@Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. 2003. Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review* 97: 75-90.

Annotate12: _____

@Diamond, Jared. 1999. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapters 4 & 14.

April 20: Research Proposal Presentations

April 21 at 3:00 PM: Research Proposal Presentations

April 26: Talking points for 4/27 due by Noon; @reading summary due by 5:00 PM

April 27: 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.

Przeworski, Adam, and Michael Wallerstein. 1982. The Structure of Class Conflict in Democratic Capitalist Societies. *American Political Science Review* 76(2): 215-38.

Boix, Carles. 1999. Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 93(3): 609-24.

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.

Williams, Laron K., and Guy D. Whitten. 2014. Don't Stand So Close to Me: Spatial Contagion Effects and Party Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*.

Annotate13: _____

@Ordeshook, Peter, and Olga Shvetsova. 1994. Ethnic Heterogeneity, District Magnitude, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 100-23.

@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.

Annotate14: _____

@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.

@Gabel, Matthew, and John Huber. 2000. Putting Parties in Their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data. *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 94-103.

May 3: Talking points for 5/4 due by Noon; @reading summaries due by 5:00 PM

May 4: 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.
- Williams, Laron K. 2011. Unsuccessful Success? Failed No-Confidence Motions, Competence Signals, and Electoral Support. *Comparative Political Studies* 44: 1474-99.
- Rogowski, Ronald, and Mark Andreas Kayser. 2002. Majoritarian Electoral Systems and Consumer Power: Price-Level Evidence from the OECD Countries. *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 526-39

Annotate15: _____

- @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.
- @Palmer, Harvey D., and Guy D. Whitten. 2000. Government Competence, Economic Performance and Endogenous Election Dates. *Electoral Studies* 19: 413-26.

Annotate16: _____

- @Tavits, Margit, and Taavi Annus. 2006. Learning to Make Votes Count: The Role of Democratic Experience. *Electoral Studies* 25: 72-90.
- @Gasiorowski, Mark J. 2000. Democracy and Macroeconomic Performance in Underdeveloped Countries: An Empirical Analysis. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 319-49.

May 10: Talking points for 5/11 due by Noon; @reading summaries due by 5:00 PM

May 11: Representation

- Tsebelis, George. 1995. Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism. *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 289-325.
- Riker, William H. 1980. Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions. *American Political Science Review* 74: 432-46.
- Whitten, Guy D., and Laron K. Williams. 2011. Buttery Guns and Welfare Hawks: The Politics of Defense Spending in Advanced Industrial Democracies. *American Journal of Political Science* 55: 117-34.
- Lijphart, Arend, and Markus Crepaz. 1991. Corporatism and Consensus Democracy in Eighteen Countries: Conceptual and Empirical Linkages. *British Journal of Political Science* 21: 235-46.
- Mueller, Dennis, and Peter Murrell. 1986. Interest Groups and the Size of Government. *Public Choice* 48: 125-45.

Annotate17: _____

- @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.

Annotate18: _____

- @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.
- @Iversen, Torben, and Francis Rosenbluth. 2008. Work and Power: The Connection between Female Labor Force Participation and Female Representation. *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 479-95.

May 18: Final paper is due by 5:00 PM