POLI 7970: Seminar in Comparative Politics

Instructor: Dr. Leonard Ray
Office: 215 Stubbs Hall
Time: 1:00 – 3:50 PM, Tuesday
Office Hours: 9:30-12 T, W
Room: 210 Stubbs Hall
Phone: 578-3244
E-mail: lray2@lsu.edu

The course is designed to provide graduate students with a broad overview of the field of comparative politics. We will begin with two weeks of readings which focus on the field of comparative politics and its relationship to the broader discipline. The remainder of the readings will present seminal works and examples of the diverse theoretical and empirical approaches which have been employed in this field. While the reading list for the course is long, it is only a sample of the voluminous literature on this topic, and students are encouraged to use these readings as the starting point for their own exploration of the literature.

LSU divides up Comparative Politics according to the expertise of our faculty who offer graduate courses on Comparative Institutions, Comparative Political Economy, Comparative Political Behavior, and State and Society. I will try not to overlap too much with these courses, and focus instead on as broad a survey of the field as possible. Some important works are omitted from this list because you will be required to read them in the other graduate seminars.

Requirements:

The course is a seminar, and students are expected to do all required readings before class, and to come to class prepared to discuss these readings. It is helpful if students write brief summaries of all the readings assigned each week. In order to facilitate discussion, students are required to post one discussion question about each required reading on the course moodle site by midnight on the Monday before class. They are also required to read 2 of the recommended readings, and make an oral presentation to the class about that reading and its relationship to the readings required for that week. Two short writing assignments will require students to synthesize material presented in the class and to analyze patterns in the evolution of the literature. There will also be a take home final exam. Grades will be based on these requirements according to the following formula:

Discussion Questions posted on Moodle: 15 % total
Presentations of Required Readings: 20% total (10% each)
Short papers: 40% total (20% percent each)
Final exam: 25%

Short Paper 1 Due Feb 26

Select a recent article on Comparative Politics that uses a qualitative research design. Discuss the article in terms of the theoretical approach and the methodology employed. Be sure to accurately describe the article, and then offer a critical assessment of the argument and evidence. (Critical meaning a thoughtful evaluation, not necessarily a negative one.)
Short Paper 2 Due April 10

Citation exercise

1. Read a recent article in comparative politics (since 2005). Summarize the author(s) theoretical argument. Examine the citations in the article, and identify four older works by other authors which are cited as sources for this paper's theoretical argument. Read those works and discuss whether each of them actually support the theoretical argument of your selected article.

Or

2. Select a classic work in comparative politics (pre 2000). Summarize the author(s) theoretical argument.

Identify four recent articles (since 2005) which cite this classic, and discuss how the original argument is used in the newer article.

Required Texts:


Comparative politics: Rationality, culture, and structure (Cambridge 2009): 0521712343


Benedict Anderson Imagined Communities Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (Verso 2006) 1844670864
Reading Schedule

Jan 15. Week 1. Introduction

Jan 22 Week 2. History and Scope of Comparative Politics, the nature of the enterprise

Required:


Dankwart A. Rustow "New Horizons for Comparative Politics “ World Politics, Vol. 9, No. 4. (Jul., 1957), pp. 530-549 (JSTOR)

Munck, Gerardo and Richard Snyder 2007 “Debating the Direction of Comparative Politics” in Comparative Political Studies 40:1 5-31


Almond (1977) Clouds Clocks and the Study of Politics


Recommended:


Jan 29 Week 3. Methodology in Comparative Politics


Mahoney process tracing


Steenbergen and Jones MODELING MULTILEVEL DATA STRUCTURES 1997

Recommended

James Mahoney Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics

James Mahony, COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL METHODOLOGY

http://www.jamesmahoney.org/articles/Comparative-Historical%20Methodology.pdf

Collier understanding process tracing 2011


Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis Carsten Q. Schneider, Central European University, Budapest, Claudius Wagemann, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-
Feb 5 Week 4. Paradigms, Concepts and Theory in Comparative Politics

Required:


Recommended:

George Tsebelis, Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), chs. 1, 2.


Feb 12 Mardi Gras Holiday

Feb 19 Week 4. Identities and Groups
Benedict Anderson Imagined Communities Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism Verso 1983


Narrativity, Narrative Identity, and Social Action: Rethinking English Working-Class Formation Margaret R. Somers Social Science History Vol. 16, No. 4 (Winter, 1992), pp. 591-630

Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin

Feb 26 Week 5: The State and State Formation


Understanding the Regulatory State Michael Moran
British Journal of Political Science Vol. 32, No. 2 (Apr., 2002), pp. 391-413

Recommended:
March 5  Week 6. State Autonomy

Required:

Krasner Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics Comparative Politics Vol. 16, No. 2 (Jan., 1984), pp. 223-246


Sockpol “Bringing the State Back In ” in Bringing The State Back In


Recommended:


Adam Przeworski Capitalism and Social Democracy Cambridge University Press 1985


March 12  Week 7. Classifying Political Systems I (Democracies)

Required:

Aristotle The Politics Excerpt on moodle

Comparative Political Systems  Gabriel A. Almond  The Journal of Politics Vol. 18, No. 3 (Aug., 1956) (pp. 391-409)


Recommended:
March 19 Week 8. Classifying (non-Democratic) Political Systems

Required:

Zbigniew Brzezinski “Totalitarianism and Rationality” The American Political Science Review, Vol. 50, No. 3. (Sep., 1956), pp. 751-763. (Parts I and II.) (JSTOR)


Classifying political regimes
by: Mike Alvarez, JosÃ© Cheibub, Fernando Limongi, Adam Przeworski

Thinking About Hybrid Regimes
Larry Jay Diamond
From: Journal of Democracy
Volume 13, Number 2, April 2002


Recommended:

Dangers and Dilemmas of Democracy
Philippe C. Schmitter
From: Journal of Democracy
Volume 5, Number 2, April 1994
pp. 57-74 | 10.1353/jod.1994.0036

March 26 Week 9. Emergence, maintenance, and breakdown of Democracy
Robert Bates and Da-Hsiang Donald Lien "A Note on Taxation, Development, and Representative Government" Politics and Society

http://www8.georgetown.edu_centers/cdacs/bernhardpaper.pdf


Barbara Geddes


Recommended:


Seymour Martin Lipset Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics Doubleday 1960 (Chapters 1-3)

April 2 Spring Break
April 9 Week 10. Development, Modernization and Political Culture
Modernization and Comparative Politics: Prospects in Research and Theory
Dankwart A. Rustow


Recommended:


April 16 Week 11 Institutions and Institutional Explanation

Required:

Kathleen Thelen HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 1999. 2:369.404 Copyright © 1999 by Annual Reviews. All rights reserved


Paul Pierson. "The Path to European Integration: A Historical Institutionalist Analysis” Comparative Political Studies 29 (2) 123-164.

Recommended:


April 23 Week 12. International and National Political Economy approaches


J. A. Hobson Imperialism Chapter 6


Recommended:

Paul Kennedy 1987 The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 Vintage


Mancur Olson 1982 The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities
Yale

Peter A. Hall, "The Political Economy of Europe in an Era of Interdependence," in Kitschelt, et. al. (eds.),
Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism, pp. 135-163.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto Dependency and Development in Latin America University

Ronald Rogowski, Commerce and Coalitions

University Press.

April 30 Week 13. Social-Structural Explanations
Ira Katznelson chapter in Comparative Politics

Theda Skocpol, "Explaining Revolutions: In Quest of a Social-Structural Approach," in Lewis A. Coser and
in Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, ch. 4.

Gosta Esping-Andersen, "Politics Without Class? Postindustrial Cleavages in Europe and America," in
Herbert Kitschelt, et. al. (eds.), Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1999), pp. 293-316.

The political recrafting of social bases of party competition: Chile, 1973-95
M Torcal, S Mainwaring - British Journal of Political Science, 2003 - Cambridge Univ Press

Recommended:

Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments”


Ronald Chilcote, Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, 2nd Edition