Government 6353
Field Seminar in Comparative Politics
Fall 2017
Wednesdays, 2:00pm - 4:25pm
Goldwin Smith Hall 348

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This seminar is an overview of the field of comparative politics targeting Ph.D. students in the Government department. This course introduces students to classic works as well as recent contributions that build upon those works. Readings draw from leading theoretical approaches—including structural, institutional, rational choice, and cultural perspectives—and cover a broad range of substantive topics, such as regime types, democratization, states and civil society, political economy, violence, participation, and representation. Students from other programs may register only with the permission of the instructor. There are no prerequisites for the course.

The reading load for this course varies by week, but averages six to seven articles/chapters or approximately three hundred pages per week. Assigned readings are marked with an asterisk (*). Students are expected to complete all of the required readings before each class.

I have listed additional background reading to identify important works that we will not be able to cover during our course. These lists for each week are long. You will certainly not be able to complete them all, and you should not try. However, you should consider the syllabus as a whole to reflect a broad survey of some of the major questions and topics in the field of comparative politics. It is still incomplete, in ways that we will discuss at length in class. But a student interested in pursuing research on, say, the state, or political identity, or the political economy of advanced industrial democracies, should expect to be familiar with the basic concepts, debates, and approaches found in the recommended readings sections for that particular week.

The following books are available for purchase at the Cornell bookstore. Copies are also available at the Olin Library reserve desk.


Remaining readings are drawn from a mix of books and journal articles. The assigned readings are available online at the Blackboard course site, which may be accessed at http://blackboard.cornell.edu. The course ID is 7009_2017FA. Readings are found under the Readings tab on the left-hand navigation panel.

There are three requirements for this course:

1. *Active and thoughtful class participation*. All students are expected to participate actively and regularly in discussions. In addition, two times during the semester, students will serve as discussion leaders. Discussion leaders will write a short, two-page critical review of the weekly readings and circulate it in advance to other members of the class in order to identify key issues for classroom discussion.

2. *Critical response essays*. Throughout the course of the semester, each student is responsible for writing five (5) short response papers that integrate and critically evaluate each week’s required readings. These can be done for any week except for weeks in which the student is the discussion leader.

3. *Final exam*. A 48 hour take home written exam comprised of a choice of several essay questions. The date of the exam will be announced early in the semester.

I will not grant incompletes in this class except as a consequence of extraordinary personal circumstances. Late work will be penalized.

To facilitate learning and group engagement, phones, tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices are not permitted in our seminar. You should therefore plan ahead by bringing hard copies of the readings if you need them for your reference. If you have a medical condition that requires special accommodation for personal electronic devices, please see me at the end of our first course meeting.

**Course Plan (assigned readings with *):**

**Week 1 (Aug. 23): Introduction: Classics**


**Week 2 (August 30) The Science of Comparative Politics?**


*Recommended*


**Week 3 (September 6): States and State Formation**

*Theda Skocpol. 1979. States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-42


**Recommended**


Joel Migdal, “Researching the State,” in Lichbach and Zuckerman, eds. Comparative Politics.


Week 4 (September 13): Institutions


Recommended


Week 5 (September 20): Regimes I: Concepts


*Barbara Geddes. 1999. “What Do We Know about Democratization After Twenty Years?” Annual Review of Political Science 2, 115-144.


Recommended


Andrew Mertha. 2009. “‘Fragmented Authoritarianism 2.0: Political Pluralization of the Chinese Policy Process,’” *China Quarterly* 200: 1-18


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**Week 6 (September 27): Regimes II: Origins**


Recommened


**Week 7 (October 4): Regimes III: Survival and Transitions**

*Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. 2010. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War.* Ch. 1 & 2 plus 3 or 4 and 5, 6, or 7.*


**Recommended**


**Week 8 (October 11): Political Economy of Development**


**Recommended**


**Week 9 (October 18): Social Movements, Collective Action, and Contentious Politics**


*Recommended*


**Week 10 (October 25): Identity**


Recommended

Harvard University Press.
Rogers Brubaker. 2002. “Ethnicity without Groups.” Archives européennes de sociologie XLIII,
Kanchan Chandra, “Making Causal Claims about the Effect of 'Ethnicity,'” in Lichbach and
Zuckerman, Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure.
Kanchan Chandra. 2006. “What is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter?” Annual Review of
Political Science 9: 397-424.
University Press.
Karl Deutsch. 1953. Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of
Nationality New York: Wiley.
states,” in Clifford Geertz (ed) Old societies and new states: the quest for modernity in Asia
Anthony Gill. 2001. “Religion and Comparative Politics.” Annual Review of Political Science 4:
117-38.
Avner Greif. 1994. “Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: A Historical and
Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies,” Journal of Political
Economy 102(2).
World Politics.
Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm.” Perspectives on Politics 5(1), 63-69
Mala Htun. 2016. Inclusion without Representation in Latin America: Gender Quotas and Ethnic
University Press.
Journal of Economic Literature 36: 1465-1496.


Week 11 (November 1): Civil War and Violence


**Recommended**


Robert Braun.


**Week 12 (November 8): Voters, Parties, and Elections**


**Recommended**


Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1966. *Elections and the Political Order*.


Week 13 (November 15): Accountability, Representation, and Governance


**Recommended**


Daniel Kaufmann and Aart Kraay. 2008. “Governance Indicators: Where Are We and Where Should We Be Going?” *World Bank Research Observer*.


Alexis de Tocqueville. 1840. *Democracy in America*.

**Week 14 (November 29): Political Economy of Advanced Industrial Democracies**


**Recommended**


