

POL 9600: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Department of Political Science
University of Missouri
Fall 2020
Wednesdays 3—5:30pm
Middlebush 212

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Course Description

This Ph.D.-level course is an introduction to the comparative politics subfield and the comparative method. We will survey the classical themes and questions in comparative politics, from state formation, democratization and development, political culture, social movements, nationalism and ethnic politics, as well as more contemporary issues of polarization and democratic erosion. We will use examples from developing and advanced democracies in regions all over the world, including the United States. We will also pay special attention to the causal logic of comparative inquiry and its value along the way.

Course Materials

All readings will be posted to Canvas (<http://courses.missouri.edu>). There are no required books.

Course Grading

60% 3 response papers each worth 20%
30% Final exam
10% Participation

Grading Scale

A 93-100%
A- 90-92%
B+ 87-89%
B 83-86%
B- 80-82%
C+ 77-79%
C 73-76%
C- 70-72%
F Below 70

Assignments

Response papers: You are required to write 3 response papers. The prompts are listed on the weekly schedule at the end of this syllabus. You can choose any 3 of the weeks. This will allow you to write on topics that most align with your interests. Papers should be emailed to me BEFORE the start of class on the date that it is due.

Response Paper Requirements

1. Papers should be no longer than 3 pages single-spaced (not counting works cited) with standard 12 pt font and 1 inch margins.
2. A strong paper will demonstrate an ability to make use of course readings in crafting the argument and addressing counter-arguments.
3. A strong paper will be well-organized and use clear and concise sentences.
4. Late Papers: For each 24 hour period the paper is late, a half letter grade will be deducted from the paper grade.

Response Paper Structure

Your position paper should be organized into four parts:

1. POSITION

Provide a one or two paragraph statement of your position on the question and the main reasons for taking that position.

2. CONTEXT

Describe why the question is important and summarize the “state of knowledge” on it.

3. ARGUMENT

The argument section should do 2 things: 1) provide the most important arguments/evidence in favor of your position and 2) address why the main counter-arguments (arguments for a different position than what you are taking) are not as persuasive.

4. CONCLUSION

Summarize your position highlighting the most important justifications.

Final exam: Students will take a timed 90 minute final exam during the last week of the course. The exam will be based on the readings, lectures, and discussions. Students are permitted to use course materials while taking the exam. Students are not permitted to work with other people when taking the exam. Please note that to write solid essays within the 90-minute time limit will require in-depth familiarity with the materials. In other words, you can use your notes and course materials while taking the exam, but if you aren't familiar with the material, it is unlikely that your essays will meet graduate-level course expectations.

Participation: This is a PhD-level seminar. Every student is expected to come to the seminar having read and digested the readings. The seminar is primarily discussion and debate, so proactive participation, either through posing questions or offering responses, is expected.

*****COVID-19 Pivot Plan**

Given the still uncertain nature of the pandemic, there is a chance that we will have to pivot to an online format mid-semester. Should that happen, given the size of the class, we will shift to an *online synchronous format*.

- **Seminar:** Seminars will take place at the regular scheduled class time on Zoom. I will be in contact regarding a password-protected link. Participation expectations will remain the same. To account for unexpected connection/technical difficulties, sessions will be recorded and posted on Canvas after class times.
- **Final exam:** The exam will be posted to Canvas at the start time of the class and you will have 24 hours to complete and email me your answers. The exam should only take 90 minutes, but the 24 hour window is to allow for any unexpected technical difficulties.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest, whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, or disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. ***When in doubt about plagiarism or cheating of any form, consult with me first.***

Any student found to have plagiarized or cheated will receive an “F” for the course.

Disabilities Accommodations

If you need accommodations because of a disability, or if you have emergency medical information to share with me, please let me know as soon as possible. If disability-related accommodations are

necessary, please register with the Disability Center (S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696), and notify me of your eligibility for accommodation.

Intellectual Pluralism

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities; the MU Equity Office, or equity@missouri.edu.

Technology support

If you have issues or questions about the technology related to this course, please contact one of the following support sources:

- Technical difficulties (e.g., PawPrint account issues, browser settings, etc.), contact the UM Division of IT (DoIT) Help Desk at 573-882-5000 or helpdesk@missouri.edu.
- Questions related to Canvas, (e.g., logging in to Canvas, accessing the discussion board) contact Mizzou Online at mizzouonlinehelp@missouri.edu or ET@MO
Canvas@missouri.edu
- If you have troubles submitting an assignment email tech support not the instructor. They will assist you. If you are unable to resolve the issue prior to the deadline send the TA an email informing him/her of the issue.

Course schedule*

*Note that this is a tentative schedule and is subject to change by the instructor.

Week 1 (8/27)

Introductions & Course review

Week 2 (9/3)

What is the comparative method?

- Arend Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method,” *American Political Science Review* vol. 65, no. 3 (1971): 682-693.
- Barbara Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics,” *Political Analysis* vol. 2 (1990): 131-150.
- Dan Slater and Daniel Ziblatt, “The Enduring Indispensability of the Controlled Comparison,” *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 10 (2013): 1301-1327.

RESPONSE PAPER: What are the strengths and weaknesses of a comparative case study approach?

Week 3 (9/10)

Why states?

- Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in Theda Skocpol, Peter Evans, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer eds. *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
- Mancur Olson, “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development,” *American Political Science Review* vol. 87, no.3 (1993): 567-576.
- Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Chapter 1

RESPONSE PAPER: Under what conditions should we expect to see weak states?

Week 4 (9/17)

Authoritarian rule and resilience

- Milan Svoblik. “Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes.” *American Journal of Political Science* vol. 53, no. 2 (2009): 477–494.
- Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2002): 51-65.
- Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret Roberts, “How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 107, no. 2 (2013): 326-343.

RESPONSE PAPER: What are the main challenges to contemporary authoritarian states and how have they responded?

Week 5 (9/24)

Modernization & Political Development

- Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 53 no. 1 (1959): 75-84.
- Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): Chapters 1, 7, 8.
- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49, 2 (January 1997) pp. 155-183.

RESPONSE PAPER: How does modernization theory stand up against time? Identify the assumptions in modernization theory and offer a critique.

Week 6 (10/1)

Transitions to Democracy

- Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is.... and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* (1991): 75-88.
- Barrington Moore. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, 1968, Preface and skim Chapters 7-9 (pp. 413-483).
- Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* 2 no. 3 (1970): 337-363.
- Dan Slater and Joseph Wong, "The Strength to Concede: Ruling Parties and Democratization in Developmental Asia," *Perspectives on Politics* (2013): 717-733.

RESPONSE PAPER: Do the same factors that promote transitions to democracy also sustain them?

Week 7 (10/8)

Does political culture matter?

- Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), Chapters 1 & 13.
- Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), Chapter 6.
- Fareed Zakaria, "Culture is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew," *Foreign Affairs* 73(2): 109-126.
- Lisa Wedeen, "Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 96, no. 4 (2002): 713-728.

RESPONSE PAPER: A common critique of "culture" as an explanation is that it is deterministic or tautological. Do you agree or disagree? Define "culture" and discuss its merit as a causal variable.

Week 8 (10/15)

Social movements & protest

- Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, (Routledge, 2015), Chapter 2
- Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge, 1979), Introduction

- Timur Kuran, “Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989” *World Politics*, vol. 44 no. 1 (1991), pp. 7-48.
- Evgeny Finkel, “The Phoenix Effect of State Repression: Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 109, No. 2 (2015), pp. 339-353.

RESPONSE PAPER: Analyze the motivations/structure/outcome of a contemporary social movement of your choice in light of this week’s readings.

Week 9 (10/22)

Politics of development

- James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein, “Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?” *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 4 (2007): 709-725.
- Perna Singh, *How Solidarity Works for Welfare*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapters 2, 4.
- Atul Kohli, *State-Directed Development*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): Introduction and Conclusion
- Evan Lieberman, *Race and Regionalism in the Politics of Taxation*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Chapter 3

RESPONSE PAPER: Under what conditions does ethnic diversity hurt development?

Week 10 (10/29)

Corruption

- Marko Klasnja and Rocio Titiunik, “The Incumbency Curse: Weak Parties, Term Limits, and Unfulfilled Accountability,” *American Political Science Review* 111 no. 1 (2017): 129-148.
- Alisha Holland, “The Distributive Politics of Enforcement,” *American Journal of Political Science* 59 no. 2 (2015): 357-371.
- Matthew Winters and Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro, “Lacking Information or Condoning Corruption: When do Voters Support Corrupt Politicians?” *Comparative Politics*, vol. 45 no. 4 (2013): 418-436.
- Nathan Nunn and Leonard Wantchekon, “The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa,” *American Economic Review*, vol. 101, no. 7 (2011): 3221-52.

RESPONSE PAPER: Why does corruption persist in some places, but not others?

Week 11 (11/5)

Ethnic conflict

- Kanchan Chandra, “What is Ethnic Identity and Does it Matter?” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9 (2006): 397-424.
- Daniel Posner, “The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 98, no. 4 (2004): 529-545.
- James Fearon and David Laitin, “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 97, no. 1 (2003): 75-90.

- Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, “Why do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis,” *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (2010): 87-119.

RESPONSE PAPER: Are more ethnically diverse societies naturally more prone to ethnic conflict?

Week 12 (11/12)

Nations and nation-building

- Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), Chapters 1 & 4.
- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (New York: Verso 1983), Chapters 1 & 3.
- Rogers Brubaker, “The Manichean Myth: Rethinking the Distinction between <Civic> and <Ethnic> Nationalisms, in *Nation and National Identity: The European Experience in Perspective* (1999).
- Andreas Wimmer, *Nation-Building* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), Chapters 1 & 8.

RESPONSE PAPER: Nationalism is often seen as a detrimental force to democracies. Do you agree or disagree?

Week 13 (11/19)

Democratic erosion

- Nancy Bermeo, “On Democratic Backsliding,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 27 no. 1 (2016): 5-19.
- [“How Wobbly Is Our Democracy?”](#) Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *New York Times*, January 27, 2018.
- Matthew Graham and Milan Svoblik, “Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 114 no. 2 (2020): 392-409.
- Bart Bonikowski, “Ethno-nationalist Populism and the Mobilization of Collective Resentment,” *British Journal of Sociology* vol. 68 no. S1 (2017): 181-213.

RESPONSE PAPER: How serious is the contemporary trend of democratic erosion? Explain your position by discussing the causes and consequences of backsliding.

Thanksgiving break!

Week 14 (12/3)

Exam review

Week 15 (12/10)

Final Exam