

PS119 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Seminar Leader: Boris Vormann

Course Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-7:00 pm

Please make sure to check the schedule below for extended and extra sessions

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description

Why and how do political systems differ from one another? Which processes have led to the formation of distinct political regimes? And how do these historical variations affect politics today? In addressing these questions in a wide set of contexts, this course provides an introduction to key theoretical approaches and concepts in the comparative study of politics. The focus will be on core topics in political development such as state and nation building, the role of the state in the economy, its relationship to civil society and processes of democratization. We will also look at different types of political regimes, electoral and party systems—and the ways in which they affect the structure, functioning, and social role of political institutions. We explore these topics from a comparative perspective in combining theoretical texts with case studies. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand important topics in domestic politics, grasp the diversity of political systems and regimes, and analyze current political developments.

Requirements

Reading material (you must have your own copy of the edition with this ISBN!)

1. Class Reader (available at the library)
2. Caramani, Daniele (ed.). 2017. *Comparative Politics. 4th Edition*. Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-87374-21; three copies are available at the library)

Class preparation

In preparation for class, read the texts thoughtfully and engage with their core argument. Take notes while reading and try to identify questions in advance: Why do the authors argue as they do? How do they raise and substantiate their claims? How does their line of argumentation relate to earlier readings and discussions in class?

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected, as regular attendance is essential to the success of this course. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will result in a reduction of the course grade by up to one grade step (e.g., B+ to B). There will be an attendance sheet for any session. Late arrival counts as an absence.

Assignments, Grade Breakdown and Essay Deadlines

Oral

- **Classroom Participation** 20% (of total grade)
This seminar involves thoughtful and active participation in class discussions and working groups. This includes a persistent reflection on current events related to the course's core themes. The classroom is a protected space and you should feel free to voice your arguments and comments. Please do not hesitate to address the seminar leader if you feel that this is not the case.
- **Case Study Presentation** 20%
Each student will present **one comparative case study for one of the subjects in sessions during weeks 7-8 or 11-13**. For the most part, the core readings in these classes will focus on the case of the United States. The short presentations should compare other cases to that example. These comparisons should be interactive, engaging, and analytically insightful—and take no longer **than 10-12 minutes**.
 - Details will be discussed in class

Written

- **6 Response Papers (each 500 words), (6*5%)** 30%
Each student is required to write 6 response papers (1.5-spaced, 12 pt., Times New Roman) in **Sessions during weeks 3-6**. I expect a short abstract of the primary texts' main tenets, an analysis that embeds the reading in earlier class discussions, and the articulation of one central synthetic question that engages the issues and debates addressed in the reading as a starting point for broader discussion.
 - Response papers need to be **submitted in print by the beginning of the respective session**.
- **In-Class Final Exam (ca. 2000 words):** 30%
The final in-class exam will take place on **December 18, 2018** during our regular time slot. Students will have to answer a series of questions on the materials discussed throughout the term; specific instructions will be given in class.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers (Student Handbook)

“Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.”

Schedule

Week Beginning	Tuesday	Thursday	Assignments
I. Background and Theory Traditions <i>Approaches and Methods in Comparative Politics</i>			
	Introduction	***No Class Session***	
1 Sept 3	Calhoun, <i>Dictionary of the Social Sciences</i> Lowndes, <i>Theory and Methods</i> Hague et al., <i>Comparative Government</i>	The Relevance of Comparative Politics Caramani, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 1-17 Rothstein, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 19-34 Newton & Van Deth, <i>Foundations</i>	
2 Sept 10	An Overview of Approaches Peters, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 35-48 Hague et al, <i>Comp. Government</i>	Methods and Research Strategies Keman and Pennings, <i>Comp. Pol.</i> , 49-63 Ryan, <i>The Comparative Method</i>	
II. Actors, Contexts, and Processes <i>Political Institutions and Changing Regimes</i>			
Patterns of State Formation			
3 Sept 17	Rise of the Nation-State Poggi, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 67-82 O'Neil, <i>Essentials</i>	European States Tilly, <i>Coercion, Capital, and Europ.</i> Wallerstein, <i>World-Systems Analysis</i>	Response Papers
4 Sept 24	The US State Skowronek, <i>Building a New Amer. State</i> King & Lieberman, <i>The American State</i>	The Developmental State Frank, <i>Development of Underdevelopment</i> Evans, <i>Predatory, Developmental...</i>	
States, Markets, Societies			
5 Oct 1	Authoritarian Rule Brooker, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 99-114 Siaroff, <i>Comparing Political Reg.</i> , 77-99	Liberal Democracy Perez-Linan, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 83-99 Dahl, <i>On Democracy</i>	Response Papers
6 Oct 8	State-Market Relations O'Neil, <i>Essentials</i> Clift, <i>Comparative Political Economy</i>	***5:30-7:30*** Exceptional Political Cultures? Peck, <i>Neoliberalism</i> Hacker and Pierson, <i>American Amnesia</i>	

Government Institutions and Processes

	5:30-7:30pm	**DOUBLE SESSION 3:15-7:30pm**	
7 Oct 15	Legislatures, Govt. and Bureaucracies Kreppel, <i>Comp. Pol.</i> , 117-135/ Müller, 136-154 Mayhew, <i>Legislation</i> / Katznelson, <i>Politics of Power</i>	Judiciary, Elections and Referendums Sweet, <i>Comp. Pol.</i> , 155-172/Landy & Milkis, <i>American Government</i> Gallagher, <i>Comp. Pol.</i> , 173-187/Franklin, <i>US Elec.</i>	Case Studies
8 Oct 22	No class	No class	

Fall break

Influencing the State

	Inequality and Responsiveness	Political Parties and Interest Groups	
9 Nov 5	Erne, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 245-259 Gilens, <i>Inequality and ... Responsiveness</i> ➤ Watch and discuss Martin Gilens talk in class	Discussion VIA BLUE JEANS Katz, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 207-223 Caramani, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 224-244 Vallely, <i>Who Needs Political Parties?</i>	
10 Nov 12	GUEST LECTURE: CURD KNÜPFER Media Polarization <i>Please prepare:</i> Bennett, <i>Changing Societies</i> Knüpfer, <i>Diverging Projections of Reality</i>	NO IN-CLASS MEETING <i>Prepare for next time:</i> Kriesi, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 274-290 Mayer, <i>Movements and Politics</i>	

Governance and its Limits

	5:30-8:00pm	GUEST LECTURE: HELMUT AUST ***3:45-5:15pm, Lecture Hall***	
11 Nov 19	Federalism and Regionalization Loughlin, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 188-204 Bickerton & Gagnon, <i>Comp. Pol.</i> , 260-273 Derthink, <i>Enduring Features</i>	& Regional Subnational Governments Keating, <i>Re-Thinking Sovereignty</i> Graefe, <i>Pol. Econ. of Min. Nationalism</i>	Case Studies
12 Nov 26	Global City Networks: The C40 Sassen, <i>The Global City</i> Lee & Koski, <i>Mitigating Global Warming</i>	Urbanization in the Global South Turok, <i>Urbanization-Development Nexus</i> Sheppard, <i>Globalizing Capitalism</i> Chen, <i>China's Model of Urban Growth</i>	
13 Dec 3	Multi-level Governance: The EU Hix, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 403-421 Matthijs & Blyth, <i>When is it Rational</i>	Globalization and the State Sorensen, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 422-436 Mazzucato, <i>Value of Everything</i> , Ch. 8	

III. Outlook

14 Dec 10	The Crisis of Democracy Burnell, <i>Comparative Politics</i> , 437-452 Brown, <i>Neoliberalism's Frankenstein</i>	Conclusions
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Final Exam (In-Class), December 18, 2018