

Understanding Comparative Politics

SOSC 3520

Fall, 2021

Tue, Thur 10:30AM - 11:50AM

Rm 5619, Lift 31-32

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Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30pm (Rm 2347 via Lift 3, 13-15)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a comparative politics course targeting toward advanced undergraduate students. With its long history, comparative politics has covered many different topics. The course will focus on important substantive questions to understand political phenomena around the world.

This course is designed to build perspectives and skills to understand and analyze domestic politics around the globe by exposing students to the basic literature in political science and economics related to comparative politics subfield. Except for the first few classes, the course will be run as a combination of lecture and student presentation(s) and discussion, in which everyone is expected to participate. Therefore, everyone is responsible for reading, preparing presentations and critically assessing the readings and presentations.

The course consists of five topics related to politics. Each topic is broad and complex. Due to time constraints, we will focus on several key subtopics in each section. First, we will discuss the basic logic and methodologies in comparative politics. We will then survey the literature on a controversial topic in state formation and regime types. In the subsequent section, the class will focus on election and government system. Then we move to policy-related issues: economic development and redistribution. Finally, we will visit several challenges in comparative political economy including poverty, foreign aid, natural resources, civil war and political connection/corruption.

GRADING

1. **Presentation:** 30% of the grade will be determined by contributions to in-class presentation. The presentation should aim to provide innovative and intelligent answers to given question, concise summary and critical assessment of the related literature. One team will consist of 4-6 people (Not all of you need to present). Team will be organized and the first meeting opportunity will be provided in class on **September 16, 2021**. Presenters are required to prepare a proper presentation with slides, not exceeding 20 minutes. Final presentation slides should be sent to the instructor 24 hours prior to the presentation. You are encouraged to consult to the instructor (as a group) in the process of preparation. The team grade will be decided based on presentation materials and presentation. To avoid free-riding, attach detailed division of labor on the last page of the slide. Individual's grade will be adjusted by the division and quality of labor. **READING SCRIPT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED** during the presentation.

2. **Mid-term and final examination:** Mid-term exam will take 20% of the grade. Final exam, taking 40% of grades, will be scheduled by the school. Both exams will be a mixture of multiple choices, true or false, short answers, and short essays. Final exam will be cumulative. Mid-term will be one hour and the final will be two hours. Essential readings and lectures are the subjects of exams. You **MUST** sit these exams at the scheduled time. Two exceptions are family emergency (such as sudden fatal illness or death) and your emergent surgery. In any case, you must provide a doctor's note with his or her contact information. Upon a proper doctor's note and contact information, a make-up exam may be scheduled.

3. **Class attendance and participation:** 10% of the grade will depend on attendance and participation. Attendance check will be randomly conducted about 5 times during the semester. One absence will be waived. Active participants will be noticed and considered.

Failure to complete any of the tasks above (presentation, mid-term exam, final exam, final paper or attendance) may result in a failure grade for this course.

TEXTBOOKS

William R. Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona N. Golder. 2018. *Principles of Comparative Politics* (3rd edition), Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, Sage. (hereafter, CGG)

Other useful textbooks

David J. Samuels. 2012. *Comparative Politics*. Pearson.

Daniele Caramani. 2008. *Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kenneth Newton and Jan W. van Deth. 2010. *Foundations of Comparative Politics* (2nd edition). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach. 2005. *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

TOPICS & READINGS

I. Introductory Materials

Sep. 2: Overview

What is political science? What is comparative politics? Is politics comparable?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 1. Introduction

Sep. 7 and 9: Research Methods

Is political science a science? What are quantitative/qualitative research? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 2. What is Science?

Recommended Readings

James Mahoney and Gary Goertz. 2006. A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research, *Political Analysis*, 14:227-249.

Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Henry Brady and David Collier. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Rogers M. Smith. 2002. "Should We Make Political Science More of a Science or More about Politics?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35(2): 199-201.

II. State and Regime

Sep. 14: The nation state

What is state? What is nation? What is sovereignty? How does state differ from dynasty?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 4. The Origins of the Modern State.

Recommended Readings

Samuels, Chapter 2. The State.

Charles Tilly. 1985. "War Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In* edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fukuyama, Francis. 2004. *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*. Cornell University Press.

Sep. 16: team organization and discussion

Sep. 16, and 21: Democracy

What is Democracy? How can one measure democracy? What values does democracy bring to a society?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 5. Democracy and Dictatorship: Conceptualization and Measurement.

Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2: 75-88.

Recommended Readings

Zachary Elkins. 2000. "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 293-300.

Geraldo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen. 2002. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices." *Comparative Political Studies* 35: 5-34.

Robert A. Dahl. 1971. *Polyarchy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Robert A. Dahl. 2000. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Charles Tilly. 2007. *Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sep. 23 and 28: Autocracy

What is autocracy? Is autocracy bad? Why or why not? Why do people support or choose authoritarian regime voluntarily? Why do autocracies have elections?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 10. Varieties of Dictatorships.

Recommended Readings

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13: 51-65.

Jennifer Gandhi and Adam Przeworski. 2007. "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats," *Comparative Political Studies* 40: 1279-1301.

Fareed Zakaria. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76: 22-41.

Sep. 30 and Oct. 5: Democratization (and Autocratization)

What lead a country to democratization? What causes autocratization? What makes a country to swing between two regime types?

Essential Readings

CGG, Chapter 8. Democratic Transitions.

Recommended Readings

Barbara Geddes. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2:115-44.

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

Carles Boix. 2006. "The Roots of Democracy." *Policy Review* 135.

III. Institutions

Oct 7 and 12: Electoral System

Why countries have different electoral system? Are elections democratic/fair? Does election reflect the voice of the majority? What are the features of good electoral system?

Essential Readings

CGG Chapter 11. Problems with Group Decision Making.

CGG Chapter 13. Elections and Electoral Systems.

Recommended Readings

Arend Lijphart. 1997. "Unequal Participation: Democracies Unresolved Dilemma." *American Political Science Review* 91(1): 1-14.

Arend Lijphart. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy* 15(2): 96-109.

Kenneth Benoit. 2007. "Electoral Laws as Political Consequences: Explaining the Origins and Change of Electoral Institutions." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 363-90.

Oct. 19: Political Parties

Why do parties matter? Why are there only a handful number of parties? Do they represent people? What types of people join the party?

Essential Readings

CGG Chapter 14. Social Cleavages and Party Systems.

Recommended Readings

Harold Clarke and Marianne Stewart. 1998. "The Decline of Parties in the Minds of Citizens." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: 357-78.

Larry Diamond and Richard Gunther. 2001. *Political Parties and Democracy*. Johns Hopkins Press.

Richard Gunther, Jose Ramon Montero and Juan J. Linz. 2002. *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oct. 21: Midterm Examination

- In-class exam
- 60 minutes (early leave is allowed)
- Multiple choice, short answers (1-3 words), True or false, short essays

Oct. 26 and 28: Social Movement

Why do people protest? Why does the mass participate in protest? Why do governments tolerate/repress protests?

Essential Readings

Samuels, Chapter 9. Collective Action.

Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E Roberts. 2013. "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression." *American Political Science Review* 107(2): 1-18.

Recommended Readings

Cameron G. Thies and Schuyler Porche. 2007. "The Political Economy of Agricultural Protection." *Journal of Politics* 69(1): 116-127.

Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster.

IV. Policies

Nov. 2 and 4: Economic Growth

What drives economic growth? Does regime type matter? Why the richest countries are democracies? Why some authoritarian countries are wealthy?

Essential Readings

Samuels, Chapter 11. Political Economy of Development.

CGG, Chapter 9. Democracy or Dictatorship: Does It Make a Difference?

Recommended Readings

Mancur Olson. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 567-576.

Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff. 2008. "Debating the Role of Institutions in Political and Economic Development: Theory, History, and Findings." *Annual Review Of Political Science* 11: 119-135.

Douglas North. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Navia, P. and T.D. Zweifel. 2003. "Democracy, Dictatorship, and Infant Mortality revisited." *Journal of Democracy* 14(3): 90-103.

Brown, D.S. 1999. "Reading, writing, and regime type: Democracy's impact on primary school enrollment." *Political Research Quarterly* 52(4): 681-707.

Nov. 9: Redistribution and Welfare Politics

Does the government responsible for basic social welfare? Why does the government redistribute? Do people like redistribution?

Essential Readings

Samuels, Chapter 12. The Political Economy of Redistribution.

Recommended Readings

Isabela Mares and Matthew Carnes. 2009. "The Welfare State in Global Perspective." In Susan C. Stokes and Charles Boix (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gosta Esping-Andersen. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare*. Princeton University Press.

V. Challenges

Nov. 11 and 16 : Poverty and Inequality

Why are there poor population in wealthy democratic countries? Why do the poor often vote for the conservative/right-wing parties? Does anti-poverty program or foreign aid reduce the poverty level?

Essential Readings

Thomas Piketty. 2015. "About Capital in the Twenty-First Century", *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings* 105(5): 48–53.

Ana De La O. 2013. "Do Conditional Cash Transfers Affect Electoral Behavior? Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Mexico." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(1): 1-14.

Recommended Readings

Philip Keefer. 2007. "Clientelism, Credibility, and the Policy Choices of Young Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4): 804-821.

Faisal Z. Ahmed. 2012. "The Perils of Unearned Foreign Income: Aid, Remittances, and Government Survival." *American Political Science Review* 106(1): 146-165.

Alberto Diaz-Cayeros and Beatriz Magaloni. 2009. "Aiding Latin America's Poor." *Journal of Democracy* 20 (4):36-49.

Nov. 18 : Natural resources

Are natural resources beneficial for the citizens? Why are resource-rich countries autocratic? Why do they have smaller number of populations and universities?

Essential Readings

World Bank, "Natural Resources: When Blessings Become Curses."

Recommended Readings

Ji Yeon Hong. 2018. "How Natural Resources Affect Authoritarian Leaders? Provision of Public Services: Evidence from China" *Journal of Politics* 80(1): 178-194.

Michael L. Ross. 1999. "The Political Economy of the Resource Curse." *World Politics* 51(2): 297-322.

Michael L. Ross. 2012. *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Macartan Humphreys, Jeffrey Sachs, Joseph Stiglitz (Eds). 2007. *Escaping the Resource Curse*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Nov. 23: Political Violence and Civil War

Why are there a war within a country? What explains civil conflict? Does religion or ethnicity contribute to conflict?

Essential Readings

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1):75-90.

Recommended Readings

Ji Yeon Hong and Wenhui Yang, "Oilfield, Mosques and Violence: Is There a Resource Curse in Xinjiang?" *British Journal of Political Science*.

Chris Blattman and Edward Miguel. 2010. "Civil War." *Journal of Economic Literature* 48(1): 3-57.

Edward Miguel, Shanker Satyanath and Ernest Sergenti. 2004. "Economic Shocks and Civil Conflict: An Instrumental Variables Approach." *Journal of Political Economy* 112(4): 725-753.

Nov. 25: Political Connection and Corruption

Is corruption inevitable in politics? Is nepotism corruption?

Essential Readings

Dan Triesman. 2007. "What Have We Learned About the Causes of Corruption from Ten Years of Cross-National Empirical Research?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 10): 211-244.

Rory Treux. 2014. "The Returns to Office in a Rubber Stamp Parliament." *American Political Science Review* 108(2): 235-251.

Recommended Readings

Raymond Fisman and Yongxiang Wang. 2015. The Mortality Cost of Political Connections. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 82(4):1346-1382.

Claudio Ferraz and Fred Finan. 2011. "Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes". *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123(2): 703-745.

TBD: Final Exam

Presentation subjects

1. [Social Movement] Democratization and Authoritarian Successor Party [Oct 26]
2. [Social Movement] How did Tunisia succeed as an only case from Arab Spring? [Oct 28]
3. [Economic Growth] How can Singapore remain as a free and prosperous non-democracy? [Nov 2]
4. [Economic Growth] Why did Philippines stop growing? [Nov 4]
5. [Inequality and Redistribution] South Africa - the most unequal country [Nov 9]
6. [Poverty] Why are the poorest countries poor? [Nov 11]
7. [Foreign Aid] Why is Ethiopia - the largest aid receiver - still poor? [Nov 16]
8. [Resource Curse] Venezuela [Nov 18]
9. [Ethnic war] What made Kurd a stateless nation? [Nov 23]
10. [Civil Conflict] Afghanistan - How Afghanistan fall into Taliban again? [Nov 25]