

Introduction to Comparative Politics
POST 30

Pitzer College

Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00-12:15pm
Fall 2017

Prof. Mark Schneider
209 Bernard Hall
Mark_Schneider@pitzer.edu

Office Hours: MW: 2:30pm-3:45pm

What's happening in the world seems hard to comprehend, but political science begs to differ. This course provides a broad overview of the subfield of comparative politics by focusing on, and putting into broader context, important substantive questions facing the world from violence to elections to the kinds of political parties that emerge in different contexts. The course is organized around four substantive themes. First, why can some countries depend on the state to enforce order and encourage development while others cannot? Second, under what conditions should we expect democracies to emerge and endure? Third, what different institutional forms do democratic government take and why does this matter? Fourth, what are the different patterns of representation and accountability, and problems that can undermine this, in the developing world? To understand these conceptual questions, we will consider a range of cases from South Asia, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe.

Course Objectives: As required by the College, you will find a list of course objectives on the last page of this syllabus.

REQUIREMENTS

(1) Attendance and Participation (20%)

You are expected to attend all class meetings and to read the required readings in advance of each lecture. In order to do well in this course, you must attend and actively participate in class. You must also fully participate in all class activities. You will not be penalized for 1 absence but will lose points after that.

(2) Case Study Presentations (15%)

Each student will complete a presentation that applies a class session theme to a real-world case in one country. The purpose of the presentation is to use a political science argument to understand the situation in your case (current or from the past) that interests you. You will pick an argument and explore whether that argument explains your specific case through a careful application of the argument to evidence from your case.

The presentation should last 10-12 minutes. I will ask you to propose a country and a ranking of preferences for three class session by email by week 3. Presentations will take place from Session 8 to 26. You will be required to meet with the professor no less than one week before the presentation to discuss the presentation. Be ready to discuss the research question and how you will answer it in your case.

I am also open to 2-person presentations that apply an argument to two cases that vary in ways predicted by the theory you examine.

(3) Take-Home Midterm Exam (25%)

The Midterm will include a combination of identification questions and a multi-part essay question. It will require you to explain material presented in required readings and lectures; to make connection between concepts; and to apply concepts to cases we've read about and outside readings. You will have about a week to complete the exam.

(4) Comparative Politics in the News (5%)

This assignment requires each student to present news in a country outside the United States that fits with a class theme for a particular class session. News will be assigned by Week 3. Students will post news articles on sakai and present their news and how it relates to ideas in our course at the start of class.

(5) Take-Home Final (35%)

The final exam (8-10 pages) will be a take-home essay that asks you to draw on course material. You will be asked to address one of two essay prompts. Final exam essay prompts will be handed out at final class meeting and due at 5pm on the day of the scheduled final exam, which is set by the registrar.

All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

Classroom Etiquette

To make sure that we have a hospitable learning environment, I ask students to follow three simple rules:

- 1) Arrive on time.
- 2) Turn your cell phones off when you enter the class room
- 3) Respect your classmates. Debate is welcome but disagree respectfully by engaging ideas rather than making arguments personal.
- 4) Coffee/beverages are fine but food is not permitted in class.
- 5) Close your laptops when you are not discussing readings in paired discussion.

A Note on Academic Integrity

As goes without saying, it will not be possible to pass this course if I find any evidence of plagiarism/cheating of any kind for any assignment. At minimum, this will result in a zero for that assignment and will be referred to the Dean without exceptions. If you do the work, and think a lot about the material, you'll be fine.

READINGS:

All readings are can be downloaded from the course page on Sakai.

This course requires you to carefully read all assigned readings before class. Make sure you not only understand the basic argument, but give yourself time to think critically about the readings before class so you will be prepared to participate in discussion. I also encourage you to complete the reading worksheet linked below for each academic (journal) article or book excerpt.

Critical Reading:

I provide advice on critical reading and a valuable worksheet (Developed by Prof. Kanchan Chandra, NYU) at the end of this syllabus. I suggest completing the worksheet as you go through assigned readings throughout the course. All students will complete the worksheet for a class activity on Tilly in class session 3. I encourage you to use this for each academic reading to help you focus your reading.

Course Schedule

Session 1: Course Introduction (8/30)

PART 1: STATES, ORDER, AND VIOLENCE

Session 2: What is Comparative Politics? (9/4)

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*, 65(3)682-693.

Sessions 3: State Formation (9/6)

Tilly, Charles. 1985. War Making as Organized Crime. In P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol (Eds). *Bringing the State Back In*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended: Levi, Margaret. 1989. *Of Rule and Revenue*. University of California Press. Chapter 5 ("France and England").

Complete the reading worksheet for Tilly. We will go through it as a class.

Session 4: State-Building in sub-Saharan Africa (9/11)

Herbst, Jeffrey. 1990. "War and the State in Africa." *International Security*, 14(4) 117-139.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2014. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton University Press, chapter 3.

Session 5: State Capacity and Governance (9/13)

Berenschot, Ward. 2011. "On the Usefulness of Goondas in Indian Politics: 'Moneypower' and 'Musclepower' in a Gujarati Locality." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 34(2) 255-275.

Evans, Peter. 1995. *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation* Princeton: Princeton University Press, ch. 3.

Recommended:

Weber, Max. 1978. "Bureaucracy" in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Pgs. 956-963.

Bates, Robert. 2001. *Prosperity and Violence*. W. W. Norton. Selection.

Sessions 5: Political Violence at the Macro-Level: Civil Wars (9/18)

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

"The Iraqi Army Was Crumbling Long Before Its Collapse." *New York Times*. <available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/13/world/middleeast/american-intelligence-officials-said-iraqi-military-had-been-in-decline.html>>

Session 6: Political Violence at the Micro-Level: Civil War in Sierra Leone (9/20)

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The determinants of participation in civil war." *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(2) 436-455.

Recommended: Mueller, John. 2000. "The Banality of "Ethnic War"." *International Security*, 25(1) 42-70.

Session 7: The Logic of Civil Violence: Riots and Violent Protests (9/25)

Wilkinson, Steven I. 2005. "Putting Gujarat in Perspective." *Economic and Political Weekly*: 1579-1583.

Gettleman, Jeffrey. 2007. "Disputed Vote Plunges Kenya into Bloodshed." *New York Times*. Available at: <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/31/world/africa/31kenya.html>>

Watch Film (Before Class): *My Name is Ram*

Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4v0om4fqgw>>

PART II: POLITICAL REGIMES - DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

Session 8: What Democracy is (and is not) (9/27)

Dahl, Robert. 1971. *Polyarchy*. New Haven: Yale University Press: Chapter 1.

Flores, Thomas Edward, and Irfan Nooruddin. 2016. *Elections in Hard Times: Building Stronger Democracies in the 21st Century*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3.

Session 9: Autocracies (10/2)

McGregor, Richard. 2010. *The Party: The secret world of China's communist rulers*. Penguin UK. Chapter 1.

Lankov, Andrei. 2017. "Kim Jong-Un is a Survivor, Not a Mad Man." *Foreign Affairs*. Available at: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/04/26/kim-jong-un-is-a-survivor-not-a-madman/>

MIDTERM HANDED OUT IN CLASS

Session 10: Democratization (10/4)

Boix, Carles. 2006. "The Roots of Democracy." *Policy Review*, 135: 3-22.

De Mesquita, Bueno, Bruce Downs and George Downs. 2005. "Development and Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 84(5): 77-86.

Session 11: What Makes Democracies Endure? (10/9)

Linz, Juan and Alfred Stepan. 1996. "Toward Consolidated Democracies." *Journal of Democracy*, 7 (2) 14-33.

Varshney, Ashutosh. 1998. "Why Democracy Survives." *Journal of Democracy*, 9 (3) 36-50.

Session 12: What Explains Democratic Backsliding? (10/11)

Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27 (1) 5-19.

Esen, Berk, and Sebnem Gumuscu. 2016. "Rising Competitive Authoritarianism in Turkey." *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9)1581-1606.

MIDTERM DUE AT THE START OF CLASS

Fall Break: No class 10/16

Session 13: Democratic Backsliding in Developed Democracies (10/18)

Mickey, Robert, Steven Levitsky, and Lucan Ahmad Way. 2017. "Is America Still Safe for Democracy? Why the United States Is in Danger of Backsliding." *Foreign Affairs*.

In-Class Midterm Activity

PART III: POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND REPRESENTATION IN DEMOCRACIES

Session 14: The Quality of Elections: Is the System Rigged? (10/23)

Lehoucq, Fabrice. 2003. "Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types, and Consequences." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6: 233-56.

Sridharan, E. and Milan Vaishnav. *Election Commission of India*. Presented at the Conference on Building an Indian State in the 21st Century.

Recommended: Hasen, Richard. 2012. "Voting Wars: From Florida 2000 to the Next Election Meltdown." In *The Voting Wars: From Florida 2000 to the Next Election Meltdown*. Yale University Press.

Session 15: Constitutional Design: Presidentialism vs. Parliamentarism (10/25)

Principles, Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Democracies, Ch. 12 (selected pages).

Mainwaring, Scott, and Matthew S. Shugart. 1997. "Juan Linz, presidentialism, and democracy: a critical appraisal." *Comparative Politics* 449-471.

Recommended: Ansell, Ben and Jane Gingrich. 2013. "Chapter 2: United Kingdom." In David Samuels (Ed.), *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*: 39--76.

Session 16: Electoral Institutions and Representation? (10/30)

Powell, G. Bingham. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and proportional visions*. Yale University Press. Chapter 1.

In-Class Activity: Design the Ideal Political System in the U.S.

Session 17: Federalism (11/1)

Samuels, David. Chapter 3: 67-69 (“Unitary versus Federal Constitutions”)

Stepan, Alfred. 1999. “Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. Model,” *Journal of Democracy* 10(4): 19-33.

Session 18: Why Do People Vote (And Who Doesn’t) I? (11/6)

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A resource model of political participation." *American Political Science Review*, 89(2) 271-294.

Gerber, Alan, Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 102 (1) 33-48.

Dalton, Russell. “Why Don’t Millennials Vote?” *The Monkey Cage* (Washington Post). <available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/22/why-dont-millennials-vote/?utm_term=.0ef6dce28261>.

Session 19: Why Do People Vote (And Who Doesn’t) Part II? (11/8)

Ahuja, Amit and Pradeep Chhibber. 2012. “Why the Poor Vote in India: ‘If I Don’t Vote, I Am Dead to the State.’” *Studies in comparative international development*, 47(4) 389-410.

Nathan, Noah L. 2016. "Does Participation Reinforce Patronage? Policy Preferences, Turnout, and Class in Urban Ghana." *British Journal of Political Science*.

Session 20: Do Political Parties Matter? (11/13)

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties?* Chapter 2.

Mainwaring, Scott and Timothy Scully, eds. 1995. *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. Introduction.

Session 21: Explaining the Rise of Populist Parties (11/15)

Mudde, Cas. 2004. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition*, 39(4) 542-563.

Hawkins, Kirk. 2003. Populism in Venezuela: The Rise of Chavismo." *Third World Quarterly*, 24(6) 1137–1160.

Session 22: Clientelistic Parties (11/20)

Kitschelt, Herbert and Steven Wilkinson. 2007. "Citizen-Politician Linkages: An Introduction" in Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson eds. *Patrons, Clients, and Policies*. New York: Cambridge University Press: Chapter 1.

Auyero, Javier. 2000. "The logic of clientelism in Argentina: An ethnographic account." *Latin American Research Review*: 55-81.

Recommended: Schneider, Mark. "[Can Benefits be Tied to the Vote?](#)" *Hindu Business Line*, 14 January 2014.

PART IV: REPRESENTATION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND GOVERNANCE

Sessions 23: The Welfare State (11/22)

Alesina, Alberto, and Edward Glaeser. 2004. *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe: A World of Difference*. New York: Oxford University Press: Chapter 6.

Sandbrook et al. *Welfare State in the Global Periphery*. Chapter 3 (Kerala).

Session 24: Do Voters Hold Politicians Accountable? (11/27)

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press, Chapter 4.

Session 25: Social Movements and Democratic Responsiveness (11/29)

Tarrow, Sidney G. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social movements and contentious politics*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction and Chapter 6.

Session 26: Local Democracy (12/4)

Heller, Patrick. 2001. "Moving the state: the politics of democratic decentralization in Kerala, South Africa, and Porto Alegre." *Politics & Society*, 29(1): 131-163.

Schneider, Mark. 2015. [Do Local Leaders Prioritize the Poor?](#)" *Hindu Business Line*, 14.

Session 27: Final Review and Course Conclusion (12/6)

Goals/Objectives of the Course (intended outcomes):

1. Students will come to understand major debates underlying comparative politics.
2. Students will engage in effective written expression.

3. Students will learn about the politics of different cultures across the globe.
4. Students will learn to analyze complex political phenomena through careful engagement with theory and evidence

Reading Skills:

As you manage the reading for this and other courses, you are likely to find, if you have not already, that there is no correlation between effort and outcome. It is entirely possible to spend several hours reading something without “getting it.” And it is equally possible to spend less than a half-hour reading something else and getting to the heart of the argument. You will have to devise for yourselves ways to read efficiently. These are some devices that may help:

1. Figure out what the heart of an argument is before you read deeply: skim, read the abstracts, the jacket blurbs, often short reviews published elsewhere. When you know where the center of gravity is, you read more efficiently.
2. Read actively: do not simply soak up the reading for what the author wants to tell you, but approach it with questions, and try to answer them for yourself as you make your way through.
3. Use other peoples’ skills: you do not have to do all the work yourself. It is not “cheating” if you talk through the argument with someone else before or after you delve in, or look at reviews for explication, or form reading groups where you can discuss the argument with each other.
4. Write in order to read. The response papers for this class and the (non-graded) worksheet attached should help.
5. Use diagrams if necessary: often, the structure of an argument can be most clearly expressed if you “draw” it, using arrows and lines, than by trying to understand it in words.
6. Organize your notes in a way that makes retention and information retrieval possible: you could use index cards, annotated bibliographies, database programs like Filemaker Pro etc. These rules may be obvious to some and not to others. Basically, do whatever works for you. But be self-conscious about the reading process as a skill that has to be learned and not necessarily as an ability that either comes naturally or does not.

Reading Worksheet

For each book, chapter, or article assigned in this course, you should fill out the following (non-graded) worksheet. Many of these points can be addressed in a sentence or two (e.g. Questions 1 and 2; in some cases, answers will not need even to be full sentences (e.g., Question); and in some cases, the answers may overlap. These worksheets should be retained: they will be useful for future reference.

1. State the central question that the reading addresses.
2. State the central argument(s) defended in the paper in response to this question.
3. What type of reasoning or evidence is used to support these arguments? If it is an analytical paper, what is the logic that undergirds the argument? If an empirical paper, what type of data is employed? Are there other data sources that you think might be more appropriate?
4. Do you find the claims of the reading convincing? What do you see as the main gaps that need to be filled?
5. Why (if at all) is the reading interesting?
6. Do you agree with the main claims? What are your hesitations? (This may simply involve restatement of previous points.)
7. Identify one or two implicit premises or background assumptions in the paper that you think are especially controversial or objectionable.
8. Considering your answers to the previous questions, write an abstract for the article of no more than 100 words. (Feel free to repeat formulations given in response to earlier questions.)
9. When you have done this for individual readings, take some time to think about the various readings you have been assigned in relation to each other. See if you can write or imagine a summary table for all the readings taken together which compares and contrasts them.