
POSC 5500 Comparative Political Analysis

Fall 2013

Tuesday, 5:30 p.m – 7:20 p.m.

Dealy Hall 305

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Office Location: Faber Hall, Rm. 677

Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a critical survey of main theoretical debates and methodological approaches in the field of comparative politics. This strand of research seeks to explain a wide range of political outcomes, including democratization, civic engagement, ethnic conflict, and corruption, by comparing countries or regions so the course draws upon empirical evidence from Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. The course begins by examining how such theoretical frameworks as rational choice, political culture, and institutionalism advance our understanding of domestic politics. The next section focuses on the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods in the field of comparative politics. The concluding section unpacks the process of writing an empirical research paper in social sciences.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

- advance their knowledge of comparative politics literature
- strengthen their understanding of world politics
- design and complete an empirical research project

Course Requirements

Participation	10 percent
Research Presentation	10 percent
Midterm Exam	20 percent
Research Design	10 percent
Literature Review	10 percent
Final Paper	40 percent

Participation

Student participation is critical to effective learning. Students are expected to read assigned readings prior to the class and meaningfully contribute to classroom discussions of the material.

Research Presentation

Based upon one's research for the final paper, each student will make a short presentation and answer questions posed by fellow students.

Midterm Exam

There will be a midterm exam consisting of multiple choice questions and two short essays. The exam will cover the course material, including assigned readings, lectures, and classroom discussions. A make-up exam will be administered only in case of a medical emergency.

Research Design

This assignment is designed to prepare students for writing an empirical research paper in comparative politics. Each student is required to submit a one-page single-spaced summary of the proposed research project. The research design should include a clear statement of the research question and a brief description of research methodology.

Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to provide a critical overview of existing academic literature pertinent to one's research project. The literature review should be the maximum of five double-spaced pages long, including a list of references at the end of the text. Please use the APSA citation style to cite sources and do not exceed the page limits.

Final Research Paper

Each student is expected to write an empirical research paper at the end of the course. The paper should be approximately 20 pages long, using 12-point Times New Roman font. The research paper should be divided into several sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and conclusion. More detailed guidelines regarding this assignment will be provided in class.

Important Dates

October 22	Midterm Exam
November 12	Literature Review due
November 26	Research Design due
December 17	Final Research Paper due

Late Penalty

You are responsible for submitting a hard copy of each assignment at the beginning of the class on due date. Email submissions will not be accepted. Assignments handed in after the class will be considered late. The late assignment will receive a ten percent penalty per each day of lateness.

Required Readings

The course is primarily based upon articles in refereed academic journals. You are responsible for downloading the assigned material through the Blackboard and reading it prior to the class. You are also strongly encouraged to keep track of world politics to draw a stronger connection between political science theories and current events.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (Sept 3). Introduction

Week 2 (Sept 10). Democracy and Its Alternatives

Coppedge, Michael, et al. 2011. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach." *Perspectives on Politics* 9(2): 247–267

Huntington, Samuel. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 3–30

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51–65

Week 3 (Sept 17). Rational Choice and Political Culture

Amadae, S. M. and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. 1999. "The Rochester School: The Origins of Positive Political Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 269–295

Goldfarb, Robert and Lee Sigelman. 2010. "Does 'Civic Duty' Solve the Rational Choice Voter Turnout Puzzle?" *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 22(3): 275–300

Dalton, Russell and Steven Weldon. 2010. "Germans Divided? Political Culture in a United Germany." *German Politics* 19(1): 9–23

Fisman, Raymond and Edward Miguel. 2007. "Corruption, Norms, and Legal Enforcement: Evidence from Diplomatic Parking Tickets." *Journal of Political Economy* 115(6): 1020–108

Week 4 (Sept 24). Institutions

North, Douglass. 1991. "Institutions." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5(1): 97–112

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "Colonial Origins of Economic Development." *American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369–1400

Bratton, Michael. 2007. "Formal versus Informal Institutions in Africa." *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 96–110

Week 5 (Oct 1). Political Behavior

Dalton, Russell. 2000. "Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior." *Comparative Political Studies* 33(6/7): 912–940

Carreras, Miguel and Néstor Castañeda-Angarita. 2013. "Who Votes in Latin America? A Test of Three Theoretical Perspectives." *Comparative Political Studies* (June): 1–26

Beissinger, Mark. 2013. "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine's Orange Revolution." *American Political Science Review* 107(3): 574–592

Hoffman, Michael and Amaney Jamal. 2012. "The Youth and the Arab Spring: Cohort Differences and Similarities." *Middle East Law and Governance* 4: 168–188

Week 6 (Oct 8). The Role of International Actors

Wright, Joseph and Mathew Winters. 2010. "The Politics of Effective Foreign Aid." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 61–80

Finkel, Steven, Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Mitchell Seligson. 2007. "The Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003." *World Politics* 59(3): 404–439

Hyde, Susan. 2010. "Experimenting in Democracy Promotion: International Observers and the 2004 Presidential Elections in Indonesia." *Perspectives on Politics* 8(2): 511–527

Week 7 (Oct 15). The Role of Non-State Actors

Bernhard, Michael and Ekrem Karakoc. 2007. "Civil Society and the Legacies of Dictatorship." *World Politics* 59(4): 539–567

Bunce, Valerie and Sharon Wolchik. 2010. "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *World Politics* 62(1): 43–86

Horowitz, Michael. 2010. "Nonstate Actors and the Diffusion of Innovations: The Case of Suicide Terrorism." *International Organization* 64: 33–64

Week 8 (Oct 22). Midterm Exam

Week 9 (Oct 29). Writing a Literature Review

Knopf, Jeffrey and Iain McMenamin. 2008. "How to Write a Literature Review." In *Publishing Political Science*, ed. Stephen Yoder. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, pp. 101–116

Week 10 (Nov 5). Research Design

Baglione, Lisa. 2012. "Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism: The Research Design." In *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, pp. 99–129

Gerring, John. 2011. "How Good Is Good Enough? A Multidimensional, Best-Possible Standard for Research Design." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(3) 625–636

Week 11 (Nov 12). Writing Lab

Note: Please bring a copy of the literature review for peer review

Week 12 (Nov 19). Quantitative Research Methods

Weisberg, Herbert, Jon Krosnick and Bruce Bowen. 1996. "The Nature of Survey Research." In *Introduction to Survey Research, Polling, and Data Analysis*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 3–28

Blair, Graeme, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall. 2013. "Explaining Support for Combatants in Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review* 107(4)

Boix, Charles and Milan Svolik. 2013. "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government: Institutions and Power-Sharing in Dictatorships." *Journal of Politics* 75(2): 300–316

Week 13 (Nov 26). Qualitative Research Methods

Note: Research design is due.

Jane Ritchie. 2003. "The Applications of Qualitative Methods to Social Research." In *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, eds. Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 24–46

Wedeen, Lisa. 2010. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255–272

Cohen, Jeffrey. 2000. "Problems in the Field: Participant Observation and the Assumption of Neutrality." *Field Methods* 12(4): 316–333

Week 14 (Dec 3). No Class (Individual Meetings with the Instructor)

Week 15 (Dec 10). Student Presentations

Week 16 (Dec 17). Wrap-Up Discussion

Note: The final research paper is due.