

## Political Science G6403

### ISSUES IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Spring, 2007

270B International Affairs Building  
Tuesdays, 2:10-4:00

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4:00-5:00 and by appointment

#### OVERVIEW

This seminar surveys major questions that motivate contemporary research in comparative politics. The course is designed to introduce PhD students to the modern subfield, and to help prepare them for success on the comparative comprehensive exam. The course should also help students to develop skills that are necessary to become successful teachers and scholars in the comparative subfield.

The course is not designed as an exercise in intellectual history, though some "classics" are included. It is also not designed to teach particular approaches or methods in the study of comparative politics, though many such approaches and methods are included in the readings. Instead, the course is designed to give students a sense of what we "know" today about the answers to some major questions that animate the subfield. Of course, no such course can be comprehensive, and we have to limit ourselves to 39 such questions.

The course is divided into four sections. [Part I](#) surveys the "building blocks" of most arguments in comparative politics: institutions, culture, parties, groups, and regime types. Parts II-IV examine different types of political "outcomes" that are the subject of much comparative research. [Part II](#) focuses on macro political outcomes, including research on regime stability, violence, revolution, civil war, the welfare state, public good provision, representation, and political accountability. [Part III](#) focuses on the interaction of politics and economics, including research on economic growth, corruption, inequality, property rights, and economic reform. [Part IV](#) focuses on micro political behavior, including research on ideology, partisanship, and political participation.

\*\*Note: I will be out of town on February 20. The class will be held instead at 10am on February 16.\*\*

#### Requirements and grading

The requirements include:

*Weekly readings:* Students must be prepared each week to discuss the core readings. Students who are making any sort of presentation are exempt from this requirement [15 percent of grade].

*Presentations:* Each student must make one "solo" presentation and one "collaborative" presentation (with one or more colleagues). The topic will be assigned by me (i.e., no student choice) [20 percent of grade for each presentation]

*Written essay:* Each student must write an answer to any question posed on the syllabus (the student is free to choose which one)[20 percent of grade]

*Data reports:* Each student will post one report on data that are used to conduct question that the student chooses [10 percent]. The student will briefly describe the report in class.

*Final exam:* Each student will write an answer to any one question on the syllabus that the student desires. Students cannot choose a question on which they presented, or on which they wrote their written essay. It is a closed book, one hour exam that is intended to give the student a taste of the environment for the oral portion of the comprehensive exam [15 percent of grade].

### Course materials

The following materials are available for purchase at Labyrinth Bookstore (on 112<sup>th</sup> between Broadway and Amsterdam:

#### *Required*

Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba. *The civic culture; political attitudes and democracy in five nations*

Gary W. Cox. *Making votes count : strategic coordination in the world's electoral system*

G. Bingham Powell, Jr. *Elections as instruments of democracy : majoritarian and proportional visions*

Adam Przeworski... [et al.]. *Democracy and development : political institutions and material well-being in the world, 1950-1990*

Matthew Soberg Shugart and John M. Carey. *Presidents and assemblies: constitutional design and electoral dynamics*

Carles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*

All other materials from the core readings are available electronically. The core readings that are not in books for purchase and that have no link on this syllabus are available electronically through the class web page of CourseWorks. In addition, many of the supplemental and suggested readings are available electronically or on reserve at Lehman.

## The presentations

Each week, one half hour of the course will be devoted to presentations by students on questions that are posed on the syllabus. These presentations should be 15 minutes each, and should be presented using slides on an overhead projector. In general, weak presentations will simply summarize the readings ("Smith says x, Jones says y"). Strong presentations will

Describe any key conceptual issues that must be addressed by work on the question (e.g., a presentation on inequality might discuss different ways of conceptualizing inequality);

Describe the central arguments/debates in the literature on the question (e.g., a presentation on corruption might focus on different types of variables –such as regime type, decentralization, level of development -- that influence corruption levels);

Describe thorny methodological issues that bedevil work on the question (e.g., a presentation on social revolutions might discuss the problems created by the small-n nature of the phenomenon).

Offer criticisms and/or suggest pathways for future research.

To help students get started, the syllabus lists "Suggested Readings." These might serve as a place to begin, but students must do their own bibliographic research. Students should obviously not feel obligated to cover all of these suggested readings (which would often be impossible). Tips of conducting bibliographic research are [here](#).

Students should post their presentations on the "Lecture" section of CourseWorks. They should also create a bibliography of the works they have consulted.

## Written essay

The written essay will be of the same nature as the presentation, though, obviously, written instead of presented. The written essays must be posted on the "Lecture" section of CourseWorks before the class meeting time for that question. Essays should be five to seven pages, should focus on the same issues discussed in "The Presentations". As with the presentations, students should create a bibliography of the works they have consulted. Students may post entries from this bibliography to the course bibliographic data base if they are willing.

## Data reports

Most weeks have one or more questions about data resources that are used to study the topic for the week. Each student will respond to one of these questions by writing a brief report. The best synopses will

*Describe the conceptual variable(s) that are being measured by the data that is the topic of the report.* For example, a presentation on measuring party locations would simply state that the data described are used to place parties in an ideological space, and might then describe different ways of conceptualizing this space

*Describe what data exist on the topic.* For example, the party locations presentation might include data from mass surveys, elite surveys, party manifestos, or legislative roll calls.

*Give (brief) examples of how the data have been used.*

*Discuss (briefly) any significant controversies that exist regarding measurement.*

*Provide links to relevant codebooks or data sets.*

I have in mind a brief document for this assignment (1-2 pages), with useful links to data, codebooks, or especially relevant bibliographic resources. All reports should be posted to the relevant "Assignment" in CourseWorks.

Students can choose which Data question to answer, and "property rights" will be "first come, first served" (i.e., the first person to tell me they want to work on a specific question will be allowed to do so, with only one person working on each topic). Also, the questions are "suggested" – if a student would like to pose and answer a different data question, including data questions about archives or other important resources for qualitative research, they can do so with my approval.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **January 16: Introduction**

## **PART I: BASIC BUILDINGBLOCKS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS ARGUMENTS**

### **January 23 -- Week 1: Conceptualizing political institutions**

Discussion topic: What are political institutions and what do they do?

Core readings for discussion:

[Barry Weingast, "Rational Choice Institutionalism" \(from \*State of the Discipline\*..\).](#)

[David, Paul A., "Clio and the Economics of QWERTY" \(in \*Economic History: A\*](#)

[Necessary Though Not Sufficient Condition for an Economist\), \*American Economic Review\*, Vol. 75, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Ninety-Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association. \(May, 1985\), pp. 332-337.](#)

[Riker, "Implications from the disequilibrium of majority rule for the study of institutions." \*American Political Science Review\*, Vol. 74, No.2. \(Jun., 1980\), pp. 432-446.](#)

[Bender, Glazer and Hammond, "Theories of Delegation," \*Annual Review of Political Science\* 2001, Vol. 4 Issue 1, p235](#)

[Evan S. Lieberman. 2001. "Causal Inference in Historical Analysis: A Specification of Periodization Strategies." \*Comparative Political Studies\* 34 \(9\), 1011-1035.](#)

### [Supplemental readings](#)

[Presentation topic 1: How do we explain the emergence and evolution of institutions?](#)

[Presentation topic 2: What is "path dependence" and what, if anything, does it help us understand?](#)

## **January 30, Week 2. Conceptualizing political regimes**

Discussion topic: What are the relevant distinctions between different types of political regimes?

Core readings for discussion:

Shugart, Matthew Soberg and John M. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapters 1-4. (Lehman JF255 .S48 1992)

Powell, *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*, (New Haven : Yale University Press, c2000), Part I (LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JF1001 .P674 2000).

[Tsebelis, George. "Decision making in political systems: veto players in presidentialism, parliamentarism, multicameralism and multipartyism." \*British Journal of Political Science\* 25:289-325.](#)

Adam Przeworski... [et al.]. *Democracy and development: political institutions and material well-being in the world, 1950-1990*, chapter 1

[Lijphart, \*Patterns of Democracy\*, chapters 1-3](#)

### [Supplemental readings](#)

[Presentation topic1: Measuring Democracy](#)

[Presentation topic2: Religion and regime type: Are particular religions more or less compatible with particular regime types?](#)

Data report questions:

What data measure the nature of constitutional arrangements (e.g., the level of separation of powers, federalism, judicial independence, etc.)?

What data measure the degree of "democracy" across countries and over time?

### February 6, Week 3: The cultural context

Discussion topic: What is political culture and where does it come from?

Core readings:

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, passim, but especially chapters 1, 5, 10, 11-13.(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JA74 .A4 1989)

[DavidJ. Elkins and Richard E.B. Simeon, "A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?" \*Comparative Politics\*, 11 \(January 1979\): 127-146](#)

[Avner Greif, "Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: A Historical and Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies," in \*The Journal of Political Economy\*, Vol. 102, No. 5. \(Oct.,1994\), pp. 912-950.](#)

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Differences: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review*. 98:529-46.

[Inglehart, Ronald, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," \*American Political Science Review\* 82 \(December 1988\), pp. 1203-1230](#)

[Supplemental readings](#)

[Presentation topic 1: Are particular cultures conducive to democracy?](#)

[Presentation topic2: How do you measure culture?](#)

Data report:

What data measure social capital?

How are surveys used to measure political culture?

## February 13, Week 4: Parties and Party Systems

Discussion topic: What are the relevant differences in party systems and what creates them?

Core readings for discussion:

[John H. Aldrich. 1995. \*Why Parties?\* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1. \(LEHMAN RESERVES JK2261 .A46 1995\)](#)

Gary Cox, *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, chapters 1-5, 10. (LEHMAN RESERVES JF1001.C69 1997)

[Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan. "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," pp. 1-64 in Lipset and Rokkan \(eds.\), \*Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives\*, \(1967\). \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JF2051 .L47\)](#)

Shugart and Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapters 9-11. (LEHMAN JF255 .S48 1992).

### [Supplemental readings](#)

[Presentation topic1: Why do parties form?](#)

[Presentation topic2: Lipset and Rokan revisited: How does social structure influence the party system?](#)

Data report:

What data measure the nature of electoral laws?

What data measure party locations in policy spaces?

What are the most important data sets on election outcomes, at the national and district level?

**Rescheduled class: February 16, Week 5: Interest group organization**

Discussion topic: When and how do interest groups organize themselves?

Core readings for discussion:

[Hall, Peter A. and David Soskice, eds., \*Varieties of capitalism : the institutional foundations of comparative\* \(Oxford \[England\] ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001\): Introduction. \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVESH501.V355 2001\)](#)

[Torben Iversen, "Power, Flexibility and the Breakdown of Centralized Wage Bargaining: The Cases of Denmark and Sweden in Comparative Perspective." \*Comparative Politics\*, Vol. 28, No. 4. \(Jul., 1996\), pp. 399-436.](#)

[Mancur Olson, \*The Rise and Decline of Nations\* \(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982\), chaps. 2-3. \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES HD82.O565 1982\)](#)

[Peter Swenson, "Bringing Capital Back In, Or Social Democracy Reconsidered: Employer Power, Cross-Class Alliances, and Centralization of Industrial Relations in Denmark and Sweden," \*World Politics\* 43, no. 4 \(July 1991\), pp. 513-544.](#)

[Supplemental readings](#)

[Presentation topic1: How do international forces influence the organization and behavior of parties and groups?](#)

[Presentation topic2: What are the policy preferences of groups?](#)

Data report:

What data measure labor organization, including the degree of "corporatism" across countries?

What data measure labor union activity, particularly strikes?

**\*\*\*February 20 – NO CLASS,\*\*\***

**PART II. MACRO "POLITICAL" OUTCOMES**

**February 27, Week 6: Political stability**

Discussion topic: What causes transitions between authoritarian and democratic forms of government?

Core readings for discussion:

[Seymour Martin Lipset. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy" in \*The American Political Science Review\*, Vol. 53, No. 1.\(Mar., 1959\), pp. 69-105.](#)

Adam Przeworski. et al, *Democracy and development : political institutions and material well-being in the world,1950-1990* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2000): chapter 2. (LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JC423 .D46 2000g)

Boix, Carles, *Democracy and Redistribution*, chapters 1-2, 4

[Boix, Carles, Stokes, Susan Carol. "Endogenous Democratization." \*World Politics\*, Volume 55, Number 4, July 2003.](#)

Supplemental readings

[Presentation topic1: What encourages the consolidation of democracy?](#)

[Presentation topic2: What causes cabinet instability and why does it matter?](#)

Data report:

What data measure transitions to and from authoritarian governments?

What data measure cabinet composition and cabinet duration?

**March 6, Week 7: Violence and revolution**

Discussion topic: What is ethnic identity and when do ethnic groups collide (or cease to do so)?

Core readings for discussion:

[Lijphart, Arend. \*Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration\*\(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977\), chapters 1-2 \(pp. 1-52\).\(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JC421 .L54\)](#)

Brubaker Rogers, *Nationalism Reframed*, ch. 2, also in [Brubaker. "Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An](#)

[Institutionalist Account," Theory and Society, February 1994.](#)

[Snyder, Jack, \*From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict\* \(New York: W. W. Norton, 2000\), chap. 1 \(pp. 15-44\).  
\(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JC421 .S5572000\)](#)

[Fearon, James, and David Laitin, "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation,"  
\*American Political Science Review\*, 90, no. 4 \(December 1996\): 715-735.](#)

### Supplemental readings

[Presentation topic 1: What are social revolutions and when do they occur?](#)

[Presentation topic 2 : What causes civil war?](#)

Data report:

What data measure domestic violence and civil war?

What data measure social heterogeneity (ethnic, religious, linguistic fragmentation, etc.)?

### **March 13, Spring break**

### **March 20, Week 8: The Welfare State and the Provision of Public Goods**

Discussion topic: What creates incentives for redistribution?

Core readings for discussion:

[Paul Pierson, "Coping with Permanent Austerity: Welfare State Restructuring in Advanced Democracies," in \*The New Politics of the Welfare State\*, Paul Pierson, editor \(OUP, 2001\)](#)

[Torben Iversen, "The Dynamics of Welfare State Expansion." In \*The New Politics of the Welfare State\*, Paul Pierson, editor \(OUP, 2001\)](#)

[Milesi-Ferreti, Perotti and Rostagno, "Electoral Systems and Public Spending"  
QJE 2002](#)

[Evelyn Huber, Charles Ragin, and John Stephens, "Social Democracy, Christian Democracy, Constitutional Structure, and the Welfare State," \*American Journal of Sociology\*, 99, No. 3, 1993, pp. 711-49.](#)

[Mares, Isabella. "The Sources of Business Interest in Social Insurance..."World Politics, Jan 2003, p. 229](#)

### Supplemental readings

[Presentation topic1: What influences the size of government?](#)

[Presentation topic2: What creates incentives for the provision of public goods?](#)

Data report:

What data measure government expenditures, in the aggregate and by category?

What data measure tax and transfer policies across countries?

### **March 27, Week 9: Representation and Accountability**

Discussion topic: What is political representation and what influences its quality?

Core readings for discussion:

[Manin, Przeworski and Stokes, "Elections and Representation," in \*Democracy, accountability, and representation\*, edited by Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, Bernard Manin \(New York ; Cambridge :Cambridge University Press, 1999\). \(LEHMAN JC423 .D43946 1999\)](#)

[Susan Stokes, "What do Policy Switches Tell us about Democracy" chapter 3 in \*Democracy, accountability, and representation\*, edited by Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, Bernard Manin \(New York; Cambridge :Cambridge University Press, 1999\). \(LEHMAN JC423 .D43946 1999\).](#)

G. Bingham Powell, Jr. *Elections as instruments of democracy : majoritarian and proportional visions* (New Haven : Yale University Press, c2000), part III. (LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JF1001 .P674 2000)

[James A. Stimson; Michael B. Mackuen; Robert S. Erikson "Dynamic Representation," \*American Political Science Review\*, Vol. 89, No. 3. \(Sep., 1995\), pp. 543-565.](#)

### Supplemental readings

[Presentation topic1: What is political accountability and what influences it quality?](#)

[Presentation topic2: When is delegation to bureaucrats inconsistent with democratic representation?](#)

Data question: (Surveys are most often used to measure representation. A data question on surveys is in Week 10.)

What data describe the level of individual freedom and the protection of civil liberties across countries?

What data characterize features of the public sector, such as the number of public employees?

### **PART III: POLITICS AND ECONOMICS**

#### **April 3, Week 10: Politics and economic outcomes**

Discussion: How do political factors influence economic growth?

Core readings:

Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James A Robinson. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation," *American Economic Review*. Nashville: Dec 2001. Vol. 91, Iss. 5. (Not available online but [working paper available](#))

Adam Przeworski. et al, *Democracy and development : political institutions and material well-being in the world,1950-1990* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2000): chapters 3-5. (LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JC423.D46 2000g)

[Glaser, la Porta, Lopez and Shleifer, "Do Institutions Cause Growth?" Journal of Economic Growth9:271-303.](#)

[Rodrik et al. "Institutions Rule: The Primacy of institutions over Geography and Integration in economic Development" Journal of Economic Growth 9:131-65\(2004\)](#)

Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*, ch. 4

[Supplemental readings:](#)

[Presentation topic 1: What are the political sources of inequality?](#)

[Presentation topic 2: Where do property rights come from and what do they do?](#)

Data report:

What data measure economic growth?

What data measure inequality?

What data measure the security of property rights?

### **April 10, Week 13: Corruption**

Discussion question: What causes political corruption?

Core readings:

Rose-Ackerman, Susan, *The Causes of Corruption*, part III, pp. 111-174.

[Hellman, J. and M. Shankerman, \(2000\) "Intervention, Corruption and Capture. The Nexus between enterprises and the state" \*Economics of Transition\*, 8\(3\): 545-576.](#)

Shleifer, A. and R.W. Vishny. "Corruption," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1993, Vol. 108, No. 3, 599-617

Treisman, D., 2000. The causes of corruption: A cross-national study. *Journal of Public Economics* 76 (2000) 399-457.

[Supplemental readings:](#)

[Presentation topic 1: When do resources hinder democracy ?](#)

[Presentation topic 2: How do political factors influence incentives for open versus closed economies?](#)

Data report:

What data measure corruption?

What data measure economic openness?

### **PART III: MICRO POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

#### **April 17, Week 10: Individual attitudes about politics**

Discussion topic: What is ideology and how does it orient individuals toward politics?

Core readings for discussion:

[Michael Freedon, \*Ideologies and political theory : a conceptual approach\*\(Oxford : Clarendon Press ; New York : Oxford University Press, 1996\), chapter1. \(LEHMAN JA83 .F76 1996\)](#)

[Geertz, "Ideology as Cultural System" and Converse, "The nature of belief systems in mass publics," in David E. Apter, ed., \*Ideology and Discontent\* \(New York : Free Press, c1964\). \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES JC311 .A741964\)](#)

[Inglehart, Ronald. \*Modernization and Postmodernization: cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies\* \(Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, c1997\), chapter1, 4-5. \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES HM101 .J554 1997\)](#)

[Kitschelt,Herbert; Hellemans, Staf. "The Left-Right Semantics and the New Politics Cleavage" \*Comparative Political Studies\*, Volume 23, Issue 2, 1990.](#)

[Paul M. Sniderman,Richard A. Brody, Philip E. Tetlock, \*Reasoning and choice : explorations in political psychology\* \(Cambridge \[England\] :New York : Cambridge University Press, 1991\) chapter 8. \(LEHMAN HN90.P8 R431991\)](#)

Supplemental readings:

[Presentation topic1: What is party identification and where does it exist?](#)

[Presentation topic2: What shapes individual attitudes toward their governments?](#)

Data report:

What mass surveys can be used to study ideology, party identification, and other attitudes toward politics?

#### **April 24, Week 13: Individual participation in politics**

Discussion topic: What factors encourage individuals' participate in protests?

Core readings:

[Mark Granovetter. "Threshold Models of Collective Behavior," \*American Journal of Sociology\*, Vol. 83, No. 6. \(May, 1978\), pp.1420-1443.](#)

[Samuel Popkin. "Political entrepreneurs and peasant movements in Vietnam", in Michael Taylor, ed. \*Rationality and Revolution\* \(Cambridge University Press, 1989\). \(LEHMAN HX550.R48R37 1988\)](#)

[James C. Scott, \*The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia\*. \(New Haven : Yale University Press, 1976\), chapters1, 2. \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES HD1513.A755 S36\)](#)

[Sidney Tarrow, \*Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics\*. \(Cambridge \[England\] ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1994\),chapter 1. \(LEHMAN-SOCIAL WORK RESERVES HM291.T3531994\)](#)

[Charles Tilly. "Models and Realities of Popular Collective Action," in \*Social Research\* 52 \(4\) \(Winter 1985\). \(LEHMAN H1 .S53\)](#)

[Supplemental readings:](#)

[Presentation topic1: The individual decision to vote](#)

[Presentation topic2: When do labor unions go on strike?](#)

Data report:

What data measure mass protests and civil disobedience?

What data measure voter turnout?