

Introduction to World Politics

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Office Hours: M/W 2-3 pm

Class Hours: T/Th 3-5pm

Class Room: XXYY

1 Course Description

As students of world politics, we rely on the comparative method to understand why and how politics takes place the way it does in countries around the world. The specific approaches have typically ranged from the use of statistical analysis and mathematical models to historical comparative analysis, single case studies, and ethnography. The problem with the term comparative politics, according to Arend Lijphart, is that it indicates the how, but it does not specify the what of the analysis.

This undergraduate course offers a quick survey of some of the main concepts, theories, and debates in comparative politics during the past decades. Of particular importance, we will seek to understand the origin of democratic regimes, how they differ from other types of regimes, how politicians and citizens may erode their foundations, and how authoritarian polities emerge. We will also study how states are formed and challenged and why the process of building political order in developing countries is so radically different from the European experience centuries ago. In exploring these and many other subjects, we will find a balance between classic and contemporary works. Moreover, as a course on world politics, we will encounter works of different methodological approaches and with evidence from around the world.

2 Requirements

2.1 Class participation (5%)

This class will be taught in lecture format, but its success depends on students' active participation and engagement with the discussion. As such, participants are required to do the assigned reading for the week and come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss

the main ideas. A good way to understand the readings and tackle their main themes is to engage with them in an active manner. This implies asking: what is the main question and key arguments made by the author? What type of evidence does the text provide in support for the claims? How does the author use this evidence to answer the question? Is there a better and more convincing method to tackle the question? What are the implications of the argument to understanding other time periods or regions of the world?

Class participation lies at the core of the seminar and I hope that each student will be willing to speak up and contribute to class discussion during the course of every class. Attendance and participation are mandatory. If you are ill or cannot attend class, please email me in advance to let me know you cannot make it. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the participation component of the grade.

2.2 Weekly responses (20%)

For at least 3 times during the semester, you are expected to email responses to the reading to both the instructors and your classmates. There are three things you should include in your email: (1) two things you learned or found particularly interesting and (2) two questions or criticisms. They need not be very long, but they should clearly demonstrate that you have reflected on the reading. They will be a key part of our class discussions.

2.3 Three short papers (25% each)

You will be required to write three short papers throughout the semester. The objective of these papers will be to get you used to the habit of expressing abstract ideas and analyzing empirical evidence in a written way. Papers will not be longer than 5 pages, double-spaced, with default (1 inch) margins, left-aligned, and written in 12 pt Times New Roman. The specific prompt, rules, and expectations will be thoroughly discussed in class.

3 Class policy

3.1 Academic integrity

You are expected to abide by the Notre Dame [Academic Code of Honor](#). In that sense, I expect your submitted work to be of your own and not a plagiarism of other people's ideas and works. Plagiarism, in any of its forms, will not be tolerated and will be reported in accordance with the procedure required by the Honor Code. It is important for you to familiarize with the proper methods of citation to avoid any possible misunderstanding. In all your work, you are free to choose your preferred citation style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago).

3.2 During Class

There are basic rules of etiquette in academic settings. Please refrain from using phones or other devices that distract you and your fellow classmates. You are allowed to use computers in class. I trust that your use of computers is related to our class and that it will not prevent you from participating actively in the discussion.

3.3 Attendance and late assignments

Deadlines are to be met. This is an important basis for equity among students. If you have a conflict with a class session, please contact me in advance. If you cannot meet a deadline due to medical or personal issues, contact me and provide a notice from the dean and/or doctor. If you do not have a justified excuse for late assignments, you will be penalized and receive a deduction of a third of a grade for each 24 hours of lateness. For instance, A- becomes B+, B+ becomes B, etc.

4 Class schedule

Week 1. General Overview - Why and How do we compare (Part I)?

Munck, G. L., and Snyder, R. (2007). Debating the Direction of Comparative Politics: An Analysis of Leading Journals. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(1), 5–31.

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

Week 2. General Overview - Why and How do we compare (Part II)?

Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), chapter 1

Goertz, Gary and James Mahoney. 2012. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*, Princeton University Press.

Week 3. Democracy and Democratization

Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Pp. 1-12 and 78-137.

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

Week 4. Democratic Erosion

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

Berman, S. (1997). Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic. *World Politics*, 49(3), 401-429.

Svolik, M. W. (2019). Polarization versus Democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, (3), 20-32.

Week 5. Authoritarian Politics

Svolik, M. (2012). *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule* (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1-2.

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

Week 6. States and Political Order (Part I)

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *The American Political Science Review* 87(3): 567-76.

Tuong Vu, "Studying the State Through State Formation," *World Politics* 62, 1, 2010, 148-175.

Week 7. States and Political Order (Part II)

Slater, Dan, and Diana Kim. 2015. "Standoffish States: Nonliterate Leviathans in Southeast Asia." *TRaNS: Trans -Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* 3(01): 25-44.

Ch, Rafael, Jacob Shapiro, Abbey Steele, and Juan F Vargas. 2018. "Endogenous Taxation in Ongoing Internal Conflict: The Case of Colombia." *American Political Science Review* 112(4): 996-1015.

Week 8. Contentious politics, violence, and civil wars (Part I)

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

Timur Kuran. 1991. "Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989." *World Politics*, 44(1): 7-48.

Week 9. Contentious politics, violence, and civil wars (Part II)

Guillermo Trejo. 2012. *Popular Movements in Autocracies: Religion, Repression, and Indigenous Collective Action in Mexico*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, Introduction and Chapter 1.

Doug McAdam. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Introduction and Chapter 3.

Week 10. Voting Behavior and Political Parties (Part I)

Herbert Kitschelt, "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 6/7 (August/September 2000), pp. 845-879.

Stokes, Susan, "Political Clientelism," pp. 604-627 in Boix and Stokes, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford University Press 2007)., pp. 604-627,

Week 11. Voting Behavior and Political Parties

Carlin, R., Singer, M., and Zechmeister, E. (Eds.). (2015). *The Latin American Voter: Pursuing Representation and Accountability in Challenging Contexts*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 2.

Hagopian, Frances. 2007. *Parties and Voters in New Democracies*, in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 12. Political development, Institutions, and Prosperity

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson. 2001. "Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91:5, 1369-1401.

North, D., Wallis, J., and Weingast, B. (2009). *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1.

Week 13. Ethnicity, Religion, and Culture

Pipa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular. Religion and Politics Worldwide*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, chapter 8.

Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: India and Beyond," in *World Politics*, April 2001.

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): 529-545.