

ISC131: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Goals and Description

This course introduces students to important concepts, themes, and approaches in the comparative study of politics. The range of Comparative Politics is broad and the field is united by the *comparative method*. The goal of the course is to introduce the student to the main themes of Comparative Politics while at the same time introducing them to important methodological debates. Topics covered in this class include the state, the nation, regime type, electoral systems and political parties as well as questions of ethnic identity, conflict, civil war, nation-building, and revolution.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of completing this course, you will:

1. Improve your presentation skills.
2. Develop skills of analytic argumentation and improve the clarity and effectiveness of your writing.
3. Understand the comparative method.
4. Learn how to read and interpret *state of the art* texts.
5. Learn about the main themes in Comparative Politics.
6. Understand the origins of states, nations, and regime types.

Class Policies

The following policies are important. Read them carefully.

Grading

There are four components to your grade:

- Class Participation: 20% - Students will have to read 1-2 texts per class. They are academic articles or chapters. They aim to introduce the issues and debates for each class and they are the beginning and not the end of the discussion. Active participation in the class is strongly encouraged. You are encouraged to bring with you news stories that are relevant to our class.
- In class midterm: 30% - The midterm will consist of two parts. The first part will be a short knowledge quiz (multiple choice and identification questions) that will count for 75% of your grade. The second part will count for 25% of your grade and will require you to write a Policy Note to a leader. You will be given two questions/topics and you will be expected to write on one of them. Please do not bring with you any notes or reading materials.
- 2 Short assignments: 20% of your grade - Students will have to write two short assignments on themes covered in class or on specific cases (a country, a group, a conflict, etc).

- Final Paper: 30% - There will be an in-class closed-book final that will follow the same structure as the midterm.

If you would like me to re-grade your midterm or the final paper, you must submit a *written* request, explaining why you believe you did not receive the proper grade. I reserve the right to raise *or* lower your grade. There will not be opportunities to do extra-credit work to improve your grade.

Make-up exams

Make-up exams are allowed only if you have consulted with me in advance.

Late Work

Late assignments will lose one third of a full grade (e.g., from an A to a A-, to B+ etc.) for each day after the deadline. There are only two exceptions to the late-assignment policy: illness or family emergency. If either of these circumstances applies, you must provide *written documentation* (such as a doctor's note if you are ill), **and** you must communicate with me *before the assignment is due* (i.e., emailing me on the morning the assignment is due and saying you are sick is not acceptable for avoiding a penalty). I am willing to accommodate documented requests, but you must communicate with me *before* the assignment is due.

Attendance and Participation: Class attendance will be formally recorded and participation incorporated into your final grade. Please come to class on time. Feel free to bring a cup of coffee/tea or water, but please don't bring food. Cell phones must be turned off. Laptop volume must be set to "mute." In case of medical and other emergencies, make sure you notify me in advance and submit relevant documents later.

Course Schedule:

July 2. What is Comparative Politics?

Giovanni, Sartori. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 64, No. 4: 1033-1053.

Lijphart, Arend. 1975. "The comparable-cases strategy in comparative research", in *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 2, July, pp. 158-177.

July 3. Defining the State

Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. 50-58; "The Types of Legitimate Domination", 212-261; 901-905 (Definition of the State); Selections on "Bureaucracy", 956-982, 990-993, and on "Patrimonialism" 1006-1042.

July 4. Defining the Nation

Renan, Ernest. 1995. "What is a Nation?" in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds) *The Nationalism Reader*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, pp. 143-155.

Weber, Max. 1996. "Ethnic Groups," in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader*. New York: New York University Press. pp. 52-56.

July 8. Regime Type

Alvarez, Mike and José Antonio Cheibub, Fernando Limongi, and Adam Przeworski. 1996. "Classifying political regimes." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 31: 3-34.

Freedom House

July 9. What kind of culture is associated with democracy? Does culture explain democracy?

Inglehart, Ronald & Paul Abramson. 1994. "Economic Security and Value Change." *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2:336-354.

July 10. What are the micro foundations of democracy? Why do democracies emerge?

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *American Political Science Review* 87, 567-77.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1965. "Political Development and Political Decay." *World Politics* 17. Pages 386-430.

July 11. What makes democracy endure? Why do democracies break down?

Boix, Carles & Susan C. Stokes. 2003. "Endogenous Democratization," *World Politics* 55(4): 517-549.

Fish, Steven M. & Robin S. Brooks. 2004. "Does Diversity Hurt Democracy?" *Journal of Democracy*.

July 15. Do all voting systems lead to the same results?

Cox, Gary W. 1990. "Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives in Electoral Systems." *American Journal of Political Science* 34. Pages 903-35

July 16. Parties, Elections, Ethnic Cleavages, and Political Competition

Harris Mylonas and Nasos Roussias. 2008. "When do Votes Count? Regime Type, Electoral Conduct, and Political Competition in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 11, 1466-1491.

Darden, Keith and Anna Maria Grzymała-Busse. 2006. "The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse," *World Politics - Volume 59, Number 1*: 83-115.

July 17. Review

July 18. MIDTERM EXAM

July 22. Case Selection: Does the world produce all relevant cases?

Barbara Geddes. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2. Pages 131-152.

Fearon, James D. 1991. "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science." *World Politics* 43. Pages 169-195.

July 23. Why are there revolutions?

Timur Kuran. 1991. "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989 (in Liberalization and Democratization in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe)," *World Politics* 44(October): 7-48.

July 24. What leads to civil war?

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

Andreas Wimmer, Lars-Erik Cederman and Brian Min. 2009. "Ethnic politics and armed conflict. A configurational analysis of a new global dataset", in *American Sociological Review* 74(2): 316-337.

July 25. Why do ethnic groups fight?

David D. Laitin and James D. Fearon. 1996. "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation," *American Political Science Review* 90: 715-35.

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. 2000. "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity," *International Organization* 54, 4:845-877.

July 29. Explaining Patterns of Political Violence

Wimmer, Andreas. 2012. *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Introduction)

Brubaker, Rogers and David Laitin. 1998. "Ethnic and Nationalist Violence." *Annual Review of Sociology* 4: 423-452.

July 30. Why are people willing to die for their nation?

Darden, Keith A. Forthcoming. *Resisting Occupation: Mass Schooling and the Creation of Durable National Loyalties*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

<http://keithdarden.wordpress.com/books/> [chapter 1]

Posen, Barry. 1993. "Nationalism, the Mass Army and Military Power," *International Security* 18, 2: 80-124.

July 31. How do domestic political institutions impact the way a government behaves in the international arena?

Gourevitch, Peter. 1978. "The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics." *International Organization*, vol. 32, no. 4, (Autumn), pp. 881-912.

Putnam, Robert D. 1988. *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games*. *International Organization* 42: 427-60.

August 1. How do states choose their nation-building policies toward non-core groups?

Mylonas, Harris. 2012. *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1 and 2.

August 5. Nationalism and Self Determination Movements

Mylonas, Harris and Nadav Shelef. "Which land is Our Land? Explaining Change in the Desired State Borders by Stateless Nationalist Movements", Unpublished Manuscript.

August 6. Review

August 7. FINAL EXAM