

Introduction to Comparative Politics

V1501, Section 001, Spring 2012

Monday-Wednesday 1:10-2:25

207 Mathematics Building

Instructor:

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Introduction

This course provides a broad overview of the comparative politics subfield. Particular attention will be paid to understanding how and why countries become democracies as well as when democracies remain stable forms of government. After an extended introduction to important issues within comparative politics (e.g., what is politics, what is the state, what is the comparative approach, and what are the fundamental differences among totalitarian, authoritarian and democratic governments), we will explore in more detail questions about how modern democracies function. Is economic development critical to stable democracy? Does the American model of democracy translate well to other countries? Does a population need particular cultural characteristics for its government to function democratically? How important are political parties to democracy? Ultimately, the goal of the course is for students to develop analytic tools for understanding various political systems.

Course Requirements

Your grade will be based on the following:

- (1) Discussion section attendance and participation: 10%
- (2) First paper, due Monday, February 27: 15%
- (3) Midterm exam, on Wednesday, March 7: 25%
- (4) Second paper, due Monday, April 9: 15%
- (5) Final exam: 35%

Discussion sections. Discussion sections begin the second week of class. Section times and locations will be announced in class. You are responsible to sign up for one section through SSOL.

Papers. The two papers, due on Monday, February 27 and Monday, April 9, must be two to three pages in length. The topics will be given in class.

Exams. For the *two in-class exams* you will be responsible for understanding the major arguments that are presented in lectures, sections, and the required readings. The final exam is cumulative. The midterm will be on Wednesday, March 7 and the final will be held on the date assigned by the University.

Grading

Attendance is *mandatory* in discussion sections, and each student should expect to lead the discussion at least once during the semester. Participation grades will be based on students' attendance and contribution to the quality of section discussion. With permission from both TAs, once per semester you can attend a different section if you have a conflict during the time of your own section. The participation grade will be based on attendance, knowledge of the material, and the quality of participation in section discussions.

Students are required to hand in both a hard copy of each paper as well as send an electronic copy via email to their teaching assistant. A paper will be considered late unless it is emailed to the TA before class and handed in during class on the day it is due. Late papers will be downgraded by one-third of a letter grade per class (i.e., two-thirds of a grade per week.)

If you have a personal emergency that precludes you from taking an exam or handing in a paper on time, please inform your TA immediately via email and then take the matter to your academic dean. We will grant extensions or allow makeup exams only when there is approval from your dean's office. If you miss the midterm exam, you are required to take it the next week that you are on campus. Please note that we cannot give incompletes; they are granted by your academic dean who will allow them only if you miss the final exam due to an emergency.

If you ever have a concern about how you have been graded, the first step is to bring your concerns to the TA who graded your work. The policy for doing so is the following:

- (1) You must, in writing, describe what you feel constitutes the correct answer, or, if your concern is about a paper assignment, describes the specific qualities in a paper that would warrant the grade you believe you deserve.
- (2) You must, in writing, describe how your work meets the standard described in 1.

Your TA will then read and evaluate your arguments for a different grade, and will reply in writing. If you ask to have the grade for your work reconsidered, *the TA has the right to change your grade to a better grade, change it to a worse grade, or leave it unchanged.*

Course materials

There is nothing to buy. All the readings can be found on Courseworks.

Other Administrative Issues

If you have a documented disability on record at Columbia University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see Professor Tamas with supporting documentation ASAP.

The professor has complete discretion to change any part of this syllabus.

Schedule

Week 1 (January 18): Introduction

Lecture topics include:

- What is politics?
- What is comparative politics?
- What are power and the distribution of power?

Required readings:

None

Week 2 (January 23, 25): Frameworks for Understanding Politics

Lecture topics include:

- What are the “two faces” of power?
- What does new institutionalism mean, and why is it important?
- What is rational choice theory?
- What are formal modeling and game theory?

Required readings:

- Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz (1962), “Two Faces of Power,” *American Political Science Review* 56 (4), pp. 947-53;
- Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor (1996), “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms.” *Political Studies* 44 (4), pp. 936-57;
- John Huber (1996), *Rationalizing Parliament: Legislative Institutions and Party Politics in France*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 14-16;
- Kenneth Shepsle and Mark Bonchek (1997), *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*, (New York: W. W. Norton), pp. 197-219, 260-96.

Week 3 (January 30, February 1): The Comparative Method

Lecture topics include:

- What is the scientific method as it relates to studying politics?
- What are the strengths and weakness of quantitative methods?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the case study method?
- What is the comparative method, and why do political scientists use it?

Required readings:

- Gary King, et al. (1994), *Designing Social Inquiry*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 3-33;
- Rogowski, Ronald (1995), “The Role of Theory and Anomaly in Social Scientific Inquiry,” Book Review, *American Political Science Review* 89 (2), pp. 467-70;
- John Gerring (2004), “What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?” *American Political Science Review* 98 (2), pp. 341-54;
- Arend Lijphart (1971), “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method,” *American Political Science Review* 65 (3), pp. 682-93.

Week 4 (February 6, 8): The State and Modern Politics

Lecture topics include:

- What are states and how do they differ from nations?
- Why are states a lot like organized crime?
- Why is violence so important to the state?
- What is legitimacy and why is it critical to politics?

Required readings:

- Charles Tilly (1985), "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Peter Evans et al., *Bringing the State Back In*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 169-91;
- Max Weber (1946), "Politics as a Vocation" in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 77-128.

Week 5 (February 13, 15): Authoritarian Regimes and a Worldwide Shift to Democracy?

Lecture topics include:

- Is there a global shift towards democracy, and is that shift coming in waves?
- What are the major types of authoritarian regimes?
- Why are some authoritarian regimes more resilient to democratization than others?

Required readings:

- Samuel Huntington (1993), *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press), pp. 3-30;
- Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996), *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press), pp. 38-54;
- Stephan Levitsky and Lucan Way (2002), "Democracy Without Elections: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2), pp. 51-65.

Week 6 (February 20, 22): Democratic Transitions

Lecture topics include:

- What nations are most likely to experience a democratic transition?
- Is there a general pattern of these transitions?
- How do opposition groups push a regime towards a transition?
- When does the elite of a regime accept a democratic transition without violence?

Required readings:

- Dankwart A. Rustow (1970), "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model", *Comparative Politics* 2 (3), pp. 337-363;
- Thomas Carothers (2002), "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13 (1), pp. 5-21;
- Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter (1986), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), pages TBA;
- Geddes, Barbara (1999), "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, pp. 115-44.

Week 7 (February 27, 29): Economic Theories of Democracy

Lecture topics include:

- What is an economic theory of democracy?
- Is economic development fundamental to modern democracy?
- How does one explain democracy in countries with high levels of poverty?

Required readings:

- Robert Dahl (1998), *On Democracy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 166-79;
- Seymour Martin Lipset (1959), "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (1), pp. 69-105;
- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi (1997), "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49 (2), pp. 155-83;
- Barrington Moore (1966), *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, (Boston: Beacon Press), pp. 3-39.

First paper due Monday, February 27

Week 8 (March 5, 7): Why the Soviet Union Collapsed but Chinese Authoritarianism Thrives

Lecture topics include:

- Why is the Chinese government resilient to democratization?
- Why did states in the Soviet Union democratize while China did not?

Required readings:

- Andrew Nathan (2003), "Authoritarian Resilience", *Journal of Democracy* 14 (1), pp. 6-17;
- Andrew Nathan (2009), "China Since Tiananmen: Authoritarian Impermanence", *Journal of Democracy* 20 (3), pp. 37-40;
- Minxin Pei (2006), *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), pp. 45-95;
- Stephen White (2000) *Russia's New Politics: The Management of a Postcommunist Society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 255-92.

Midterm Exam – Wednesday, March 7

Week 9 (March 19, 21): Democracy as Competition

Lecture topics include:

- What is the pluralist theory of democracy, and what are its limitations?
- What does the term “polyarchy” mean, and why is it important?
- How well does this framework function outside the United States?

Required readings:

- James Madison, *Federalist Papers* 10, 51;
- Robert Dahl (1971), *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 1-32;
- Juan J. Linz (1992), “The Perils of Presidentialism” in Arend Lijphart, ed., *Parliamentary Versus Presidential Government*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 119-27;
- Juan J. Linz (1992), “The Virtues of Parliamentarism” in Arend Lijphart, ed., *Parliamentary Versus Presidential Government*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 212-6;
- Matthew Soberg Shugart and John M. Carey (1992), *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 18-54;
- Hardgrave, Robert L. (1993), “India: the Dilemmas of Diversity,” *Journal of Democracy*, 4 (4), pp. 54-68.

Week 10 (March 26, 28): Political Parties and Democracy I

Lecture topics include:

- What are political parties?
- Why are political parties considered “modern” organizations? Why did they begin to exist in the nineteenth century?
- Why did political parties begin to emerge first in the United States and then in Great Britain?

Required readings:

- Joseph Schumpeter (1950), *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, (New York: Harper), pp. 269-96;
- Giovanni Sartori (1976), *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 3-29;
- Arend Lijphart (1999), *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 62-89;
- Melvin J. Hinich and Michael C. Munger (1994), *Ideology and the Theory of Public Choice*, Michigan Studies of Political Analysis, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), pp. 1-21.

Week 11 (April 2, 4): Electoral Systems

Lecture topics include:

- What are electoral systems?
- What is Duverger’s Law, and is it accurate?
- Why do single-member district systems exist primarily in Great Britain and its former colonies?
- What is proportional representation, and how does it affect a political system?
- What are mixed electoral systems, and why are most newer electoral systems mixed?

Required readings:

- Arend Lijphart (1999), *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 143-70;
- Bernard Grofman, et al., "Introduction: Evidence for Duverger's Law from Four Countries" in *Duverger's Law of Plurality Voting: The Logic of Party Competition in Canada, India, the United Kingdom and the United States*, Studies in Public Choice Series, eds. Bernard Grofman, et al., (New York: Springer, 2009), pp. 1-11;
- Csaba Nikolenyi, "Party Inflation in India: Why has a Multi-Party Format Prevailed in a National Party System?" in *Duverger's Law of Plurality Voting: The Logic of Party Competition in Canada, India, the United Kingdom and the United States*, Studies in Public Choice Series, eds. Bernard Grofman, et al., (New York: Springer, 2009), pp. 97-114;
- Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies," in *Electoral Systems and Democracy*, eds. Larry Jay Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), pp. 73-85;
- Quentin L. Quade, "PR and Democratic Statecraft," in *Electoral Systems and Democracy*, eds. Larry Jay Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), pp. 92-7;
- Matthew Soberg Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg, "Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: A Definition and Typology," in *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* ed. Matthew Soberg Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 9-24.

Week 12 (April 9, 11): Political Parties and Democracy II

Lecture topics include:

- How have party organizations evolved over the past century?
- What are cadre parties, mass parties, catch-all parties, and cartel parties?
- Why are major political parties run by professional politicians, and how does that affect democracy?

Required readings:

- Peter Mair (1990), "Introduction," in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 1-17;
- Maurice Duverger (1990), "Caucus and Branch, Cadre Parties and Mass Parties," in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 37-45;
- Otto Kirchheimer (1990), "The Catch-all Party," in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 50-60;
- Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair (1995), "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party", *Party Politics* 1 (1), pp. 5-28.
- Bernard Ivan Tamas (2008), *From Dissident to Party Politics: The Struggle For Democracy in Post-Communist Hungary, 1989-1994*, (Boulder: East European Monographs), pp. 1-38.

Second paper due Monday, April 9

Week 13 (April 16, 18): Political Culture and Democracy

Lecture topics include:

- Does a country need certain cultural characteristics to be a stable democracy?
- How does a cultural theory of democracy explain rapid increases in the number of democracies over the past century?
- How does a cultural theory of democracy explain the relationship between economic development and democracy?

Required readings:

- Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963), *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 3-36;
- Ronald Inglehart (1997), *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*, pp. 1-50, 160-80, 209-15;
- Robert Putnam (1993), *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 1-16, 163-85;
- Sheri Berman (1997) "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," *World Politics*, 49 (3), pp. 401-29.

Week 14 (April 23, 25): Human Security and Social Movements

Lecture topics include:

- What is human security?
- Why is collective action, including social movements, extremely difficult to sustain?
- Under what circumstances do social movements develop and even win?
- Why are institutions so fundamental to social movements?

Required readings:

- Amartya Sen (1999), *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 3-34, 146-159;
- Richard Jolly and Deepayan Basu Ray (2006), "The Human Security Framework and National Human Development Report", National Human Development Report Series, NHDR Occasional Paper 5 (New York: Human Development Report Office, United Nations Development Programme), pp. 1-31;
- Sidney G. Tarrow (1998), *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 1-26;
- Mancur Olson (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), pp. 1-22, 33-43.

Week 15 (April 30): Conclusion

Lecture topics include:

- Review for final exam

Required readings:

- None

Final exam time and date assigned by the Registrar Office
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