This course, the second in the year-long introduction to the study of comparative politics for Ph.D students in political science, examines the purpose and methodology of comparative inquiry. Designed to introduce students to the study of comparative politics and to assist students in developing research topics and strategies, the course explores key themes – the origins of political regimes, the building of nations and states, ethnicity and nationalism, collective action, the politics of welfare states, and the logic of institutional change – through the critical reading and discussion of classic and contemporary works.

Class Meeting: Wednesdays 3.30-5.20, 8 Prospect Place, Rm 121. (We will need to reschedule the class during the week of April 16.)
Office Hours: Thursdays 130-330  (sign up on office door), 8 Prospect Place, room 108.
Email address: elisabeth.wood@yale.edu.

Requirements:

1. Reviews of the reading. For eight of the weeks of the course each participant will write a short review of the week's reading (no more than 2 single spaced pages). Reviews should include a concise summary of the argument and evidence, assess its strengths and weaknesses, and raise questions for discussion. Consider questions such as: What comparative strategy or design is employed? What precisely is being compared? Is there an identified set of cases thought to be comparable? Is the comparison explicit, and if so how were the cases selected? Is there an implicit comparative design? Does the work principally generate ideas, test causal hypotheses, or develop theory, or some combination of these? Does the author appear to believe the conclusions of the study are generalizable? What is the stated scope of the argument? What evidence is presented that is said to confirm or disconfirm the author’s argument? Can you suggest a further or better way to evaluate the author’s claims?

Reviews should be posted on the classes server by 8:00 am Wednesday.

2. Writing assignment. A paper (8-15 single spaced pages) that further explore a theme of the course. The student may choose to write a literature review, a research paper, or a research proposal. The topic must be approved by the instructor by March 5 and the student must submit an abstract, outline, and bibliography by March 26, a first draft by April 23, and the final paper by May 5th. All assignments should be posted to the classes server by the due date.

3. Class presentation. Participants will make a few short presentations of the week’s reading to the class. Each presentation (no more than 10 minutes) should assess the work’s strengths and weaknesses, addressing questions similar to those listed above.
4. All participants must attend the Comparative Politics Workshop (Tuesdays at 4:30).

**Course Materials:**
Books available for purchase at Labyrinth Books.

**Course Outline**

**January 16. Introduction to the seminar**

**January 23. Comparative case study methods and causal mechanisms**


John Gerring 2004. The case study: What it is and what it does. Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*


Background reading (if needed):

Recommended:

James Mahoney and Gary Goertz. 2004. The possibility principle: choosing negative cases in comparative research. APSR 98(4)


January 30. State formation


Recommended:


February 6. Origins of political regimes


Recommended:


Way, Lucan A. 2005. Authoritarian Statebuilding and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave *World Politics* 57 (2)


**February 13. Origins of political regimes II**


**February 20. Nation building**


**February 27. Ethnic identities and political regimes**


Recommended:


**March 5. Ethnic identities and electoral politics**

India. Cambridge

Final paper topic must be approved by now.

March 26. Nationalism


Due: Abstract, outline, and bibliography

Recommended:


April 2. High risk collective action


Recommended:


April 9. The welfare state

Recommended:


April 16. Institutional change

Kathleen Thelen. 2004. *How Institutions Evolve. The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan* Cambridge

April 23. Conclusion. Alternative methods in comparative politics: agent-based modeling, Boolean inference, and behavioral experiments


Timothy Wickham-Crowley. 1991. A Qualitative Comparative Approach to Latin American Revolutions, *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 32 (1-2) : 82-

Due: first drafts of papers

Recommended:


Final papers due May 5th, 10:00 am