Introduction

This course is the more canon-driven complement to Comparative Politics I (PLSC 777a), taught by Susan Stokes in Fall 2013, which focuses more on research design and trends in the discipline. The goal of this course is to cover, in some depth, many of the main topics and readings in comparative politics. Not coincidentally, we will also cover some of the comparative politics reading list, the aim being to partially prepare you for the comprehensive exams that many of you will take. I say ‘partially’ because comparative politics is a big sprawling field and no course can hope to cover everything.

The readings each week are designed to cover some of the essential points of a substantive topic, as well as raise deeper methodological questions that have application to other issues and themes in comparative politics. One thing to note is that I have not included some obviously important readings (e.g. Dan Posner’s, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Robert Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work*, James Mahoney’s *Colonialism and Postcolonial Development*) that were on the syllabus for PLSC 777a. Knowledge of these will be assumed, however, in our discussions.

For each of the broad subject areas we cover in class, you might also want to take a look at the other readings mentioned in the Comparative Politics Reading List, so that you can do other relevant readings.
Assignments and Grades

The assignments for the course are designed to develop skills that prepare you, as much as possible, for the format of the exams. We will write a lot, read each other’s papers, and (with papers’ names removed) critique and suggest improvements to the papers we write.

Each of you will have to do 3 short response papers (3 pages each), each worth 10% of the grade. These will be assigned to ensure that several of you are writing response papers on any given week. These are due Sunday evening by 7pm, emailed to me, to allow all of us time to read. Each of you will submit one copy to me with your name on, for me to grade and send individual comments back. Each of you should also upload one anonymous copy to the folder I will create for that week on classesv2, to be discussed by all of us at the beginning of class the following week.

Class participation and evidence of consistent preparation for class: 20% of the grade. NB: I would very strongly prefer it if students do not take notes on a laptop, as working with the computer distracts from engagement with the lecture as well as class conversation. If you must take notes on a laptop, then you must turn the wireless feature off. I especially want to remind students that emailing, texting, etc. is rude to me and to their fellow seminar participants, and it will have an adverse effect on your grade for class participation.

2 longer ‘exam’ questions, no longer than 10 pages each, to be assigned on the Thursday and finished by the following Friday at 5pm. One of these will be done before Spring break and one after. Each paper will be worth 25% of the grade. These too will be read and critiqued by the class.

Books

The following book is required, and should be ordered as soon as possible:

- Carles Boix & Susan Stokes, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford 2007) 019956602X

Jan 15th Introduction


Jan 22nd The use of history

*How much can historical ‘natural experiments’ help us to disentangle complex theoretical and empirical puzzles?*


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Jan 29th Varieties of Capitalism & Welfare States

*How useful is the ‘varieties of capitalism’ framework?*


**February 5th Democratization**

*How important is economic development to democratization?*


Frye, “Economic Transformation and Comparative Politics,” in Boix & Stokes, pp.940-68


**February 12th State Formation and State Capacity**

*How important is war for strong state formation?*


February 19th Ethnic Conflict

*Question*: How effective is consociational power-sharing in moderating ethnic conflicts?

Donald L. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa?* (Berkeley, 1992), pp.163-203. [This is a more concise introduction to some of the conflict moderation strategies outlined in Horowitz’s *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp.563-652, which may be substituted for this. But note that this reading does not substitute for many other parts of EGC, for instance on the causes of conflict, or ethnicity and the military].


February 26th Party Systems & Party Cleavages 1

*Question*: Why do party systems turn on religious and ethnic cleavages in some systems and class cleavages in others?


G. Bingham Powell, JR “Aggregating and Representing Political Preferences,” in Boix & Stokes, pp.653-77
March 5th Party Systems & Party Cleavages 2 [This class needs to be rescheduled]

*Question: How important are government institutions on the one hand and civil society organizations on the other to the type of party system that emerges in different countries?*


**Clientelism**

*Question: Why has vote buying and turnout buying been so prevalent in so many democracies? [You may answer this question or the one above]*


---Yale Spring Recess begins 5.20 pm March 7th and classes resume March 24th 8.20 am---

March 26th Institutions and Fiscal Federalism

*How has the recent financial crisis demonstrated some of the problems of fiscal federalism?*


Pablo Beramendi, “Federalism” in in Boix and Stokes, pp.752-81
April 2nd Political Regimes

*How critical are the middle and upper middle classes for determining democracy or dictatorship?*


Gregory Luebbert, “*Social Foundations of Political Order in Interwar Europe,***” *World Politics*, 1987, 39, 4, pp.449-78


April 9th Development

*Why have some states failed to develop their rural sectors since independence?*


Myron Weiner, “*Institution-Building in India,***” in Ashutosh Varshney/Myron Weiner, *The Indian Paradox* (Sage, 1989), pp.77-95.


April 16th Civil Wars

*What explains patterns of participation in civil wars?*


April 23rd Nationalism & Contentious Politics

*Why do people mobilize on the basis on ethnicity?*


---Yale classes end April 25th 2014---