

THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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This course is a core seminar in the theories and methods of the field of comparative politics. Since comparative politics is a huge subfield of political science, we will focus on just the major theories and approaches. Some of the topics we will cover include the development of comparative politics as a field, methodologies used in comparative politics and political science, developing new knowledge in political science, democratization, state-society relations, cultural and institutional analysis, and political economy.

Course Objectives

*I'd like you to develop a clear grasp of comparative methodology and research approaches, as evidenced in a short (3-4 page) research outline. This will form the basis for your research paper, and will count for 10% of your grade.

*I hope you will develop an understanding of the evolution and scope of the subfield of comparative politics.

*I will also try to familiarize you with the major approaches and concepts in the subfield of comparative politics. You should demonstrate your grasp of these concepts in class discussion, and in two critical analytical papers covering two sections of the readings (4-5 pages each). You get to choose on which readings to write. The first will be due no later than September 19, the second by October 31. The whole idea is to facilitate discussion, so please turn the papers in on the evening we are discussing that topic. Each is worth 10% of your grade.

*A critical component of this course is learning how to conduct quality research, and demonstrating this by writing a 20-25 page research paper using comparative approach and methods. Invariably I've found that students at U of L, graduate and undergraduate, have problems writing a good research paper. This paper may be on any legitimate topic of your choosing, but it must fall within the purview of comparative politics. You must identify a clear research question or hypothesis, include a survey of the pertinent literature, clearly state your methodology, and document your work thoroughly with notes and a bibliography. I have prepared a guide to writing the research paper—please follow it carefully! The final paper is worth 40% of your grade.

You will do this in stages throughout the semester. The first stage will be the introduction and research method outline (3-4 pages, with title and bibliography). The second stage will be the rough draft of no less than 15 pages, with full documentation. This draft will be reviewed by two of your peers and by me. You will be graded on the quality and helpfulness of your review (10%). Then, taking into account my comments and those of your peers, you will have about a month to revise and expand your paper into a polished final draft.

You will also give a formal presentation of your research on the last day of class. This will be the equivalent of a conference presentation. You will have 15-20 minutes to present your paper, and then will field questions from myself and your colleagues. Please prepare carefully for the presentation.

It is very important that you do all the assigned readings before class, attend each class, and participate actively. As part of your discussion/participation grade (20%), each student will act as a discussion facilitator for one class. Please coordinate closely with me at least one week before the class so that we achieve a fruitful division of labor.

Assignments

Research outline	10%	due September 12
Rough draft of paper	0%	due November 6
Critical review	10%	due November 13
Final draft of paper	40%	due December 7
Class Discussion:	20%	each class
Analytical papers	20%	by Sept 19 & Oct 31
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Total:	100%	

You will be evaluated based on your ability to grasp, synthesize and apply major theories and concepts in the field of comparative politics. Keep in mind that it will help to think theoretically and logically. If you do so, you will perform well in this class. We want to move beyond simple description and look for patterns in politics across different political systems.

Grading Standards and Procedures

I will follow the typical grading standards for graduate students:

- A Excellent work. Virtually no room for improvement
- A- Superior work. Could be marginally improved
- B+ Very good work
- B Acceptable, but could use substantial improvement
- B- Only marginally acceptable

Plagiarism

Yes, it does occur in graduate school, but it will not be tolerated in any form. If I discover that any work has been plagiarized you will receive a failing grade for the course I will recommend dismissal from the University.

Books to purchase (required)

Gerardo Munck and Richard Snyder, *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Shireen T. Hunter and Huma Malik, eds. *Modernization, Democracy, and Islam* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005).

There is also a CoursePack for purchase at Ekstrom Library, and a few articles on Blackboard.

Topics and Required Readings

I. August 22: Discussion of research interests of students and the professor

II. August 29: Comparative Politics in Political Science

Munck & Snyder, pp. 1-59.

David Laitin & commentaries, in Mansfield & Sisson, *The Evolution of Political Knowledge* (Ohio State University Press, 2004), pp. 11-59 (in Coursepack).

Interview with Gabriel Almond, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 63-85.

III. September 5: Comparative Methods

David Collier, "The Comparative Method," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II* (American Political Science Association, 1993), pp. 105-119 (in Coursepack)

Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sandcastles* (University of Michigan Press, 2003) pp. 1-23, 89-106, and Appendix B on coding Labor Repression as a variable. Available on reserve, and as a required reading for POLS 670.

Richard Snyder, "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method," *Studies in Comparative International Development* (Spring 2001), pp. 93-110, on Blackboard.

Interview with Barrington Moore, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 86-112.

Interview with David Collier, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 556-600.

IV. September 12: State-Society Relations

Alfred Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 39-72 (in Coursepack)

James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 1-52 (in Coursepack)

Interview with James C. Scott, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 351-391.

Interview with Theda Scocpol, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 649-707.

Research Outline Due

V. September 19: Democracy & Democratization I

Tilly, *Democracy*, pp. 1-105

Interview with Robert Dahl, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 113-149.

Interview with Philippe C. Schmitter, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 305-350.

!st analytic paper due on or before this date.

VI. September 26: Democracy and Democratization II

Tilly, *Democracy*, pp. 106-205

Ariel Armony and Hector Schamis, "Babel in Democratization Studies," *Journal of Democracy* (October 2005), pp. 113-128, Blackboard

Interview with Guillermo O'Donnell, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 273-304.

VII. October 3: Modernization and Value Change

Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*, pp. 1-145.

Interview with David Laitin, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 601-648.

VIII. October 10: Values and Democracy

Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*, pp. 149-300.

IX. October 17: Institutions and Regimes

Lederman, Loayza and Soares, "Accountability and Corruption: Political Institutions Matter," *Economics and Politics* (March 2001), 1-35, Blackboard.

Terry Moe, "Power and Political Institutions," *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2005), pp. 215-233, Blackboard

Interview with Juan Linz, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 150-209.

Interview with Samuel Huntington, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 210-233.

X. October 24: Institutions and Political Economy

Adam Przeworski, "Institutions Matter?" *Government and Opposition* (2004), pp. 527-540, on Blackboard.

Robert Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* (2002) pp. 325-361, on Blackboard.

Ghobarah, Huth and Russett, "Comparative Public Health: The Political Economy of Human Misery and Well-Being," *International Studies Quarterly* (2004), pp. 73-94, Blackboard.

Interview with Adam Przeworski, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 456-503.

Interview with Robert H. Bates, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 504-555.

XI. October 31: Institutions and Political Identities

Alfred Stepan, "A New Comparative Politics of Federalism," in *Arguing Comparative Politics*, pp. 315-361, in CoursePack.

Interview with Arend Lijphart, in Munck & Snyder, pp. 234-272.

2nd analytic paper due on or before this date.

XII. November 7:

Modernization and the Muslim World

Hunter and Malik, *Modernization, Democracy, and Islam*, pp. 1-114.

Ronald Inglehart, "The Worldviews of Islamic Publics in Global Perspectives," from the World Values Survey Project, Blackboard.

Rough Draft of Paper Due

XIII: November 14: Modernization & Democracy in the Muslim World

Hunter and Malik, pp. 117-202, 327-330, and 4 of the 7 case studies from Part III.

Paper Critiques Due

XIV: November 28: Research Presentations

December 7: Final Draft of Paper Due