

**The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University**

Course Syllabus: Comparative National Systems

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Class time/location: Monday-Wednesday 6-8 pm; BOB 736
Office hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a graduate-level introduction to comparative politics. The class will emphasize both how institutions work and how they differ across established democracies, as well as in developing societies. We will also address broad functional issues cutting across the politics of nations around the world. Since this is a required course for the International Development certificate, there will be a particular focus on the challenges facing political institutions and actors in developing countries.

Comparative politics is not just a matter of knowing something about more than one country or region of the world; it is the study of institutions, political culture, public policies, and development using as broad a base of experience from different societies as possible. Understanding causality in politics poses special problems because the underlying phenomena are inherently complex, and it is often not possible to run controlled experiments. Comparative politics seeks to get around this problem by using data from a variety of similarly-situated societies, seeking relationships that vary systematically between countries, statically and over time. You cannot understand any given society, including your own, unless you understand how it differs from others. A solid grounding in the core ideas, concepts, and methods of comparative politics will be an asset to students in virtually any career path that they choose to pursue in the foreign policy or international development world.

REQUIREMENTS:

There will be a midterm exam on Monday, June 24th, based on the first six lectures and accompanying readings, and a final paper due one week after the last class. All students are required to keep up with the readings for each week's classes, and to participate actively in class discussions. Weightings for the final grade are: midterm 40%; final 40 %; class participation 20%.

BOOKS FOR PURCHASE:

- Gabriel Almond et. al., *Comparative Politics Today: A Theoretical Framework, Fifth Edition* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008).
- Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, (eds.) *Electoral Systems and Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins, 2006).

CLASS 1 (JUNE 3):

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE: Comparing Institutions

- Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. 2, Part 3, Chapters 1-4.
- Jared Diamond, "Intra-Island and Inter-Island Comparisons." In Jared Diamond and James Robinson (eds.), *Natural Experiments in History*, (Boston MA: Belknap Press, 2010)
- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Ch. 1, *Why Nations Fail* (New York: Crown, 2012), 7-44.
- Gabriel A. Almond et al., *Comparative Politics Today: A Theoretical Framework* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004), chapter 2

Recommended:

- Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, "Introduction," pp. 17-28.

CLASS 2 (JUNE 5):

COMPARATIVE POLITICS: Approaches

- Atul Kohli, Peter Evans, Peter Katzenstein, et. al., "[The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium](#)," *World Politics* 48(1), 1996: 1-49.
- Nate Silver, "Chapter 2: Are You Smarter Than a Television Pundit?" *The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail – But Some Don't.* New York: Penguin, 2012.
- Geertz, Clifford, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), Chapter 1, pp. 3-30.

Modernization and Political Development

- Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), chapter 1, pp. 32-59.

- Willa Friedman, Michael Kremer, Ted Miguel, and Rebecca Thornton "Education as Liberation?" NBER Working Paper 16939. April 2011.

CLASS 3 (JUNE 10):

INSTITUTIONS: The State and State Formation

- Douglass North, John Joseph Wallis, Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. Chapter 2, p. 30-77. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order*, Chapter 5: The Coming of the Leviathan, pp. 80-97. (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2011).
- Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, chap. 1, "The Challenge of State-Building in Africa."
- Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Recommended:

- World Bank, *World Development Report, 1997: The State in a Changing World*, chaps. 1-3, pp. 19-60.
- Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapter 1. (New York, WW Norton, 2003).

CLASS 4 (JUNE 12):

INSTITUTIONS: Presidents, Prime Ministers, Political Parties and Electoral Systems

- Juan J. Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism," in Diamond and Plattner.
- Matthew S. Shugart and John M. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), chaps. 1-2, pp. 1-27.
- Gabriel Almond et al, *Comparative Politics Today*, chap. 5, "Interest Aggregation and Political Parties."
- Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies," in Diamond and Plattner (2006).

CLASS 5 (JUNE 17):

INSTITUTIONS: Political Parties, Federalism, and Case Studies of Institutional Design Theory

- Donald L. Horowitz, "A Primer for Decision-makers" in Diamond and Plattner (2006).
- Francis Fukuyama, "[Development and the Limits of Institutional Design](#)," Global Development Network, Jan. 2006.
- Gary W. Cox and Mathew McCubbins, "The Institutional Determinants of Economic Policy Outcomes," in Stephan Haggard and Mathew D. McCubbins, eds., *Presidents, Parliaments, and Policy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 2001), pp. 21-64.
- Barak Hoffman and Lindsay Robinson, "Tanzania's Missing Opposition," in *Democratization in Africa: Progress and Retreat*, Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (Baltimore, MD: JHU Press, 2010).
- Scott Mainwaring, "Multipartyism, Robust Federalism, and Presidentialism in Brazil" in Shugart and Mainwaring (1997), *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*.

Recommended:

- Maina Kiai, "The Crisis in Kenya," in *Democratization in Africa: Progress and Retreat*, Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (Baltimore, MD: JHU Press, 2010).
- Adeed Dawisha and Larry Diamond, "Iraq's Year of Voting Dangerously," in Diamond and Plattner (2006).

CLASS 6 (JUNE 19): GUEST LECTURER DR. MATTHIAS MATTHIJS

Civil Society, Political Participation, Interest Associations, and Social Movements

- Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 1-43
- Larry Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society," *Journal of Democracy* 5 (3), 1994, pp. 5-17
- Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Second Edition (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 290-306.

- Ruud Koopmans, "Social Movements," in Russell J. Dalton and Hans Dieter Klingemann (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 693-707

Recommended:

- Herbert Kitschelt, "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (6), 2000, pp. 845-879.
- Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), chapters 1, 4 and 5

CLASS 7 (JUNE 24): MIDTERM EXAM:

CLASS 8 (JULY 1)

AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

- Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, Introduction, pp. 17-31.
- Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson, *Winner Take All Politics*, pp. 1-41. (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2010).
- Larry Bartels, *Unequal Democracy*, pp.64-98 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
- Steinmo, Sven and Jon Watts, "It's the Institutions Stupid! Why Comprehensive Health Reform Always Fails in the US." *Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law*, 20:2, 329-372.

Recommended:

- Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. George Lawrence (New York: HarperPerennial, 1988), Vol. II, Book IV, chaps. 1-6, pp. 667-695.
- Seymour Martin Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada* (New York: Routledge, 1990, chapters 1, 5, pp. 1-18, 74-89.
- Amenta, Edwin and Skocpol, Theda, "Taking Exception: Explaining the Distinctiveness of American Public Policies in the Last Century," in Castles, Francis G., *The Comparative History of Public Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

CLASS 9 (JULY 3):

Bureaucracy and State Capacity

- Max Weber, *Economy and Society Vol. 1* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), Chap. 3, "The Types of Legitimate Domination," parts 1-5, pp. 212-254.
- Chalmers Johnson. "The Developmental State: Odyssey of a Concept" in Meredith Woo-Cumings (ed). *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 32-60.
- Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 1-23.
- Lant Pritchett, Michael Woolcock, and Matt Andrews, "Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure." Center for Global Development Working Paper 234, December 2010.

Recommended:

- Kevin Croke, "The Political Economy of Child Mortality Decline in Tanzania and Uganda, 1999-2007," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 4(47), December 2012.

CLASS 10 (JULY 8):

DEMOCRATIZATION

- Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," in *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Diamond and Plattner (eds.), (Baltimore: JHU Press, 1993).
- Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), pp. 3-14, 65-72.
- Fareed Zakaria (1997). "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76(6): 22-43.
- Thomas Carothers (2002). "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy* 13(1): 5-21.
- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 48-87.

Recommended:

- Alfred Stepan and Juna Linz, "Democratization Theory and the 'Arab Spring.'" *Journal of Democracy*, April 2013.

CLASS 11 (JULY 10):

NON-DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS

- Andreas Schedler, "The Menu of Manipulation," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2) 2002, 36-50.
- Lucan Way and Steven Levitsky, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2), 2002: 51-65.
- Andrew Mwenda, "Why Democracy is Failing Us." *The Independent* (Uganda), July 18, 2010.
- Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. Chapter 1. (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Recommended:

- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alisdair Smith, Randolph M Siveson and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival*, chapter 2. (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.)
- Jennifer Gandhi, *Political Institutions Under Dictatorship*, chapter 1. (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- Alma Guillermoprieto, *The Heart that Bleeds: Latin America Now*, chapter 3, pp. 47-68.

CLASS 12 (JULY 12):

CONTENTIOUS DIVIDES: NATIONALISM, ETHNICITY, CLASS, INEQUALITY, AND GENDER

- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 39-49. (New York: Verso, 1983), 2nd edition.
- James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel Posner, and Jeremy Weinstein, "Is Ethnic Conflict Inevitable?" *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2008, pp. 138-141.
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), chapter 2, pp. 18-37.

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 1-47.

CLASS 13 (JULY 15):

New Directions in Comparative Politics: From Theory to Practice

- James Druckman and Arthur Lupia, "Experimenting With Politics." *Science* (2012), Vol 335, March 9 2012, pp. 1177-1179.
- Leonard Wantchekon, "Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin." *World Politics*. (55)3: 399-422
- Rohini Pande, "Can Informed Voters Enforce Better Governance? Experiments in Low Income Democracies," Forthcoming, *Annual Review of Economics* (2011), Vol. 3.

Recommended:

- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Ch. 14, *Why Nations Fail* (New York: Crown, 2012), pp. 404-428
- Benjamin Olken, "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia," *Journal of Political Economy* 115(2): 200-249.