

POLS 570
COMPARATIVE POLITICS
Spring 03

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“Without comparisons to make, the mind does not know how to proceed”
Alexis de Tocqueville

It is not a coincidence that Tocqueville’s search to better understand French politics produced one of the most insightful accounts of Democracy in America. Comparison lies at the heart of thorough and original political analyses as it links ideas to evidence, hypotheses to data, abstractions to substance from unique angles. Thinking theoretically about politics, one way or the other, involves comparative assessments. Comparative politics stands out as a field of political science with its explicit effort to elaborate on the principles of comparative analysis and to enhance our understanding of global issues. Therefore, the theories, research programs, and methods of comparative politics are not limited to this field. On the contrary, they navigate across the boundaries of other subfields.

This course surveys major topics and theoretical contributions in comparative politics. Its main objective is to provide students of various fields with a critical understanding of the theoretical and analytical approaches necessary for comparative research. To this end, the course is divided into four parts. The first part introduces the field in general, the second part explores some of the basic conceptual and methodological problems involved in comparative analysis; the third part examines prevailing theoretical approaches in the studies of comparative politics and the final part surveys basic themes in comparative inquiries.

Requirements:

Critical Reaction Papers: This course requires active contribution by each student. To facilitate discussion each student will write a concise up to two-page critical reaction paper which focuses on the analytical approaches presented in the assigned readings. Papers should be sent via e-mail **by 3 pm the day before** class. In these reaction papers students are expected to critically assess the assigned readings. This means you should move beyond the description of main arguments and identify and evaluate the assumptions behind them. Through this approach and papers you will not only become familiar with the main ideas shaping the theoretical debates in the field but will also develop your own research questions.

Book Review: To broaden the scope of readings covered in this course students are required to read one (or two depending on the class size) of the books listed under suggested readings. You will be given 20 minutes of class time to present a critical assessment of the book's contents, emphasizing those parts that relate to the general topic for the week. Basically, your review should identify the assumptions or arguments presented by the book, provide your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the methods and conclusions and identify your position in relation to the author(s)'s.

Final Paper: Besides the reaction papers, students are expected to write a final paper at the end of the semester. This paper should reflect your assessment of the capacity of the competing conceptual approaches to solve political problems existing in a particular research area. This final work asks you to find the best fit (or lack of it) between theory and practice in a specific political context. This assignment is purposefully defined in broad terms to accommodate your personal research interests. In order to give you an early start all students are encouraged to provide their paper topic and a short bibliography **by March 6**. To give you some practice in sharing your work with others you will present your arguments on **April 3rd** and **May 8th**.

Your grade for this course will be based on your participation and book and research paper presentation (30%), reaction papers (35%) and your final paper (35%).

Week 1 (January 16) Road map of the course

Brown Bernard, *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, Harcourt College Publishers, 2000, Introduction, pp.1-18.,

I. Comparative Politics as an Approach, as a Method, as a Subfield? Defining the Field

Week 2 (January 23)

Macintyre, Alasdair; "Is a Science of Comparative Politics Possible?", in Alan Ryan (ed.), *The Philosophy of Social Explanations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 171-188. (Available from UIC Library)

Eckstein, Harry; "Unfinished Business: Reflections on the Scope of Comparative Politics," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.31, No.4, August 1998, pp.505-534. (Available Online First Search)

Blondel, Jean; "Then and Now: Comparative Politics," *Political Studies*, Vol.47, No.1, March 1999, pp.152-160. (Available Online, First Search)

Lichbach, Mark Irving and Alan S. Zuckerman; "Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics: An Introduction," in Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman (eds.), *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, Cambridge, 1997, pp.3-17. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Almond, Gabriel A.; *A Discipline Divided*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990.

Crotty, William (ed.), *Political Science: Looking to the Future*, Vol.2 on Comparative Politics, Policy and International Relations, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991.

II. Methods of Comparative Political Inquiry

Week 3 (January 30)

Landman, Todd; *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics*, London: Routledge, 2000, part 1. (The electronic edition of the book will be available at <http://www.ebookmall.com/alpha-authors/Todd-Landman.htm>)

Dogan, Mattei, and Dominique Pelassy; *How to Compare Nations: Strategies in Comparative Politics*, Chatham, 1990. (Available from UIC Library)

Sartori, Giovanni; "Comparing and Miscomparing," *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, Vol.3, 1991. (Available from UIC Library)

Ragin, Charles and David Zaret, "Theory and Method in Comparative Research: Two Strategies," *Social Forces*, Vol.61, No.3, March 1983. (Available from JStore)

Suggested Readings:

Peters, B. Guy; *Comparative Politics: Theory and Methods*, New York: New York University Press, 1998.

Dankwart, A. Rustow and Kenneth Paul Erickson (eds.), *Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives*, New York: Harper Collins, 1991.

Week 4 (February 6)

Detrich, Rueschmeyer; "Different Methods – Contradictory Results: Research on Development and Democracy," Charles Ragin (ed.), *International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology: Issues and Alternatives in Comparative Social Research*, Vol. 56, 1991. (Available from UIC Library)

Miller, Joanne, Kazimierz M. Slomczynski, and Ronald Schoenberg; "Assessing Comparability of Measurement in Cross-National Research: Authoritarian-Conservatism in Different Socio-Cultural Settings," *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 1981, pp.178-191. (Available Online, JSTOR)

Locke, Richard and Kathleen Thelen; "Problems of Equivalence in Comparative Politics: Apples and Oranges, Again," *APSA-CP*, Vol.9, No.1, Winter 1998, pp.9-12. (At http://www.nd.edu/~apsacp/pdf/APSA-CP_Winter_1998.pdf)

Dogan, Mattei, "The Use and Misuse of Statistics in Comparative Research. Limits to Quantification in Comparative Politics: The Gap between Substance and Method," in Mattei Dogan and Ali Kazancilgil (eds.), *Comparing Nations*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1994, pp.35-71. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Lane, Jan-Erik and Svente Errson; *Comparative Politics: An Introduction and New Approach*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.

Ragin, Charles; *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

Week 5 (February 13)

Geddes, Barbara; "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics," *Political Analysis*, No.2, 1990, pp.131-150.

Bradshaw, York and Michael Wallace; "Informing Generality and Explaining Uniqueness: The Place of Case Studies in Comparative Research," Charles Ragin (ed.), *International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology Issues and Alternatives in Comparative Social Research*, Vol. 56, 1991. (Available from UIC Library)

Locke, R. M. and K. Thelen, "Apples and Oranges Revisited: Contextualized Comparison and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics," *Politics and Society*, 1995. (Available from UIC Library)

Bartolini, Stefano; "On time and Comparative Research," *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, Vol.5, No.2, pp.131-136, 1993. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Mayer, Lawrence C., *Redefining Comparative Politics*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1984.

Howard J. Wiarda, *New Directions in Comparative Politics*, (3rd edition), Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, 2002.

Week 6 (February 20)

Collier, David and James Mahoney; "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research," *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No.1, 1996, pp.56-91. (Available from UIC Library)

Lieberson, Stanley, "Small N's and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases," *Social*

Forces, Vol. 70, No.2, 1991, pp. 307-320. (Available from UIC Library)

Berman, Sheri; "Ideas, Norms and Culture in Political Analysis," (Review Article), *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 33, No. 2, January 2001, pp. 231-250. (Available from UIC Library)

Coppedge, Michael; "Theory Building and Hypothesis Testing: Large- vs. Small-N Approaches in Democratization Research," paper presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago. (At <http://www.nd.edu/~mcoppedg/crd/mpsacopp02.pdf>)

Suggested Readings:

Chilcote, Ronald H.; *Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered*, 2nd Edition, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994. Mayer, Lawrence C.; *Redefining Comparative Politics: Promise versus Performance*, Sage, 1989. (Available from UIC Library)

Theories and Approaches in Comparative Inquiries

Week 7 (February 27)

Rational Choice

Bates, Robert; "Comparative Politics and Rational Choice: A Review Essay," *American Political Science Review*, Vol.91, 1997, pp.699-704. (Available from UIC Library)

Levi, Margaret; "A Model, a Method, and a Map: Rational Choice in Comparative and Historical Analysis," in Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman (eds.), *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 19-41. (Available from UIC Library)

Popkin, Samuel L.; "Public Choice and Peasant Organization," in Robert H. Bates (ed.), *Toward a Political Economy of Development: A Rational Choice Perspective*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988, pp. 245-71. (Available from UIC Library)

Bates, Robert H. and Rui J.P de Figueiredo Jr; "The Politics of Interpretation: Rationality, Culture, and Transition," *Politics & Society*, Vol. 26, Issue 2, June 98, pp.221-257. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Reading:

Tsebelis, George; *Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Green, Donald P. and Ian Shapiro; *Pathologies of Rational Choice*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, Chapters 1-2.

Week 8 (March 6) Culturalist Approaches:

Ross, Marc Howard; "Culture and Identity in Comparative Political Analysis," in Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman (eds.), *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 42-81. (Available from UIC Library)

Wilson, Richard W.; "The Many Voices of Political Culture: Assessing Different Approaches," *World Politics*, Vol.52, No. 2, 2000, pp. 246-273, (Available from UIC Library)

Laitin, David D.; "The Civic Culture at Thirty," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 1, 1995, pp.168-173. (Available from UIC Library)

Rothstein, Bo; "If Rationality is Everything, Maybe it's Nothing. If Culture is Everywhere, Maybe it's Nowhere. Collective Memories and Comparative Politics," Paper prepared for delivery at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 30-September 2, 2001. (At <http://pro.harvard.edu/papers/011/011015RothsteinB.pdf>)

Suggested Readings

Lane, Jan-Erik; *Culture and Politics: A Comparative Approach*, Aldershot, 2002.

Bowen John R. and Petersen Roger; *Critical Comparisons in Politics and Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Week 9 (March 13) Institutionalism:

Hall, Peter A. and C.R.Taylor Rosemary; "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies*, Vol.44, No.5, 1995, pp. 936-957. (Available from UIC Library)

Roper, Steven D.; "Are All Semi-presidential Regimes the Same? A Comparison of Premier-Presidential Regimes," *Comparative Politics*, Vol.34, No.3, April 2002, pp. 253-272. (Available from UIC Library)

Steinmo, Sven and Caroline J. Tolbert; "Do Institutions Really Matter? Taxation in Industrialized Democracies," *Comparative Political Studies* (CPS), Vol. 31, No. 2, April 1998, pp. 165-187. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Steinmo, Sven, et al (eds.); *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Gordon Smith and Moises Naím; *Altered States : Globalization, Sovereignty, and Governance*, Ottawa : International Development Research Centre, 2000

Week 10 (March 20): Spring Break no class**Week 11 (April 3) Paper First Draft Due**

Presentations

IV. Themes of Comparative Political Inquiry**Week 12 (April 10) Democratization**

Putnam, Robert; *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993, Chapter 1-2. (Available from UIC Library)

Ian Shapiro, "The State of Democratic Theory", *The state of the field III*, APSA.

Alfred Stepan *Arguing Comparative Politics*, Oxford, 2001, Chapter 5. (Available from UIC Library)

Bunce, Valerie; "Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.33, No.6-7, August-September 2000, pp.703-734. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Whitehead, Laurence; *Democratization: Theory and Experience*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

Week 13 (April 17) Transitions and Revolutions and Political Change

Moore, Barrington; *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy; Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1966. (Available from UIC Library)

Bermeo, Nancy; "Rethinking Regime Change," *Comparative Politics*, April 1990, pp. 359-377. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Migdal, Joel, Atul Kohli and Vivienne Shue; *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Linz, Juan and Albert Stepan; *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Week 14 (April 24) Social Movements

Melucci, Albert; "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements," *Social Research*, Vol.52, No.4, Winter 1985, pp 789-816. (Available from UIC Library)

Offe, Claus; "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," *Social Research*, Vol.52, No.4, Winter 1985. (Available from UIC Library)

Foweraker, Joe and Todd Landman; *Citizenship Rights and Social Movements: A Comparative and Statistical Analysis*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Tarrow, Sidney; *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd Edition, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Giugni, Marco, Dough McAdam and Charles Tilly (eds); *How Social Movements Matter*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Week 15 (May 1) New Issues and Approaches in Comparative Politics

Janos, A; "Paradigms Revisited: Productionism, Globality and Postmodernity in Comparative Politics," *World Politics*, Vol.50, 1997. (Available from UIC Library)

Carothers, Thomas; "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.13, No.1, 2002, pp.5-21. (Available Online, MUSE, at http://webproxy.cc.uic.edu:2070/journals/journal_of_democracy/v013/13.1carothers.html)

Luckham, Robin; "Are There Alternatives to Liberal Democracy?", in Mark Robinson and White Gordon (eds), *The Democratic Developmental State: Politics and Institutional Design*, 2002. (Available from UIC Library)

Barber, Benjamin; "Can Democracy Survive Globalization?" *Government and Opposition*, Vol.35, No.31, Summer 2000, pp. 275-301. (Available from UIC Library)

Suggested Readings:

Grugel, Jean; *Democracy without Borders: Transnationalisation and Conditionality in New Democracies*, London; New York: Routledge, 1999. (Available from UIC Library).

Edwards Bob, Foley Michael W., and Diani Mario, *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and the Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective*, Hanover, NH : University Press of New England, 2001.