

POSC 120-00:
COMPARATIVE POLITICAL REGIMES

Syllabus

Monday and Wednesday: 1:50 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Friday: 2:20 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.

Spring 2008: March 31 – June 4

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Preface

This course will introduce students to key concepts, theories, research methods, frameworks, and designs used in comparative analysis of different political regimes. The traditional concept of comparative politics in the United States is defined as the “study of all countries excluding the United States.” Taking the foundation of traditional comparative politics as a background, the concept of comparative politics in this course will take two steps further from this traditional definition. First, we will consider the United States of America (or domestic political regimes) as one of many countries that can and should be studied comparatively. Second, only comparing national political regimes, namely *the* systems of government of different countries is not sufficient to understand real world problems of politics, and therefore we will compare not only political regimes of states but also those of non-state entities. This course will enable students to: (1) gain understanding of different and diverse forms of political regimes of countries in the world; (2) achieve critical thinking for new and alternative ways of organizing political regimes; and (3) advance theorizing and doing comparative politics beyond traditional approaches.

This course takes the terms “comparative” and “political regimes” in a broader context than simply “comparing” different “governmental politics” at the national level. We compare ideas, things, sceneries, smells, tastes, issues, interests, and we make choices. We compare among choices we make in our daily lives. Some are individual choices, some are group choices, and some may not be distinguishable. Why and how do individuals and groups make or unable to make different choices of political regimes? How and why do individuals and groups organize diverse political orders? Why and how do these diverse orders perform differently in meeting the challenges of human needs and desires? These are some guiding general questions for this introductory course. In this sense, “comparative” thinking is crucial for achieving critical thinking. Critical thinking is fundamental

for making informed and educated choices in civic and individual life, and it is crucial for scholarly endeavor of theory building and advancement of scholarship.

We come to a liberal arts college with a critical commitment to seek new knowledge and new ways of thinking to make better choices in the world in which we live. This noble critical commitment will guide our conscience in seeking new knowledge and new ideas in this course. As such, this course will be organized with the following course outline:

Course Outline

- Week 1: Epistemic and Ontological Foundations
- Week 2: Analytical Orientation
- Week 3: National Political Regimes
- Week 4: Choices in Regime Types
- Week 5: Democracy
- Week 6: Economic Development and Societal Changes
- Week 7: Social Ecological Orders
- Week 8: Global Transformations
- Week 9: Political Regimes of Generation You
- Week 10: Challenges

Required Texts:

Draper, Alan and Ansil Ramsay, *The Good Society*, Pearson Longman, 2008.

Lijphart, Arend, *Patterns of Democracy*, Yale University Press, 1999

Lim, Timothy, *Doing Comparative Politics*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006.

In addition to reading some chapters of these three texts, there will be e-reserve readings at the library. I may also use visual materials such as movies and documentary videos that will serve as illustration to the theories, concepts, and puzzles we struggle with in this course.

This is a provisional syllabus and subject to change depending on the ebbs and flows of the course and surrounding world.

Assignments, Expectations, and Grade

There are four components of course assignments. These four components will be used to evaluate your performance in this course. The percentage for each assignment for your final grade is in parentheses. The details of assignments are as follow:

- (1) Participation (20%):** Your participation in this class begins with reading assigned materials *before* the day of class for which readings are assigned. Raising questions, reflecting on lectures and your colleagues' discussion in class are all counted as participation. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture style. There will also be group-led and group-based discussion sessions. What this means is that you will have many opportunities to participate during the lecture. For group-led discussion sessions, I will assign a group of students to prepare a list of questions and ideas that are related to the readings and current world affairs prior to the class discussion session. This assigned group is responsible for leading discussion with puzzles and questions. For group-based discussion sessions, I will assign problems related to the readings to each group during the class. After discussion within each group in class, groups will be responsible for reporting to the entire class and generate the discussion. In this sense, each group may assign a reporter. Generally, Friday classes are reserved for group-led and group-based discussion sessions. To be an effective participant, you will be better off paying attention to current day world affairs and thinking about them along with readings of this course. Needless to say, this requires you to read news in hard and soft media. Visiting leading news websites regularly and seeking political news about countries and regions you are most interested in will be helpful.
- (2) Two critical thinking memos (20%):** Each student is required to complete two memos during the term. **The due dates for these memos are to be self-selected on April 2** when I will have a sign-up sheet for you. You will sign up for one due date before and after the mid-term break respectively. The aim of these memos is to give you the opportunity to scrutinize readings and to connect theories and concepts from readings, lectures, and discussion to current world affairs. This is the opportunity for you to develop your ideas in written and organized format. These ideas can be the ones you gained from above participation component and you desire to develop further in written and organized format. I encourage you to be specific in arguments and illustrations with examples including from your life experiences and worldviews. Your memo can take in a number of formats. **First**, it can be a thoughtful piece articulating on one idea. This one idea can be the one you raised in class as a part of the above "participation" component or another one you consider important. You desire to develop this idea further in written and organized format. In this memo, you are developing an idea you gained from past readings and discussion in class. **Second**, this memo can also be a critical review of upcoming readings that are assigned for the day after your memo is due. For instance, if you select Sunday, April 20 as your due date for the memo, you may write a critical review of the readings assigned for Monday, April 21. **Third**, the memo can take the form of a critical op-ed piece on current day world affairs which relates to the readings of this course. You may read New York Times and Washington Post or other newspaper editorial opinions and see how op-ed piece are organized and written. These memos should **NOT** summarize what the readings say, but you should jump directly to your critical response in light of what you learn from the readings and class discussions. These memos should be **between three and four double-spaced pages**. It is quality rather than quantity of words that will be counted toward your grade. The entries should

be sent to the listserv of the class on **your selected due date**. The entire class is entitled to analyze, comment, and respond to your memos in a respectful manner in the listserv. I may also use your memos for illustrations and discussions.

- (3) **Two take-home assignments (30%):** There will be two take-home assignments. You will be given two questions for each assignment. You will choose one question out of the two. Your assignment is to respond to the selected question directly and answer the question. These questions are related to the course readings, lectures, and class discussion preceding this assignment. You may write your answers in **between five and seven double-spaced pages**. You are not allowed to discuss your selected question or answer with your classmates. You may consult reading materials and your class notes. While you consider readings, lectures, class discussion, and your notes as appropriate bases for your answer, what I am looking for is your own ingenuity in answering the question. This is an honor system. I expect you to be a conscientious citizen and honor this rule. You will have five days in total to answer the selected question beginning from the end of class in which the questions are distributed. If you desire, you may turn in your answer anytime within five days from the time you receive the question. The first assignment will be distributed on **April 11** in class and the second assignment will be distributed on **May 14** in class.
- (4) **One group paper and presentation (30%):** There will be three projects. Groups may choose one of the three projects. A number of groups will work on one project and the remaining groups will work on the other projects. **The first project** will examine the hypothesis put forth by the World Bank's World Development Report 1998/99 arguing that the increase in "knowledge" leads to "economic development" of countries citing contrasting experiences of Ghana and South Korea. **The second project** will examine the hypothesis stating that "economic development" leads to "democracy" put forth by scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington in his *Political Orders in Changing Societies* (1968). **The third project** will examine the hypothesis that democracy leads to good society. Each group will operationalize what "knowledge," "economic development," "democracy," and "good society" mean in real world sense and in qualitative terms. Then, each group will discuss methods of quantifying the qualitative variables identified in the previous step. You are required to discuss (1) how you selected particular variables and why; (2) how you would go about quantifying selected qualitative variables; and (3) what potential secondary sources for data are. You are expected to engage in your maximum capacity to critically think and organize ideas to quantify the selected variables that represent "knowledge," "economic development," and "democracy." You are not required to conduct hypothesis testing by applying statistical techniques. However, one of the main goals of this group assignment is to prepare you for the next level of political science course, namely POSC 230 Methods of Political Research, which will require you to apply statistical techniques. The outcome of your group analysis can be either supporting these hypotheses or rejecting them. Or you might conclude that it depends. If your conclusion is "it depends," your analysis must inform readers: (1) under what circumstances you would support the hypothesis; and (2) under what circumstances you would reject it. The paper will have to be written professionally. The final paper should be **between 25 and 30 double-spaced pages** including references but excluding tables, figures, maps, and charts. The final version of group paper is due on **June 4**. More information about this assignment will be distributed on **April 7**.

NOTE: All written assignments should be double-spaced pages with 12 point Times New Roman font and with page numbers. With the exception of critical thinking memos, your take home assignments and final group papers have to be submitted to me in hard copy in addition to pdf files.

Schedule of Assignments and Due Dates

- 4/2 - Sign up due dates for memo assignments
- 4/7 - Distribute assignment for group paper
- 4/11 - Distribute the first take-home assignment (**graded**)
- 4/21 - An outline of group term paper is due
- 4/28 - Distribute feedback on outline of group paper
- 5/9 - Formal research proposal for group term paper is due (**graded**)
- 5/14 - Distribute the second take-home assignment (**graded**)
- 5/16 - Distribute feedback on formal proposals
- 5/26 - The final draft of group term paper is due
- 5/28 - Group presentations
- 5/30 - Group presentations continue...
- 6/2 - Group presentations end
- 6/4 - Final group papers are due (**graded**)

No final exam for the course.

Course Conducts

- a. Attendance:** Attendance is required for this course. If you need to be absent from the class, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance. When you are absent, it is in your benefit to borrow notes from your classmate or ask your classmates to learn what you missed. If you wish, I will be available during office hours or by appointment at your request to meet with you and go over what you missed while you were absent.
- b. Plagiarism:** There is zero tolerance for plagiarism. A summary of the College's policy on plagiarism states: *“At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred for*

appropriate action to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College.” For more information on Carleton’s policy on academic honesty, please consult

http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359

- c. **Late assignments:** Assignments are due on the dates specified in this syllabus or in the assignment sheet. Late work **will receive half point reduction per late day.** If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to illness or personal emergency, you can request an extension with the supporting documents such as a medical note from a doctor or the Wellness Center.
- d. **Special needs:** If you require special accommodation due to a documented physical or medically classified different learning strategy, please come see me during the first week of class or any time throughout the semester to discuss how I might best assist you in meeting the objectives and requirements of this course.

IMPORTANT: The key for you to be successful as a student and for me as a teacher in this course is timely and effective communication between you and me. Carleton has numerous resources to help you excel in learning. If you do not know them, do not be shy to ask. Make good use of resources on campus! I encourage you to use the Write Place even if you consider yourself as the best writer in the world. **One exception for this course is that you are not allowed to use the Write Place for your take-home exam.**

Schedule of the Course and Readings

WEEK 1: EPISTEMIC AND ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Essential Readings:

March 31: Introduction to the Course

This syllabus

April 2: Reexamining theory and reality of the state as foundation of political orders

Hobbes, Thomas. [1651] 1982. *Leviathan*, Penguin Books.

Part I: *Of Man*, pp. 183–239

[Select due dates for two memos]

April 4: Alternatives to Hobbesian view of human interactions and Leviathan

Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV. 2005. *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality*, Morgan Roads Book.

Chapter 3: Emptiness, Relativity, and Quantum Physics, pp. 43–69

Wilson, James Q. “Moral Sense: Presidential Address. American Political Science Association,” *The American Political Science Review*,” 87 (1), pp. 1-11, 1993.

WEEK 2: ANALYTICAL ORIENTATION

Essential Readings:

April 7: Reexamining theory of government and state

Higgs, Robert, “If Men Were Angels: The Basic Analytics of the State versus Self-government” forthcoming in *Journal of Libertarian Studies*, online at <http://www.independent.org/newsroom/article.asp?id=1982>

Levi, Margaret, “Why we need new theory of government” *Perspective on Politics*, 4(1), March, 2006, pp. 5-19,

Ostrom, Vincent. 2002. “Why Were There So Many Constitutional Failures in the Twenty Century?” Working Paper W02-2, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University Bloomington. Paper presented at the 2002 meeting of the Public Choice Society and Economic Science Association, U.S. Grant Hotel, San Diego, CA, March 22-24.

[Distribute the assignment for group project for the term]

April 9: What do we compare and how do we compare?

Lim, Timothy, *Doing Comparative Politics: Introduction to Approaches and Issues*, Lynn Rienner, 2006. (Hereafter “Lim”)

Chapter 1: Introduction: Doing Comparative Politics, pp. 3-30.

Chapter 2: Comparing to Learn, Learning to Compare, pp. 31-63.

April 11: Comparative theory, methods, framework, and designs

Benjamin, Roger, “Historical Nature of Social-Scientific Knowledge: The Case of Comparative Political Theory” in Elinor Ostrom (ed.) *Strategies of Political Inquiry*, Sage, 1982., pp. 69-98.

Lim, Chapter 3: Thinking Theoretically in Comparative Politics, pp. 65-93.

[Distribute the first take-home assignment]

WEEK 3: NATIONAL POLITICAL REGIMES

Essential Readings:

April 14: Diversity of national political regimes

Draper, Alan and Ansil Ramsay, *The Good Society*, Pearson Longman, 2008 (Hereafter “The Good Society”)

Chapter 1: “Good Societies” pp. 1-20

Chapter 2: “Political Institutions and Good Societies”, pp. 22-52.

April 16: Military and governments in politics

Huntington, Samuel P. “Reforming Civil-Military Relations,” *Journal of Democracy* 6.4 (1995) pp. 9-17. url: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v006/6.4huntington.html

Kohn, Richard H., “How Democracies Control Military,” *Journal of Democracy* 8.4 (1997) pp. 140-153. url: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v008/8.4kohn.html

Case study of State Peace and Development Council of Myanmar/Burma. [no required readings].

April 18: States, Markets, and Citizens

The Good Society, Chapter 3: States, Markets, and the Good Society, pp. 56-88.

Ostrom, Vincent, “Citizen-Sovereigns: The Source of Contestability, the Rule of Law, and the Conduct of Public Entrepreneurship,” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 39(1), pp. 13-17, 2006.

WEEK 4: CHOICES IN REGIME TYPES

Essential Readings:

April 21: Federalism, presidents, and parliaments

Stepan, Alfred, “Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. Model,” *Journal of Democracy* 10.4 (1999) 19-34

Two Draft Constitutions for future Burma/Myanmar. See e-reserve.

[Outline of the group term paper is due]

April 23: Monocentric and polycentric political regimes

Ostrom, Vincent, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren. 1961. "The Organization of Governance in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry." *American Political Science Review* 55 (December): 831-842.

April 25: Library research guide

Kristin Partlo, the Librarian for Social Sciences, will lead this section. This section is designed to help you in executing the steps proposed in your research outline for the group paper. You will benefit most from prepared questions about potential sources for the variables and data you will seek to use in your paper.

WEEK 5: DEMOCRACY

Essential Readings:

April 28: The meaning of democracy

Ostrom, Vincent. 1997. *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerability of Democracies: A Response to Tocqueville's Challenge*, The University of Michigan Press.

Chapter 1: Are Democratic Societies Viable

Chapter 2: Conceptions of Democracy and the Language of Political Inquiry, 33-60

Schmitter, PC and TL Karl, "What Democracy Is... and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy*, 1991.

[Distribute feedback on the outline of group term paper]

April 30: Models of democracies

Lijphart, Arend, *Patterns of Democracy*, Yale University Press, 1999 (Hereafter "Lijphart")

Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-8

Chapter 2: The Westminster Model of Democracy, pp. 9-30.

Chapter 3: Consensus Model of Democracy, 31-47.

Chapter 4: Thirty-Six Democracies, 49-61.

May 2: Appraisals of democracies

Lijphart, Chapter 16: The Quality of Democracy and “Kinder, Gentler” Democracy, pp.275-300.

Sen, Amartya K., “The Importance of Democracy,” Chapter 6 in *Development as Freedom*, Knoff, 1999, pp. 147-159.

The Case of Pak Mun Dam in Thailand. [no readings required].

MAY 3-5: MID-TERM BREAK

WEEK 6: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Essential Readings:

May 7: Economic development and societal changes

North, Douglas, *Understanding The Process of Economic Change*, Princeton University Press, 2005.

Chapter 1: Outline of the Process of Economic Change, pp. 1-8

Chapter 2: Uncertainty in Non-ergodic World, pp. 11-22.

Chapter 5: The Scaffolds Humans Erect, pp. 48-64.

Sen, Amartya K., “The Ends and Means of Development,” Chapter 2 in *Development as Freedom*, Knoff, 1999.

May 9: Why are some countries poor and some prosper?

Sen, Amartya. K., “Poverty as Capability Deprivation,” Chapter 4 in *Development as Freedom*, Knoff, 1999.

World Bank, Knowledge for Development, *World Development Report 1998/99*. p. 1-25. url: <http://www.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr98/contents.htm>

Lim, Chapter 5: Why is East Asia Rich? pp. 125-156.

[Formal research proposal for the group term paper is due]

WEEK 7: SOCIAL CHANCES AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Essential Readings:

May 12: Understanding social ecological systems

Westley, Frances, Steven R. Carpenter, William A. Brock, S. S. Holling, and Lance Gunderson (eds), "Why systems of people and Nature Are Not Just Social and Ecological Systems," *Panarchy: Understanding Transformation in Human and Natural Systems*, Island Press, 2002. pp. 103-119.

May 14: Integrating Social and Environmental Changes

Agrawal, Arun and Elinor Ostrom, "Political Science and Conservation Biology: a Dialog of the Deaf" *Conservation Biology*, 20 (3), 2006. pp. 681–682.

Folke, C., L. Pritchard, F. Berkes, J. Colding, and U. Svedin. 2007. "The problem of fit between ecosystems and institutions: ten years later." *Ecology and Society*, 2007 12(1) 30.

<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol12/iss1/art30/>

[Distribute feedback on formal research proposal]

May 16: Robust social ecological regimes

Ostrom, Elinor, "Sustainable Social-Ecological Systems: An Impossibility?" (2007). Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=997834>

The case of Pak Mun Dam in Thailand [no required readings].

[Distribute second take-home exam]

WEEK 8: GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Essential Readings:

May 19: Challenges of globalization

Held, David and Anthony McGraw, "The Great Globalization Debate: An Introduction," *The Global Transformations Reader*, Polity Press, 2000. pp. 1-45.

May 21: Multilevel human actions and political regimes

Bache, Ian and Matthew Flinders, "Themes and Issues in Multi-Level Governance," in Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders, *Multi-Level Governance*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

The Case of Rhine River basin regime.

May 23: Globalization's affects on the study of comparative politics

Lim, Chapter 9: Globalization and the Study of Comparative Politics, pp. 265-289.

WEEK 9: POLITICAL REGIMES OF GENERATION YOU

Essential Readings:

May 26: Emergent properties of societal orders

Pritchard Jr., Lowell and Steven Sanderson, "The Dynamics of Political Discourse in Seeking Sustainability," *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems*, Island Press, 2002.

[Final Draft of Group Term Paper is Due]

May 28: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

May 30: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

WEEK 10: FINAL

June 2: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

June 4: Considering challenges

Concluding lecture.

[Group term paper is due]