

POSC 120-00:
COMPARATIVE POLITICAL REGIMES

Syllabus

Monday and Wednesday: 9:50 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Friday: 9:40 a.m. – 10:40 p.m.

Winter 2009: January 5 – March 11

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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. 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 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: Ontological Foundations
- Week 2: Epistemic Challenges
- Week 3: Analytical Orientation
- Week 4: Choices in National Regime Types
- Week 5: Democracy
- Week 6: Economic Development
- Week 7: Political Development
- Week 8: Forces of Global Transformations and Political Regimes
- Week 9: Political Regimes of Generation You
- Week 10: Conclusion

Required Texts:

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 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 ebb and flow of the course and the 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) Potluck Discussion (aka) Participation (15%):** This course requires students to be active participants in discussions during the lectures. The benefit of discussion is similar to that of potluck meals. You never know exactly what you are going to get but you prepare for it and know what you want to bring to a potluck. It is conscientious responsibility of each participant that makes a potluck worthwhile to organize and to be a participant. For each class, students are required to read assigned materials actively and bring food for thoughts to share with colleagues. Active reading questions are distributed for potluck discussion for the upcoming class. You are not required to answer all of these questions for all classes. But you are required to answer seven out of all classes from Week One to Week Seven. This is roughly one response per week. **Students are required to bring answers to these questions to the class in which the readings are to be discussed.** All of these answers are worth 10 points out of 15 points in total for this component. Each response is worth 2 points. You will have a chance to discard two lowest earning responses out of seven responses. They will be returned to you at the end of the Week 9. The remaining 5 points for potluck discussion will be evaluated based on your performance on citizenship of this course. To be a good standing citizen of this course, you are required to:(1) have good attendance; (2) read assigned materials before the class; (3) have timely notification and communication with me when you have to be absent or if you need to request extension for personal reasons; and (4) exercise self-respect and responsibility of a student for the success of learning mission of this course and the Carleton College as a whole; and (5) exercise your intellectual freedom in discussions and the assignments for the course. Needless to say that your participation in this course 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. To be an effective participant, you will be better off paying attention to current day world affairs and thinking actively about them along with the readings of this course. 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 reflective and 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 January 7** 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, concepts from readings, lectures, and discussion to current world affairs. This is the opportunity for you to develop your ideas gained from readings and potluck discussions into 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 one of three

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 “potluck discussion” component or the ideas that was not brought to class attention but 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. You can call this style as a thesis-driven short essay. **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 Wall Street Journal, Economist, 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 – posc120-00-w09@lists.carleton.edu – by **5:00p.m. on self-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 discussion in class.

- (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 of this class 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 **January 16** in class and the second assignment will be distributed on **February 16** in class.
- (4) **Team Work: (35%)**: Each team will choose one of the three 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 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 team will define “knowledge,” “economic development,” “democracy,” and “good society” respectively in real world practices and operationalize these definitions into qualitative variables. Then, each team will discuss methods of quantifying the qualitative variables identified in the previous step. You are required to discuss (1) how you select particular variables and why; and (2) how you would go about quantifying selected qualitative variables. You are expected to engage in critical

thinking about variables and to organize ideas to quantify the selected variables that represent “knowledge,” “economic development,” “democracy,” and “good society.” You are not required to conduct hypothesis testing by applying statistical techniques. However, one of the main goals of this 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 based on your analysis. 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 final paper should be **between 20 and 25 double-spaced pages** including references but excluding tables, figures, maps, and charts. The final version of group paper is due on **March 14 at 5:00p.m.** More information about this assignment will be distributed in class during the first week after I establish groups.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All written assignments should be double-spaced pages with 12 point Times New Roman font and with page numbers inserted on 1 inch page margin of A4 size. With the exception of critical thinking memos, your take home assignments and final team papers have to be submitted to me in hard copy in addition to pdf files.

Schedule of Assignments and Due Dates

- 1/7 - Sign up due dates for memo assignments
- 1/12 - Distribute assignment for group paper
- 1/16 - Distribute the first take-home assignment (**graded**)
- 1/27 - Definitions and qualitative variables of team paper is due
- 1/29 - Meeting with teams for discussion and preparing for the outline
- 2/5 - Team paper outline is due (**graded**)

MIDTERM BREAK 2/7 – 2/9

- 2/15 - Distribute feedback on team paper outlines
- 2/16 - Distribute the second take-home assignment (**graded**)
- 2/29 - The final draft of team paper is due (**graded**)
- 3/4 - Group presentations
- 3/6 - Group presentations continue...
- 3/9 - Group presentations end
- 3/14 - Final team 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 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 exams.**

Schedule of the Course and Readings

WEEK 1: ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Essential Readings:

January 5: Introduction to the Course

This syllabus

January 7: Hobbesian views of human nature and human interactions

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

Part I: *Of Man*, pp. 183–239

[Select due dates for two memos]

January 9: 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: EPISTEMIC FOUNDATIONS

Essential Readings:

January 12: Reexamining theory of government and state

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

Hitler, Adolf, *Mein Kampf*, Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1940.

Volume II-Chapter II: The State, pp. 585 – 596.

[Distribute the assignment for team project for the term]

January 14: Empirical reality of the State and its Apparatuses

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.

January 16: State Sovereignty and Citizen Sovereignty

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.

[Distribute the first take-home exam]

WEEK 3: ANALYTICAL ORIENTATION

Essential Readings:

January 19: Comparative Analysis

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.

January 21: Theory, framework, methods, designs, and models

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

January 23: Thinking creatively and critically about variables

Overview of team work assignments: defining and operationalizing knowledge, economic development, democracy, and good society.

WEEK 4: DIVERSITY OF NATIONAL POLITICAL REGIMES

Essential Readings:

January 26: Federalism, presidents, and parliaments

Stepan, Alfred and Cindy Skach. 1993. "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarianism versus Presidentialism," *World Politics*, 46 (October): pp. 1-22.

Horowitz, Donald L., "Comparing Democratic Systems," *Journal of Democracy*, 1990

January 28: 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.

[January 29 – Team paper definitions and variable table are due]

January 30: Library research guide

Danya Leebaw, 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:

February 2: Defining 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

February 4: 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.

February 6: Appraisals of democracies

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

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

The Case of Pak Mun Dam in Thailand

February 7-9: MID-TERM BREAK

WEEK 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Essential Readings:

February 11: 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.

February 13: Why are some countries poor and some prosper?

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

WEEK 7: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Essential Readings:

February 16: Relationship between political development and political institutions

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

Huntington, Samuel, "Whither?" in *Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Oklahoma University Press, 1993.

Distribute second take-home exam

February 18: Knowledge and Economic Development

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

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

February 20: Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Uslaner, Eric, "Democracy and Social Capital," in Mark Warren, ed., *Democracy and Trust*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 121-150.

WEEK 8: FORCES OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND POLITICAL REGIMES

Essential Readings:

February 23: Challenges of globalization

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

February 25: Global Environmental and Societal Changes

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

The case of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (no reading)

February 27: Governing Social Ecological Systems

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/>

WEEK 9: POLITICAL REGIMES OF GENERATION YOU

Final draft of team paper is due on Saturday, February 29 by 5:00p.m.

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

Group presentations

March 4: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

March 6: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

WEEK 10: CONCLUSION

March 9: Knowledge, Economic Development, Democracy, and Good Society

Group presentations

March 11: Considering challenges

Concluding lecture.

[Group term paper is due on March 14 at 5:00p.m]