POLI220A: State and Society

Course Summary and Objectives
This seminar complements Political Science 220B (Comparative Politics: Institutions) to prepare students for the Comparative Politics comprehensive exam and to provide them with the background and training necessary to undertake original research in comparative politics. Each week will introduce a new theme, typically a dependent variable in comparative politics. This seminar will focus on the non-institutional side of political science, specifically on themes such as culture, identity, behavior, order and violence. Although this course tries to be comprehensive, it is far from exhaustive. Students should familiarize themselves with the list of recommended readings as well in order to prepare for the comprehensive exam.

Requirements
Students will be graded based on class participation (30%), four response papers (30%), and a final exam (40%) that mimics the comprehensive exam. The distribution of requirements is as follows:

• Class participation (30%): Students are expected to do all required readings for the week before coming to class, and to participate actively in class.
• Response papers (30%): Students should write four response papers over the course of the quarter: two in weeks 2-5 and two in weeks 6-10. Response papers should be 2-3 single-spaced pages and should thematically summarize the readings for the week. In other words, do not summarize each reading but rather tease out the various themes, puzzles, questions covered. You should then highlight the contributions for each set of readings (what have we learned about this topic) and the limitations (what questions remain). You are expected to circulate your response paper by 9am the Wednesday before, so as to give your classmates ample time to read your response and think about it. Response papers will be discussed in class.
• Final exam (40%): The final exam will be a take-home, closed-book, written exam. Students will have to answer 3 out of 5 essay questions.

Format
This class is a graduate seminar: active participation is required and expected. The schedule for each session will be:

9 – 10.30: Discussion of readings
10.30 – 10.45: Break
10.45 – 11.45: Discussion of student papers
11.45 – 11.50: Conclusion
**Week 1: Methods in Comparative Politics**

**Required:**
- Dunning, Thad. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*: Introduction, Part I and Conclusion

**Recommended:**
Week 2: The State

Required:

Recommended:
- Migdal, J. Strong Societies and Weak States: Chapters 1 and 2
- North, Douglas Structure and Change in Economic History
- Olson, M. The Rise and Decline of Nations
Week 3: Autocracy

Required:

Recommended:
- Decalo, S. Coups and Army Rule in Africa
- Lust-Okar Ellen. 2005. Structuring Conflict in the Arab World: Chapters 2-3
- Stepan, A. The State and Society: Chapters 1 and 2
**Week 4: Low-risk Participation**

Required:
- Dowd, Gibson, Ferree, Jung. “Get out the vote, Uganda style.” Working paper

Recommended:
**Week 5: High-risk participation**

Required:

Recommended:
Week 6: Exclusion

Required:

Recommended:
- Hainmueller and Hiscox. 2010. “Attitudes toward highly skilled and low-skilled immigration: evidence from a survey experiment.” *APSR* 104(1)
Week 7: Constructing the nation

Required:
- Gellner, E. "Nationalism." In *Thought and Change*: Chapter 7
- Weber, E. *Peasants into Frenchmen*: Chapters 6, 27, 29

Recommended:
- Fearon, J.D. “What is Identity (As We Now Use the Word)?” Unpublished manuscript: [http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/papers/iden1v2.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/papers/iden1v2.pdf)
- Hardin, R. *One for All*: Chaps. 1, 4, 6.
- Kalyvas, S. *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*
Week 8: Ethnic identities

Required:

Recommended:
- Laitin, D. *Hegemony and Culture*
Week 9: Conflict and Violence

Required:
• Fearon, J. and David Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War” *APSR*
• Kalyvas, S. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: Chapters 7-9
• Weinstein, J. *Inside Rebellion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: Chapter 1

Recommended:
Week 10: Governance and Government Performance

Required:


Recommended:

- Tsai, L. 2007. “Solidary groups, informal accountability, and local public goods provision in rural China.” *APSR* 101(2).