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%), one class presentation (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. Students can miss 1 session without penalty as long as they turn in a response paper (2-3pp single-spaced, by email) synthesizing the week’s readings by the beginning of class that week; students will be penalized for missing more than 1 session, even if they turn in a response paper (though the penalty will be lower if they do).
- Class presentation (30%): Students will be assigned to one in-class presentation. This presentation will last no longer than 10 minutes (strictly enforced). It must not provide a summary of readings. Instead, it must synthesize the main research questions for the week’s readings, briefly summarize how each reading contributes one or more answer(s) to these questions, consider new questions raised or old questions unanswered by these readings, and offer one research design for tackling one of these questions.
- Final exam (40%): The final exam will be a take-home, open-book, open-note, written exam. Students will have to answer 2 out of 4 essay questions.

Format
This class is a graduate seminar: active participation is required and expected. All electronic devices are banned during classtime. Here’s why:
Week 1: Research Methods in Comparative Politics

Required:

- Dunning, Thad. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*: Introduction, Part I and Conclusion
- Humphreys, Macartan. 2013. “Monkey Business.” Available at: http://cegablog.org/2013/03/20/tss_humphreys/
- Laitin, David D. 2012. “Fisheries Management.” *Political Analysis*

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*
- Greene, Kenneth F. *Why Dominant Parties Lose: Mexico’s Democratization in Comparative Perspective*. Chapter 1.
- Lust-Okar Ellen. 2005. Structuring Conflict in the Arab World: Chapters 2-3
• Stepan, A. *The State and Society*: Chapters 1 and 2
• Wellhofer, E.S. 2003. “Democracy and Fascism: Class, Civil Society and Rational Choice in Italy.” *APSR* 97(1)
**Week 4: High-risk participation**

Required:


Recommended:

Week 5: Participation and vote-buying

Required:


- Driscoll, Jesse and F. Daniel Hidalgo. 2014. “Intended and unintended consequences of democracy promotion assistance to Georgia after the Rose Revolution.” *Research and Politics*.


- Kasara, Kimuli and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2014. “When do the rich vote less than the poor and why? Explaining turnout inequality across the world” *AJPS*.


Recommended:


- Gerber, Alan, Gregory Huber, Marc Meredith, Danier Biggers, and David Hendry. 2013. “Felony status, participation, and political reintegration: results from a field experiment.” Working paper


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)
- Malhotra, Margalit and Mo. 2011. “Economic explanations for opposition to immigration: distinguishing between prevalence and magnitude.” *AJPS*
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
- Hardin, R. One for All: Chaps. 1, 4, 6.
- Kalyvas, S. The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe
Week 8: Ethnic identities and ethnic politics

Required:


Recommended:

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

Required:
- Fearon, J. 1995. “Ethnic War as a Commitment Problem.”
- Fearon, J. and David Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War” *APSR*
- Horowitz, Donald L. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*: 141-184.

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).