

**GS 1500. Comparative Politics (Core)**  
**Department of Politics**  
**New York University -- Fall 2006**

**INSTRUCTOR**

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**CLASS MEETING:** Thursday 4:00-6:00PM

**OFFICE HOURS:** Thursdays: 10-12

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the methodology and to some of the main themes in Comparative Politics. We first study strategies for comparative case studies, cross country large-N studies, and causal inference. We then survey the literature on state-building, political regimes and transitions. Finally, we cover the literature on political institutions, political agency, ethnic divisions, decentralization and clientelism.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to regular attendance and class participation, which will account for 20% of the grade, there will be (1) a take home exam on October 5, (2) two 2 pages review papers due on October 19 and November 2 and (3) a 10-12 pages final paper due on December 14. The take home exam will count for 10% of the grade, the review papers 20% and the final paper 50%.

**Week 1 (September 7): Introduction**

**Week 2 (September 14): What is Comparative Politics?**

Peter J. Katzenstein; Peter B. Evans -; James C. Scott; Susanne Hoebel Rudolph; Adam Przeworski; Theda Skocpol; Atul Kohli (1995) The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium, *World Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 1. pp. 1-49.

Roger Myerson (1995). Analysis of Democratic Institutions: Structure, Conduct and Performance, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 9-1, 77-99

**Methods of Comparative Political Analysis**

**Week 3: (September 21) Causal Inference**

Fearon, James D. 1991. "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science." *World Politics* 43: 169-195.

Przeworski Adam (2005) Is a Science of Comparative Politics Possible? Working Paper. New York University

Sekhon, Jas (2004) "Quality Meets Quantity: Case Studies, Conditional Probability and Counterfactuals." *Perspectives on Politics*, June: 281-293.

#### **Week 4 (September 28): Case Studies versus Large N Studies**

Stanley Lieberson, (1992) "Small N's and big conclusions: an examination of the reasoning in comparative Studies based on a small number of cases," in Charles C. Ragin & Howard S. Becker, eds., *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press): 105-118

Jackman, Robert. 1985. Cross-National Statistical Research and the Study of the Comparative Politics, *American Journal of Political Science* 29, pp. 161-182.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. (Princeton) Princeton University Press. Ch. 1, 2, 3.

#### **Week 5: (October 5) States**

Polak, Benjamin Polak and Boaz Moselle (2001). A Model of a Predatory State, *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization*. Pp. 1-33

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in *Bringing the State Back In* edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Kathryn Firmin-Sellers, (1995) "The Politics of Property Rights," *American Political Science Review*, 89, 4: 867-881.

Recommended:

Acemoglu, Daron (2005) Politics and Economics of Weak and Strong States. *Journal of Monetary Economics* (forthcoming)

Widner, Jennifer. 1999. Building Judicial Independence in Common Law Africa in Andreas Schedler, Larry Diamond and Mark Plattner (eds), *Self-Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*.

#### **Week 6 (October 12) Political Regimes and Transitions**

Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillippe Schmitter, and Stephen Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), Chapters 1-4.

Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi. 1997. Modernization: theory and facts. *World Politics* 49.2; 155-183

Leonard Wantchekon. 2003. The Paradox of Warlord Democracy: A Theoretical Investigation: *American Political Science Review* 98 (2004): 17—33

**Recommended**

Bratton Michael and Nicholas Van de Walle. 1994. Neo-Patrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa. *World Politics* 46:4

### **Week 7 (October 19): Political Institutions**

Arend Lijphart, "The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, 1945-85" *American Political Science Review* 84 (1990): 481-96.

Carey, John. 1996. *Term Limits and Legislative Representation*. (New York) Cambridge University Press.

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Counts. Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. (New York) Cambridge University Press. Introduction.

### **Week 8 : (October 26) Resource Curse**

Nathan Jensen and Leonard Wantchekon (2004) "Resource Wealth and Political Regimes in Africa", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 7, 816-841

Ross, Michael (1999). "The Political Economy of Resource Curse" *World Politics* 51.2 297-322

Robinson Jim, Ragnar Torvik and Thierry Verdier. 2006. "The Political Foundations of Resource Curse". *Journal of Development Economics*, 79. 447-468

### **Week 9 (November 2). Political Agency and Corruption**

Rose-Ackerman and Jana Kunikova (2005) "Electoral Rules and Constitutional Structures as Constraints on Corruption" *British Journal of Political Science* 35 (4)

Reinikka, Ritva and Jakob Svensson (2003), "The Power of Information: Evidence from a Newspaper Campaign to Reduce Capture," Working Paper, Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm University.

Olken, Benjamin (2005) Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia. Working Paper.

#### **Recommended:**

Rose-Ackerman, Susan (2003) Governance and Corruption. Bjorn Lombard, eds, *Global Crises, Global Solutions*, Cambridge University Press, 301-362

Egorov Georgi and Constantin Sorin (2005) Dictators and their Viziers: Agency Problems in Dictatorships. Working Paper. Princeton University.

### **Week 10. (November 9) Ethnic Conflict**

Horowitz, Donald. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley. University of California Press. Part II.

Miguel, Edward (2004). Tribe or Nation? Nation-Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania. *World Politics* 56.3; 327-362

Posner, 2003 "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas. are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi" *American Political Science Review* Vol.98, No.4

#### **Recommended.**

Bates, Robert H. 1983. "Modernization, Ethnic Cooperation, and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa." In *State versus Ethnic Claims: Africa Policy Dilemmas* Donald Rotshild and Victor Olunsorola, eds. Boulder Colorado

### **Week 11. (November 16) Ethnic Cooperation**

Horowitz, Donald. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley. University of California Press. Part III

Chandra, Kanchan. 2004. Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability. *Perspectives on Politics*

Fearon, James D. and David Laitin. 1996. "Explaining Ethnic Cooperation." *American Political Science Review* 4 pp. 715-35

Atchade, Yves and Leonard Wantchekon. 2006. Does Ethnic Solidarity Facilitate Electoral Support for Nation-Building Policies?

#### **Recommended:**

Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002. *Civic Life and Ethnic Conflict: Hindus and Muslims in India*, New Haven Yale University Press

### **Week 12. (November 30) Clientelism**

Dixit Avinash and John Londregan. 1996. "The Determinants of Success of Special Interest in Redistributive Politics." *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 58, pp. 1132-1155

Stokes, Susan (2005). Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina. *American Political Science Review* 99:3; 315-327

Scott, C. James. 1972. Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia. *American Political Science Review*. 66, 91-113.

Wantchekon, Leonard (2003) Clientelism and Voting Behavior: A Field Experiment in Benin: *World Politics* 55: 3; 399-422

**Week 13 (December 7)      Decentralization**

Bardhan Pranab (2002), "Decentralization of Governance and Development," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 16 (2), pp. 185-205.

Escobar-Lemmon, Maria (2001) Political Support for Decentralization: An Analysis of the Colombian and Venezuelan Legislatures. *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (4): 688-97

O'Neill, Kathleen. 2003. Decentralization as an Electoral Strategy. *Comparative Political Studies* 36, 1068-1091

**Recommended**

Falleti Tulia (2005) A Sequential Theory of Decentralization: Latin American Cases in Comparative Perspective. *American Political Science Review* 99:3; 327-347