

POLS 655: COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

San Diego State University
Fall 2015
W 4.00-6.40 PM
NH 131

Prof: Ahmet Kuru
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Office: AH 4132
Office hrs: W 2.00-4.00 PM

Description

This course intends to provide students with a broad understanding of comparative politics sub-field in terms of covering both major theories, such as, culturalist, ideational, rational choice, structural materialist, and institutionalist perspectives, and main themes, such as nationalism, citizenship, state-society relations, democracy and authoritarianism, socio-economic development, and state-religion relations. Comparative politics is the only sub-field of political science that is defined with a method (“comparative”). Its focus on domestic politics makes it different from International Relations, its emphasis on comparing countries differentiates it from American Politics, and its extensive usage of empirical data is a distinction from Political Philosophy.

Each student will present one book to the class. Moreover, students will write one-page (single space) response papers every week. Participation to the class discussions through questions and answers is a significant part of the learning process.

Student Learning Objectives:

In this course, students will:

- Utilize basic approaches, perspectives, theories, and methods of Comparative Politics
- Define, explain, and illustrate by contemporary examples various theories of political regimes, addressing their origins, evolution, institutions, processes, and effects
- Compare and contrast key concepts of political ideologies, as systems of organizing political movements and institutions
- Exercise skills in critical thinking, close reading of texts, verbal and written communication, organization and integration of ideas, and problem-solving

Grading

Response Papers	20 %
Class Participation	20 %
Paper	60 %

Disability Accommodation

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Academic Dishonesty

Students caught engaging in cheating or plagiarism will receive an automatic F for the course and will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. According to the SDSU Senate “Plagiarism shall be defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the University as one’s own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to (a) submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; (b) omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; (c) omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; (d) close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another... and (f) submitting as one’s own work papers purchased from research companies.”(<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/senate/policy/pfacademics.html#cheating>)

Required Readings

- Robert D. Putnam. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University, 1994.
- Ahmet T. Kuru. *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Michael L. Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. New York: Crown Business, 2012.
- Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006.
- James Scott. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff. 2012. *Economic Development in the Americas since 1500*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- March M. Howard. *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2009.
- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

SCHEDULE

August 26 Syllabus

September 2: Comparative Method

- Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64, 4 (1970): 1033-1053.
- Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*, 65, 3, 1971: 682-693.

Recommended:

James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

I. THEORIES

September 9: Culture

Robert D. Putnam. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University, 1994.

Recommended:

Samuel Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, 3 (1993): 22-49.

September 16: Ideas and Ideologies

Ahmet T. Kuru. *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Recommended:

Stephen E. Hanson, "From Culture to Ideology in Comparative Politics: A Review Essay," *Comparative Politics* 35, 3 (2003): 355-386.

September 23: Structure

Michael L. Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Michael L. Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53, 3 (2001): 325-361.

Recommended:

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

September 30: Rational Choice

Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.

Recommended:

Mancur Olson: "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *American Political Science Review* 87, 3 (1993): 567-576.

Robert Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

October 7: Institutions

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. New York: Crown Business, 2012.

Recommended:

Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 936-957.

Jan Luiten van Zanden, *The Long Road to the Industrial Revolution: The European Economy in a Global Perspective, 1000-1800*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

II. THEMES

October 14: Nationalism

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006.

Recommended:

Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991.

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

David D. Latin, *Identity in Formation: Russian-speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.

October 21: State-Society Relations

James Scott. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Recommended:

Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," *American Political Science Review* 85, 1 (1991): 77-95.

October 28: Development

Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff. 2012. *Economic Development in the Americas since 1500*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended:

David E. Bloom and Jeffrey D. Sachs, "Geography, Demography, and Economic Growth in Africa," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 2 (1998): 207-273.

James Mahoney, *Colonialism and Postcolonial Development: Spanish America in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Chpts 1, 2, 7, 8.

November 4: Citizenship

March M. Howard. *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Recommended:

Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

November 11: Veterans Day

November 18: Democratization

Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Recommended:

Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Beacon Press, 1993, pp. xvii-xxv.

Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

November 25: Thanksgiving**December 2: Authoritarianism in the Middle East and Central Asia**

Ahmet T. Kuru, "Authoritarianism and Democracy in Muslim Countries: Rentier States and Regional Diffusion," *Political Science Quarterly* 129, 3 (2014): 399-427.

Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism Reconsidered: Lessons of the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* 44, 2 (2012): 127-149.

Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 36, 2 (2004): 139-157.

December 9: Peer-Review**December 17: Paper due date**