

Claremont Graduate University
Division of Politics and Economics
SPE350 Comparative Political Systems
Spring 2018

Contact Information

Course Instructor: Melissa Rogers

Office: McManus 228

Phone: 909-621-8697

E-mail: Melissa.Rogers@cgu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4pm or by appointment

Course Schedule

Meeting day, time: Tuesday 1-4pm

Course Location: ACB 208

Course Description

This course introduces major topics in comparative politics and provides basic training for comparative politics graduate students. The main purpose of this course is to introduce key questions as well as classic and modern approaches in comparative politics. It explores the major theoretical and conceptual building blocks in the sub-fields: theory, method, development, violence, culture, institutions, parties, regimes, governance, etc. Each week we discuss a subset of the pertinent scholarly literature, mainly focusing on a major theoretical controversy. We compare and contrast answers to important questions and ask what makes an explanation “good.” We discuss when a theory is most useful and if a complementary theory could be posited that would subsume previously conflicting or incompletely successful theories. Upon completion of this course, students should have an understanding of the intellectual trends in the study of comparative politics, knowledge of key concepts and spheres of debate, and an ability to articulate the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and issues in comparative politics.

Background Preparations (Prerequisites)

This is a core course for the comparative politics sequence.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the common themes in comparative politics research.
2. Articulate the different research design and methodological approaches in the comparative method.
3. Group nations according to broad differences in governmental and societal structure.
4. Link different political and economic outcomes to difference in comparative government.
5. Explain limits to the comparative method to explaining political outcomes.

Texts and Journal References

All readings are available online through the library website or through the course Canvas site.

The main readings will be:

Caramani, Daniele. *Comparative Politics*, 4th Edition. Oxford University Press.

Landman, Todd. *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics*. Routledge (available on the library website)

Course Requirements & Assignments:

Students are required to complete a midterm exam, final exam, and 2 response papers (3-4 pages long). The midterm and final exams will take place in class and will mimic the structure of the Ph. D. qualifying exams. Students may choose any 2 weeks during the semester for their response papers. Participation is also crucial to your grade in the course. It will be worth 10% of the total course grade and will include discussion questions.

No late exams will be accepted unless special arrangements are made via a request, in writing, to me at least 2 weeks prior to the exam. Late papers will be deducted 10 points per day for each day late and will not be accepted after the 4th day.

Assignment Schedule:

Response Papers- 2 total, timing determined by students

Midterm Exam- March 20th

Final Exam- May 8th

Grade Breakdown:

Midterm: 30%

Final Exam: 35%

Response Papers (2): 25%

Participation: 10%

Grading Description: Written Assignments

Assignments are graded based on their academic rigor. In particular, I focus on whether the student has made an argument and how that argument is supported by logic and by the cited literature. I do not want students simply to summarize the literature but rather to fit literature into a coherent argument that both demonstrates understanding of the literature and ability to develop and defend an original argument. I use the following grading rubric, developed by the Association of American Universities to evaluate papers. The numbers at the top of the grid reflect the point value for each element of the paper.

Grading Description: Participation

Students should be prepared to participate in every class session. I will document the frequency of participation by individual students in each class period. Participation can include participation in class discussions, presentation of discussion questions, and comments on current events related to the course. Students will present discussion questions in assigned weeks. This gives students a clear opportunity to participate in the course. I understand that different students have different ways of participating. If students are uncomfortable speaking often in class, they

can participate by uploading current event articles to Canvas and presenting additional discussion questions.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students who are unable to attend class must seek permission for an excused absence from the course director or teaching assistant. Unapproved absences or late attendance for three or more classes may result in a lower grade or an “incomplete” for the course. If a student has to miss a class, he or she should arrange to get notes from a fellow student and is strongly encouraged to meet with the teaching assistant to obtain the missed material. Missed extra-credit quizzes and papers will not be available for re-taking.

Scientific and Professional Ethics

The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it known whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you guidance. Exams must be completed independently. Any collaboration on answers to exams, unless expressly permitted, may result in an automatic failing grade and possible expulsion from the Program. Any plagiarism will result in a failing grade and possible disciplinary action by CGU.

Grading

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Grade Point</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>Complete mastery of course material and additional insight beyond course material</i>	<i>Insightful</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>Complete mastery of course material</i>	<i>Proficient</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>Gaps in mastery of course material; not at level expected by the program</i>	<i>Developing</i>
<i>U</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Ineffective</i>

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
Explanation of issues	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
Evidence <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/ evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/ evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	Specific position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/ hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.

Instructor Feedback and Communication

The best way to get in touch with me is by email at Melissa.Rogers@cgu.edu. I will respond to email within two business days. If you have not heard from me in two days, please contact me again and I will respond promptly.

Expectations and Logistics

All readings that can be uploaded to Canvas are available through this site. If you choose to contact me through Canvas, please check the box that indicates “send email” so that I am sure to see the message. I will distribute and receive assignments through Canvas unless special arrangements are needed. All assignments should be submitted in .doc or .pdf format on Canvas. Response papers should be uploaded to the Canvas assignment folder. Graded assignments will be returned in class or on Canvas the week after they were submitted.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

CGU is committed to offering auxiliary aids and services to students with verifiable disabilities, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. To ensure that their individual needs are addressed, students with special needs are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office as early as possible. Additional resources can be found on the linked page (<http://www.cgu.edu/pages/1154.asp>).

Weekly Readings

Week 1 (January 16): Introduction

Week 2 (January 23): What is Comparative Politics?

- Caramani, Introduction and Ch.1
- Adam Przeworski, “Institutions Matter?” *Government and Opposition* 39, 2004: 527-540.
- David Collier. ‘The Comparative Method’ In Ada Finifter. Ed. 1993. *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*. APSA. [Download from SSRN](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Papers.cfm?abstract_id=1540884)
http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Papers.cfm?abstract_id=1540884

Week 3 (January 30): Comparative Methods

- Caramani. Ch. 2, 3
- Landman. Ch. 1-3

Week 4 (February 6): Political Development and Modernization

- Caramani, Ch. 17
- Huntington, Samuel. *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 1-92.

- Landman, Ch. 4
- Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tambukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Week 5 (February 13): Democracy

- Caramani, Ch.5
- Landman, Ch. 7
- Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl. "What democracy is... and is not." *Journal of democracy* 2.3 (1991): 75-88.
- Albertus, Michael, and Victor Menaldo. "Gaming Democracy: Elite Dominance During Transition and the Prospects for Redistribution." *British Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 03 (2014): 575-603.

Week 6 (February 20): Autocracy

- Caramani, Ch.6
- Barbara Geddes. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization after 20 Years," *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 2, pp. 115-44.

Week 7 (February 27): Institutions and Institutional Analysis

- Landman, Ch. 8
- Caramani, Ch. 7-9

Week 8 (March 6): Elections

- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Brothers, Chapter 2.
- John Ferejohn. "Incumbent Performance and Electoral Control." *Public Choice* 30, Fall 1986: 5-25.
- James Fearon. "Electoral Accountability and the Control of Politicians: Selecting Good Types versus Sanctioning Poor Performance." In *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*, edited by Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, and Bernard Manin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Caramani, Ch. 10

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (March 20): MIDTERM EXAM (Take at home)

Week 11 (March 27): Political Parties

- Caramani, Ch. 12, 13
- Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge University Press (library online access)

Week 12 (April 3): Subnational Politics

- Caramani, Ch. 15, 11
- Snyder, Richard. "Scaling down: The subnational comparative method." *Studies in Comparative International Development (SCID)* 36.1 (2001): 93-110.
- Rogers, Melissa Ziegler. "Taxing with Dictators and Democrats: Regime Effects, Transfers and Revenue in Argentina's Provinces." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 6.1 (2014): 3-44.

Week 13 (April 10): Comparative Political Economy

- Bates, Robert (1981). *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chs 1-2
- Stasavage, David. 2005. "Democracy and Education Spending in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol.49, no.2, pp.343-358.
- Ross, M. (1999). "The Political Economy of the Resource Curse." *World Politics*, 51: 297-322.

Week 14 (April 17): Comparative Public Policy

- Caramani, Ch. 20-22

Week 15 (April 24): Political Participation

- Caramani, Ch. 14, 18, 19

Week 16 (May 1): Social Movements and Political Dissent

- Landman, Ch. 5-6
- Caramani, Ch. 16

Final Exam- May 8th (Take at home)