Government 2105: Comparative Politics Field Seminar
Fall 2012
Wednesday 2-4 pm
Professors Jorge Domínguez and Nahomi Ichino

This survey of major topics in comparative politics is designed for Ph.D. students wanting to familiarize themselves with the subfield, its evolution, and emerging research questions and controversies. It considers works of theoretical importance dealing with politics in the developed and developing world. Each week the course discusses a subsection of the pertinent scholarly literature, usually focusing on a major theoretical controversy. Key methodological issues in the study of comparative politics are addressed in the context of these substantive and theoretical works. Because this is a reading and discussion course, active student participation is essential.

**Enrollment:** The main audience is Ph.D. candidates in the Government Department. Enrollment is with consent of the instructors. There are no formal prerequisites.

**Requirements:** Each student is expected to complete all the required reading each week and to contribute to the collective discussion.

In addition, each student will write six short papers during the semester; each paper should be no more than 1800 words, double-spaced, and use times font no smaller than 12 point. Please submit three papers to each instructor by the end of the term. Collaborative discussion is encouraged; collaborative paper writing is prohibited: you must be the sole author of each and every paper.

All papers must be submitted to the dropbox on the course website by Tuesday 6 pm for the given seminar session.

Papers should analyze one or more central issues that the assigned reading for the week addresses, locate the principal authors’ positions regarding those issues, and comment critically on the state of the debate and the value of the individual contributions to it. Keep such questions in mind as:

- What are the central issues at stake in this literature?
- What are the principal arguments of the works under study?
- How does each relate to the debates in the field?
- What are the main theoretical or empirical strengths or weakness of each?
- How valuable and viable is the theory or argument that each proposes?
- How effectively is evidence marshaled in support of the argument?
- Which scholarly disputes have been resolved?
- What good further work lies ahead?
The paper should not be a mere summary of the readings but a critical commentary and a discussion of the issues that arise in the works. Good papers are the product of original thought and set forth a distinct hypothesis or interpretation of the relevant issues. Be focused, terse, and selective. The papers need not be based on any additional reading beyond the required reading. They will be evaluated according to the effectiveness and insight with which they illuminate the principal debates and scholarly contributions to them in an independent and critically-minded way. They cannot cover all the conceivable issues and need not cover all the assigned readings, though broad coverage is desirable.

There are no other requirements for this course. Students should not plan to write long research seminar papers in this course. There are no exams.

**Course materials:** On each topic, the readings are designed to include insofar as possible: (1) landmark studies that stimulated and shaped subsequent research on the topic; (2) analytical surveys of the work that has been done on the topic; (3) studies setting forth different views on major controversial issues concerning the topic; and (4) recent studies that reflect the current state of work on the topics.

A set of all course reading materials is available in the Government Department Office. Scanned book chapters and PDF files of journal articles will also be available on the course website.

**Grading:** Class participation will count for one fifth of the final grade. Each short paper will count for about 13 percent of the final grade.

**Office Hours:** Professor Domínguez’s office is in the CGIS Knafel Building, 1737 Cambridge Street, room K216. His office hours are Tuesdays and Wednesdays 11:15-12 or by appointment. His office telephone number is 617-495-5982. His email address is jorge_dominguez@harvard.edu. His executive assistant is Kathleen Hoover, kathleen_hoover@harvard.edu.

Professor Ichino’s office is in the CGIS Knafel Building, 1737 Cambridge Street, room K206. Her office hours are usually Mondays 2-4 PM. Sign up for slots at [www.wejoinin.com/sheets/csvfl](http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/csvfl). Her office telephone number is 617-384-7231. Her email address is nichino@gov.harvard.edu.
Class Schedule

0. Sep  5  Introduction (Domínguez and Ichino)
1. Sep 12  Classical Approaches to Modernization (Domínguez)
2. Sep 19  Political Economy of Development (Domínguez)
3. Sep 26  Logics and Methods of Comparative Politics (Ichino)
4. Oct  3  Institutions and Institutional Analysis (Domínguez)
5. Oct 10  The State and State-Building (Ichino)
6. Oct 17  Political Regimes and Regime Change (Ichino)
7. Oct 24  The International Context (Domínguez)
8. Oct 31  Political Economy of Advanced Democracies (Ichino)
9. Nov  7  Ethnicity, Civil War, and Political Violence (Ichino)
10. Nov 14 Civil Society and Social Movements (Domínguez)
12. Dec  5  Political Parties and Party Systems (Ichino)
0. September 5: Introduction (Domínguez and Ichino)

1. September 12: Classical Approaches to Modernization (Domínguez)

**Required Reading**


**Additional Sources**


Bell, Daniel *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*.


2. September 19: Political Economy of Development (Domínguez)

Required Reading


Additional Sources


3. September 26: Logics and Methods of Comparative Politics (Ichino)

**Required Reading**


**Additional Sources**


Gerring, John, *Social Science Methodology* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).


Green, Donald P., and Ian Shapiro, *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory* (Yale University Press, 1994).


Mahoney, James, “After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative,” *World Politics* (January 2010).


Mahoney, James, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, 2003).

Mahoney, James, and Celso Villegas, “Historical Enquiry and Comparative Politics” Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 73-89.

Marx, Karl, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.

Pierson, Paul, *Politics in Time* (Princeton University Press, 2004), Introduction (pp. 1-10 only), Chapters 1-2 (pp. 17-78).


Robinson, James, and Jared Diamond, *Natural Experiments in History* (Harvard University Press, 2010).


4. October 3: Institutions and Institutional Analysis (Domínguez)

**Required Reading**

**Overview and Approaches**


**Institutional Effects**


**Institutional Design**


**Institutional Change**


Additional Sources


Helmke, Gretchen, and Steven Levitsky, eds. Informal Institutions and Democracy (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).


5. October 10: The State and State-Building (Ichino)

**Required Reading**


**Additional Sources**


Evans, Peter B., Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 3-37.


Krasner, Stephen, “Are Bureaucracies Important? (Or Allison Wonderland)” Foreign Policy, 7, (Summer 1972), pp. 159-179.


Skocpol, Theda, *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979).


Weber, Max, “Bureaucracy” in Gerth and Mills (eds) From Max Weber (pp. 198-244).


6. October 17: Political Regimes and Regime Change (Ichino)

Required Reading


Additional Sources


Bratton, Michael and Nicolas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).


Skocpol, Theda and Jeff Goodwin, “Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World,” *Politics and Society* 17, No. 4 (December 1989).


Ziblatt, Daniel, “Does Landholding Inequality Block Democratization? A Test of the Bread and Democracy Thesis and the Case of Prussia,” *World Politics* July 2008:

7. October 24: The International Context (Domínguez)

**Required Reading**


**Additional Sources**


Cardoso, Fernando Henrique, and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (University of California, 1979).


Gourevitch, Peter, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Cornell University Press, 1986), Ch 1 (pp. 17-34) and Ch 6 (pp. 221-240).


8. October 31: Political Economy of Advanced Democracies (Ichino)


Additional Sources
[Note: includes work on interest groups and corporatism in advanced industrialized countries]


Alt, James, and K. Alec Chrystal, Political Economics (Berkeley: California University Press, 1983).


Williamson, Oliver, The Economic Institutions of Capitalism (Free Press, 1985).

9. November 7: Ethnicity, Civil War, and Political Violence (Ichino)

**Required Reading**


Wilkinson, Steven, *Votes and Violence* (Cambridge University Press), Chapter 1 (pp. 1-18)


**Additional Sources**


Barth, Fredrik. 1969: *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.


Wilkinson, Steven, *Votes and Violence* (Cambridge University Press), Chapter 1 (pp. 1-18).


10. November 14: Civil Society and Social Movements (Domínguez)

Required Reading


Additional Sources


McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *The Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).


Required Reading

Voters and Voting


Explaining Electoral Design

Lijphart, Arend, Patterns of Democracy, Ch 8 (electoral systems) (pp. 143-170).


Additional Sources


Dalton, Russell J., and Martin P. Wattenberg (eds.), *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford University Press, 2000), chapters 2 (Dalton) and 3 (Dalton, McAllister, and Wattenberg) [pp. 19-76].


12. December 5: Political Parties and Party Systems (Ichino)

Required Reading


Additional Sources


