

## **Political Science 3**

### **Introduction to Comparative Politics**

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This first course in the comparative politics sequence will introduce students to the concepts, vocabulary and basic methods of comparative politics. The course, divided into four sections, will explore the basic concepts of the state; the roles of gender, class and identity in politics; the different types of party and electoral systems; and the effects of globalization and neo-liberalism on contemporary world politics.

Throughout the semester students will be expected to keep up with the assigned readings (noted for each week on the syllabus) and be prepared for discussion in class. This is very important, as this will be a discussion-intensive course. Students will also be required to write three “thought” papers during the course of the semester. These pieces, two to three pages in length, will be based on the previous weeks’ readings, and will form the basis of debate and discussion in class. In addition, there will be a take home mid-term examination, a short (ten to fifteen page) research paper, and a final examination.

#### **Required Texts:**

Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994)

Beyond the State: An Introductory Critique, Hoffman, John (Polity Press, 1995).

Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State, Donnan, H. and Wilson, T. (Berg Publishers, 2000).

The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism, eds., Goodin, Robert, et al., (Cambridge University Press 2000)

Gender and Citizenship in Transition, ed., Hobson, Barbara, (Routledge Press, 2000).

On Democracy, Dahl, Robert (Yale, 1998).

A Preface to Democratic Theory, Dahl, Robert (University of Chicago Press, 1956).

In the Mirror of the Third World, Halpern, Sandra (Cornell University Press, 1997)

Violence and Politics: Globalization’s Paradox, Worcester, Kenton, et al, eds., (Routledge, 2001)

Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration, Chris Shore, (Routledge 2000)

## INTRODUCTION

### **Week One:** *The Meanings of Comparative Politics*

August 31

- Readings: Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994). Parts 1&2 (pp. 3-113)
- Reserves: “Equivalence in Comparative Political Research,” van Deth, Jan, in Comparative Politics: the Problem of Equivalence, ed. Van Deth, Jan (Routledge, 1998).
- “The Science and Art of Comparative Politics,” Lane, Ruth, in The Art of Comparative Politics, Lane, Ruth (Allyn and Bacon, 1997).
- “Comparative Politics: An Overview,” Mair, Peter, in The New Handbook of Political Science, eds., Goodin, Robert and Klingemann, Hans-Dieter (Oxford University Press, 1996).

What is comparative politics? This section will focus on some of the methods, forms, and controversies associated with this field of political science. The readings for this week will be the basis for the rest of the semester, and you will want to return to these texts throughout the semester.

## **PART ONE: THE STATE, POWER, and FOUNDATIONS of the POLITICAL**

### **Week Two:** *Theorizing The State*

September 7

- Readings: Beyond the State: An Introductory Critique, Hoffman, John (Polity Press [Blackwell Publishers], 1995). Part I (pp. 1-96)
- Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994). Part 3, Chapter 5 (pp. 121-163)

Where does the state come from? This week will begin a series of inquiries into the origins and effects of the concept of the state. Questions to consider for the week include: When does the state become the state? What is the difference between the state and government? How do issues like legitimacy and democracy affect the state? Also, we will explore the manner by which different political philosophies engender differing visions of the state.

### **Week Three:** *Approaches to the Political*

September 14

Projects Due: 1<sup>st</sup> “Thought” Piece on the state / Conference with Writing Associates

- Readings: Beyond the State: An Introductory Critique, Hoffman, John (Polity Press [Blackwell Publishers], 1995). Part II (pp. 97-214)
- Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994). Part 3, Chapter 5 (pp. 121-163)

What is political theory? How do political scientists use different approaches? What are the core assumptions regarding the world and basis of politics embedded in each of the major theoretical approaches to politics? Questions to consider this week include: what must be taken for granted when using different theoretical lenses? Are these major approaches a closed set or can approaches be combined?

**Week Four: *Identity and the State***  
September 21

- Readings: Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State,  
Donnan, Hastings and Wilson, Thomas (Berg Publishers, 2000). (pp.1-159)
- Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered,  
Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994). Part 3, Chapter 6 (pp. 177-202)

Where does the state end? This week will explore the concepts of borders and frontiers. We will explore the differences between the physical boundaries of countries, the psychological limits of nations and the distinctions between nations and states. Further, we will explore how individuals fit into these abstract concepts of politics. We will explore how individuals become members of communities and form their personal and collective identities within both nations and states.

**PART TWO: CLASS, GENDER and IDENTITY**

**Week Five: *Welfare, Capitalism and the Creation of Class***  
September 28

- Readings: The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism,  
Goodin, Robert, et al., (Cambridge University Press, 1999). Parts I & II (pp.1-211)
- Suggested: Anti-Social Policy: Welfare Ideology and the Disciplinary State, Squires, Peter  
(Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1990).

We have heard much about “breaking cycles of poverty” and “the ‘need’ to return welfare recipients to work.” This week will explore the relationship between the structures of the capitalist economy and the need to mediate some of its affects. We will examine whether capitalism “needs” welfare; and similarly whether capitalism or welfare creates poverty. We will also examine whether the state can reduce poverty, and whether it needs to be “efficient.”

**Week Six: *Gender, Citizenship and Identity***  
October 5

Project Due: Mid-Term Take-Home Exam will be distributed

- Readings: Gender and Citizenship in Transition,  
ed., Hobson, Barbara, (Routledge Press, 2000). [Fraser, Lister & Hobson pp.1-117]
- Reserves: “Gender Roles,” Braun, Michael in Comparative Politics: the Problem of Equivalence,  
ed. Van Deth, Jan (Routledge, 1998).

Welfare programs and “welfare reforms” affect women greatly. This sections will explore how this is both a function of gender divisions of labour under contemporary capitalism and a function of gender disparities in Western political systems. Moreover, we will examine how such effects alter women’s perspectives on their membership within a given state and with a given political community. In this way, we will examine how welfare policy brings together concepts of the state and individual and collective forms of political, gender and class identity.

**Week Seven: AUTUMN BREAK**  
October 12

### **PART THREE: POLITICS and POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

#### **Week Eight:** *Does Democracy Matter?*

October 19

Project Due: Mid-Term Take-Home Exam

Readings: A Preface to Democratic Theory, Dahl, Robert (Chicago, 1956)

Reserves: Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction, Farrell, David (Palgrave 2001).

What does democracy actually have to offer a polity? Can democracy ameliorate poverty; can it provide a forum for equality? This section will explore different types of democracy and party structures, and compare the benefits and disadvantages of these different forms. We will also examine how pluralism and majoritarian rule can create political disparity and inequality.

#### **Week Nine:** *Forms of Democracy and Electoral Systems*

October 26

Readings: On Democracy, Dahl, Robert, (Yale, 1998).

Reserves: Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction, Farrell, David (Palgrave 2001).

Does American democracy come at the expense of other types of democratic practice? In fact, does the exportation of American style democracy actually inhibit other forms of democratic practice? We will examine civil society initiatives and other localized forms of democratic practices to discover if there is a conflict.

### **PART FOUR: THE POLITICS OF GLOBALIZATION**

#### **Week Ten:** *Political Development Economic Development*

November 2 (Don't forget to VOTE!)

Project Due: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thought Piece Due

Readings: Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered, Chilcote, Ronald (Westview Press, 1994). Part 3, Chapter 7 (pp. 215-268)

In the Mirror of the Third World: Capitalist Development in Modern Europe, Halperin, Sandra, (Cornell University Press, 1997). (pp. 1-115)

Although liberalism and capitalism are presented as universally beneficial, states have had a wide variety of economic and political experiences. This week will problematize the notion of development. We will explore whether economies "develop" along a singular trajectory, forged by Western capitalist states; thereby meaning all states can be located along a single continuum of development, with Europe and the West at one end, and other states scattered to the other. Conversely, we will explore whether Europe experienced its development in a manner which is unique.

#### **Week Eleven:** *Development, Integration and Globalization*

November 9

Readings: In the Mirror of the Third World: Capitalist Development in Modern Europe, Halperin, Sandra, (Cornell University Press, 1997). (pp. 115-209)

What makes Europe special? What does Halperin suggest occurred in Europe that did not occur in South America to make the European economies grow so rapidly after the Second World War? What connection is there between these shifts and democracy? What relationship is there between these shifts and Capitalism? Is capitalism essential for economic development?

**Week Twelve:** *Violent Reactions to Globalization*

November 16

Readings: *Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox*, Worcester, Kenton, et al, eds., (Routledge, 2001) Chapters 1, 2, 4, & 10 (pp. 13-47, 67-89, 184-208)

How does globalization affect the state? This week we will re-examine the state and violence. Can markets replace the state as an instrument of violence and discipline? How do state structures amplify globalization's structural violence? How do they keep such violence at bay?

**Week Thirteen:** *Violence and the Other*

November 23 (no Thursday class)

Readings: *Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox*, Worcester, Kenton, et al, eds., (Routledge, 2001) Chapters 5, 9, 11, 12 ( pp. 90-106, 165-183, 209-244)

Anxiety, frustration, fear: what roles do these emotions play in politics? Are they as powerful as material conditions in engendering conflicts? In ameliorating them? This week we will examine the connections between globalization and the creation of the "other" and the desire to perpetrate violence upon the "other." We will particular examine the role of fear in politics.

**Week Fourteen:** *Building a European Identity*

November 30

Readings: *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, Chris Shore, (Routledge 2000) Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-122)

Can a political identity be designed? Can all of the conflicts from European history be overcome to create a single, cohesive European identity? This week's readings explore how the European Union hopes to transform Frenchmen into Europeans. Who gets to claim such a European identity? Can Muslims claim this identity? Can Immigrants? After reading about violence and the other, do you believe the European plan will work?

**Week Fifteen:** *Beyond the State?*

December 7

Projects Due: Final Papers

Readings: *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, Chris Shore, (Routledge 2000) Chapters 7 & 8 (pp. 171-234)

Is the European Union a State? If no, how is it different? Has the European Union accomplished Hoffman's goal of transcending the frame of the liberal state? Can other political entities do the same? Is there any connection between Halperin's thesis and the success of the European Union project?