Course Design and Objectives

This course surveys major topics and theoretical contributions in the construction of political order, the choice of constitutional regimes and the sources of citizens’ compliance. The courses examines: the formation and development of the modern state; democracy; authoritarianism; revolution and political stability; legitimacy and compliance; nationalism; and macro theories of political change. With the explicit goal of exploring how research in comparative politics should be pursued in the future, each session assigns readings from both traditional macrohistorical and qualitative research and more recent analytical models.

Course Procedures and Evaluation

Each student is expected to read (before class) the items listed as 'required readings' for each session.

In addition, students are expected to complete:

(1) Four short papers (around 3 pages) answering one of the week’s discussion questions. Papers will be due by 4:30pm the day before class (with answers to the questions of that week’s session) and should be placed in a box outside the instructor’s office. No exceptions will be made and no extensions will be granted. The answers should not just summarize readings, but show reflection on how the readings address important issues, are flawed in particular dimensions, or can be developed or improved in specific directions.

(2) A final take-home exam to be set by the instructor or a research paper with a topic to be determined in advanced with the instructor. Due date: January 16, 2015.

Grades: 25% participation, 35% papers, 40% final exam (paper).

Readings

Books marked with an (*) have been ordered at the Labyrinth and put on reserve. All other readings have been put on electronic reserve.
Week 1. Introduction. Two Approaches to the Problem of Authority. (September 11)

Required reading


Week 2. Power and the State. (September 18)


Further reading


Peter B. Evans et al., Bringing the State Back In (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 3-77.


**Week 3. Power, Leaders, Dictators.** (September 25)

**Required reading**


**Further reading**


Week 4. Authoritarian Control: Mechanisms and Consequences. (October 2)

Required reading


Further Reading


Further reading: communist regimes


*Studies in Comparative Communism* 13 no. 1 (Spring 1980): 82-90 (more of above, Skilling, Janos).


Further reading: dictatorships and outcomes


**Week 5. Democracy as an Equilibrium.** (October 9)

**Required Reading**


**Further reading**


Adam Przeworski, “Institutionalization of Voting Patterns, or is Mobilization the Source of


Week 6. Endogenous Democracy? (October 16)

Required Reading


Further reading


Stephen D. Krasner. “Global Communications and National Power: Life on the Pareto Frontier,”


Week 7. Imperfect Democracies I.  (October 23)

Required Readings


Further Readings


Further reading on accountability


Week 8. Imperfect Democracies II. (November 6)

Required Readings


Further Reading


Further reading on leader selection and on leader psychology


Week 9. Imperfect Democracies III. (November 13)

Required Readings


Further Reading


**Week 10. Nations and National Identity I.** (November 20)

**Required reading**


**Further reading**


Simon Schama. *Citizens*.


Week 11. Nations and National Identities II. (December 4)

Required reading


Week 12. Nations and National Identity III. (December 11)

Required Reading


Further Reading


