

Topics and Methods in Comparative Politics

4 credit MA Core Seminar in Comparative Politics

Class Time: Tuesday 15:30 and Thursday 15:30

<u>By:</u>	Maurizio Cotta	and	Levente (Levi) Littvay	Teaching Assistant
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<u>Office Hours:</u>	TBA		Tuesday and Thursday 17:30-18:30	TBA

Appointment is always required 24 hours before meeting.
Email us, text (SMS) us or call us.

Summary of the Course

The aim of the course is to understand why comparative research stands at the core of political science, and to show how it can be done. The course after a short introduction will guide the students in an exploration of the main research fields of comparative politics. In the second part it will develop a more systematic discussion of the methodological foundations of the comparative study of political phenomena and will help students to become familiar with the most important intellectual traditions and approaches of the discipline. Finally an important part of the course will be devoted to preparing students to design their own comparative research strategy.

Evaluation

A forum entry of 350-450 words is due 24 hours before the start of every class reflecting on the readings for that class. In these reflections you need to demonstrate that you have read and thought about the material. (No need to summarize what you have read at all, we have read it too, let us know what you think about the readings.) Other's reflections will be made visible at the time of your own posting. You will need to have thoughtful reactions (200 words minimum) to the assignments within the following 48 hours. You can either build on classroom discussion or your perception about the reading as you are reacting to one or more of your fellow scholars. Beyond these minimum standards additional activity is required on the forums.

Due to the structure of the forum absolutely no late work is accepted and no makeup work will be offered. We will, on the other hand, drop two of your lowest performing reflections and reactions. We do not advise that you miss any work, but if you do, you will not be penalized for the first two occasions.

(Note: if you are sick and have proof of illness, we are required to allow you to make up the work you missed. Due to the time sensitive nature of on-line discussion, we can only offer alternative makeup assignments. Make up assignments for the week will be a minimum 2000 word reflection to the week's reading AND the on-line discussion on the week's reading.)

Attendance (with timely arrival) is **required**. Late arrivals are counted as unexcused absences. Three unexcused absences will lead to an automatic failure of the class. If you will miss a class or come late for any reason, make sure we know about it **before** the class.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to understand and evaluate comparative political research from a topical and methodological perspective. Hence, they will be able to serve as peer reviewers for comparative politics research papers. The course also prepares students to have an understanding of comparative political research to the extent to engage in original research themselves.

Grading

In class participation 20%
Reactions to the readings: 35%
Reactions to classroom discussion: 30%
Additional Forum Activity: 15%

Every assignment will be graded on a 10 point scale. The grading scale is designed to force critical thinking as the highest level of knowledge.

Grade everything on a 10 point scale:

7 demonstrates Analysis in a well developed paper

8 demonstrates Synthesis in a well developed paper

9 demonstrates Evaluation in a well developed paper

10 demonstrates Evaluation - and include ideas that provide an immediate and clear original contribution to the field.

Poor communication of your ideas will lead to up to 3 points deduction.

Superficial or insufficient development of ideas will lead to up to 3 points deduction

Topics and methods in Comparative Politics

Part I The institutional structure of democratic regimes

Seminar 1. Thursday 14th January - Course presentation. What is comparative politics? Substance and method.

Readings: D. Collier (1993). *The Comparative Method*, in A. Finifter, *The state of the discipline II*, Washington, American Political Science Association, ch. 5, pp. 106-119; A. Stepan (2001). *Introduction: Reflections on "Problem Selection" in Comparative Politics* in A. Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 1-20; C. Lees (2006). *We are all comparativists now. Why and how single-country scholarship must adapt and incorporate the comparative politics approach*, in *Comparative Political Studies*, 39: pp.1084-1108.

Seminar 2. Tuesday 19th January - The Polity and its defining features. The Modern State

Readings: T. Skocpol (1985). *Bringing the state back in. Strategies of analysis in current research*, in P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol (eds.). *Bringing the state back in*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-43.; T. Mitchell (1991), *The Limits of the State: beyond statist approaches and their critics*, in "American Political Science Review", vol. 85: pp. 77-85; G. Gill (2003), *The nature and development of the modern state*, Houndsmills, Palgrave, 2003, ch. 1: *The Modern State*, pp. 1-32.

Seminar 3. Thursday 21 January - Beyond the State model. Challenges to the State model. Weak and failed states.

Readings: Schmitter, Ph. (1996), *Imagining the future of the Euro-polity with the help of new concepts*, in Marks et al. *Governance in the European Union*, London, Sage, pp. 121-150; J. Zielonka (2007), *Introduction. The neo-medieval paradigm, and Conclusions: implications of neo-medievalism*, in J. Zielonka, *Europe as Empire. The nature of enlarged European Union*, Oxford University Press, pp.1-22 and 164-189.; S. Patrick (2006), *Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?*, in "Washington Quarterly" 29: pp. 27-52.

Seminar 4. Tuesday 26 January - The analysis of political regimes. Democratic regimes

Readings: L. Diamond, *Defining and Developing Democracy* (1999). ch. 1 in L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy*, Johns Hopkins, pp.1-23 ; C. Tilly (2007), *What is Democracy?* in C. Tilly, *Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-24 ; A. Lijphart (1999), *Introduction and chapters. 1-2* in A. Lijphart, *Patterns of democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 1-47.

Seminar 5. Thursday 29 January - Typologies of non democratic regimes. Grey areas between democracy and non democracy.

Readings: J. Linz (2000), *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, ch. 4 *Authoritarian Regimes*, pp.159-184, Boulder: Lynne Rienner; L. J. Diamond (2002). *Thinking About Hybrid Regimes* in "Journal of Democracy" 13, pp. 21-35; S. Levitsky and W. Lucan (2002), *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism* in "Journal of Democracy" 13, pp. 51-65.

Recommended readings: J. Linz (2000), *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, ch. 2 *Totalitarian systems*, pp.65-100; A. Schedler (2002). *The Menu of Manipulation* in "Journal of Democracy" 13, pp. 36-50; M. M. Howard and Ph. G Roessler (2006). *Liberalizing electoral outcomes in competitive authoritarian regimes*, in "American Journal of Political Science", 50, pp.365-381.

Seminar 6. Tuesday 2 February - Democratic Executives and forms of government.

Readings: J. J. Linz (1994), *Presidential or parliamentary democracy does it make a difference?* in J.J. Linz and A. Valenzuela (eds.). *The failure of presidential democracy*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, vol. 1, pp. 3-87; A. Stepan and C. Skatch (1993). *Constitutional frameworks and democratic consolidation*, in "World Politics", 46, pp. 1-22; S. Mainwaring (1993), *Presidentialism, multipartism and democracy*, in "Comparative Political Studies", 26: pp. 198-228.

Recommended readings: T. Perrson, G. Roland, G. Tabellini (1997), *Separation of powers and political accountability*, in "The Quarterly Journal of Economics", pp.1163-1202.

Seminar 7. Thursday 4 February - Executives in parliamentary governments and in presidential governments. Institutional and functional varieties.

Readings: T. Moe and S. Wilson (1994). *Presidents and the Politics of Structure*, in "Law and Contemporary Problems" 57: pp.1-44; W. C. Müller and K. Strøm (2000), *Conclusion: coalition governance in Western Europe*, in W. C. Müller and K. Strøm (eds.) *Coalition governments in Western Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 559-592; K. Strøm (2000), *Delegation and accountability in parliamentary governments*, in "European Journal of Political Research" 37: pp. 261-289.

Recommended readings: C.O. Jones (2005), *Organising to govern in a separated system* in C.O. Jones, *The presidency in a separated system*, Washington: The Brookings Institution, pp.66-79; A. C. Figuereido and F. Limongi (2000). *Presidential power, legislative organization and party behavior in Brazil*. in "Comparative Politics" 32: pp. 151-170;

Seminar 8. Tuesday 9 February - Parliamentary institutions: institutional varieties.

Readings: Fish, M. S (2006). *Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies* in "Journal of Democracy" 17: pp. 5-20; Patterson S.C. and Mughan A.(2001). *Fundamentals of Institutional Design: The Functions and Powers of Parliamentary Second Chambers*. in "The Journal of Legislative Studies" 7: pp. 39-60; L. D. Longley; R. H. Davidson (1998), [*Parliamentary committees: Changing perspectives on changing institutions*](#). in "The Journal of Legislative Studies" 4: pp. 1 – 20.

Recommended readings: Russell M. (2001). *The Territorial Role of Second Chambers* in "[Journal of Legislative Studies](#)" 7: pp. 105-118; W. B. Heller (1997). *Bicameralism and Budget Deficits: The Effect of Parliamentary Structure on Government Spending* in "Legislative Studies Quarterly" 22: pp. 485-516.

Seminar 9. Thursday 11 February - Parliamentary institutions: members, parties and legislative production.

Readings: M. Cotta and L. Verzichelli (2007), *Paths of institutional development and elite transformations* in M. Cotta and H. Best (eds.). *Democratic representation in Europe. Diversity, Change and Convergence*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 417-473; K.. Krehbiel (2000). *Party Discipline and Measures of Partisanship* in " American Journal of Political Science", 44, pp. 212-227;

Recommended reading: G. Capano and M. Giuliani (2001). *Governing Without Surviving? An Italian Paradox: Law-Making in Italy, 1987-2001* in "[Journal of Legislative Studies](#)" 7: pp. 13-36. K. Fukumoto (2008). *Legislative Production in Comparative Perspective: Cross-Sectional Study of 42 Countries and Time-Series Analysis of the Japan Case*. *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 9 , pp 1-19.

Seminar 10. Tuesday 16 February - Parties and party systems: typologies

Readings: G. Sartori. *Competitive systems* (1976/2005) in G. Sartori, *Parties and party systems. A Framework for analysis*. Colchester: ECPR, pp. 116-191; R.J. Dalton (2008), *The quality and quantity of party systems: party system polarisation, its measurement and its consequences*, in *Comparative political studies*, 41: pp. 899-920. L. Bardi and P. Mair (2008) *The parameters of party systems*, in " Party politics" 14: pp. 147-166.

Seminar 11. Thursday 18 February - Parties and party systems: trends of transformation

Readings: R. Katz and P. Mair (1995), *Changing models of party organization and party democracy The emergence of the Cartel Party*, in "Party Politics" 1: pp. 5-28; P. Mair (1997), *The problem of party system change*, in P. Mair, *Party system change*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 45-75; Z. Enyedi and P. Lewis (2006). *The Impact of the European Union on Party Politics in Central and Eastern Europe* in P. G. Lewis and Z. Mansfeldova (eds.): *The European Union and Party Politics in East Central Europe*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.231-249.

Recommended readings: A. H. Miller, G. Erb, W. M. Reisinger and V. L. Hesli (2000). *Emerging Party Systems in Post-Soviet Societies: Fact or Fiction?* in "The Journal of Politics", 62 , pp 455-490; M. Tavits (2008) *Party Systems in the Making: The Emergence and Success of New Parties in New Democracies* in "British Journal of Political Science" 38: pp. 113-133

Seminar 12. Tuesday 23 February - Conclusion of Part I – General Discussion

Part II Methods of Comparative Politics

Seminar 13. Thursday 25 February - Comparative Voting Behavior

John Curtice (2002) The state of election studies: mid-life crisis or new youth? *Electoral Studies* 21

K. Knight and M. Marsh (2002) Varieties of election studies. *Electoral Studies* 21

M. Marsh (2002) Electoral context. *Electoral Studies* 21

Brug, Wouter van der, Mark Franklin, Marina Popescu, and Gábor Tóka. 2009. "Towards a European Electorate: One Electorate or Many?" In *The Legitimacy of the European Union After Enlargement*, edited by Jacques Thomassen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 66-93.

Zsolt Enyedi and Bojan Todosijević (2009) Adversarial politics, civic virtues and party identification in Eastern and Western Europe. In: *Political parties and partisanship: Social identities and individual attitudes*. ed. by John Bartle and Paolo Bellucci. London: Routledge

Recommended Readings:

Electoral Studies (2002) issue 21 from pp 157 – Special Issue on Election Studies (The whole thing)

Seminar 14. Tuesday 2 March - Concept Formation

Adcock, Robert/Collier, David (2001): Measurement validity: a shared standard for qualitative and quantitative research. *American Political Science Review*, vol. 95, issue 3, pp. 529-546

Recommended Readings:

John Gerring (1999) "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences" *Polity* 31(3):357-393

John Gerring and Paul A. Barresi (2003) "Putting Ordinary Language to Work: A Min-Max Strategy of Concept Formation in the Social Sciences" *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 15:201-232

Edward G. Carmines and Richard A. Zeller (1979) *Reliability and Validity Assessment*. Sage

Seminar 15. Thursday 4 March - Descriptive vs Causal Inference

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, & Sidney Verba. (1994) Chapter 2 and 3. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

Seminar 16. Tuesday 9 March - Case Selection

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, & Sidney Verba. (1994) Chapter 4. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

Collier, David/Mahoney, James/Seawright, Jason (2004): Claiming too much: warnings about selection bias. In Brady, Henry E./Collier, David: *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield, pp. 85-102

Geddes, Barbara: How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics *Political Analysis* 1990 2: 131-150;

Seminar 17. Thursday 11 March - Ecological Fallacy and Ecological Inference

Seligson, Mitchell A. (2002): The renaissance of political culture or the renaissance of the ecological fallacy. *Comparative Politics*, vol. 34, issue 3, pp. 273-292

Recommended Readings:

King, Gary, *A Solution to the Ecological Inference Problem: Reconstructing Individual Behavior from Aggregate Data*, Princeton: University Press, 1997

Seminar 18. Tuesday 16 March - Cases, Samples, Population – Case studies and statistics

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, & Sidney Verba. (1994) Chapter 5 and 6. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

Seminar 19. Thursday 18 March - Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

Claudius Wagemann and Carsten Q. Schneider (2010) Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy-Sets: Agenda for a Research Approach and a Data Analysis Technique. *Comparative Sociology* 9

Carsten Q. Schneider and Claudius Wagemann (2010) Standards of Good Practice in Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy-Sets. *Comparative Sociology* 9

Seminar 20. Tuesday 23 March - Behaviorism

D. Sanders, Behaviouralism, in D. Marsh & G. Stoker, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Palgrave, 2002

James Farr (1995) "Remembering the Revolution: Behavioralism in American Political Science" in Farr et al, eds. *Political Science in History*. Cambridge University Press 198-224

Recommended readings

R.A. Dahl (1961) The Behavioural Approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest, in *American Political Science Review*, 55:763-72

E. G. Carmines, R. Huckfeldt, (1996) Political Behavior: An Overview, in R. E. Goodin and H.-D. Klingemann (Eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, New York, Oxford University Press, 223-254.

Seminar 21. Thursday 25 March – Institutionalism

Hall, Peter A./Taylor, Rosemary C. R. (1996): Political science and the three new institutionalisms. *Political Studies*, vol. 44, issue 4, pp. 936-957

Recommended readings:

March, James G./Olsen, Johan P. (1984): The new institutionalism: organizational factors in political life. *American Political Science Review*, vol. 78, pp. 734-749,

Seminar 22. Tuesday 30 March - Rational Choice, Behaviorism and Institutionalism

Dowding, Keith (1994): The compatibility of behaviouralism, rational choice and 'new institutionalism'. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, vol. 6, issue 1, pp. 105-117

Seminar 23. Thursday 1 April - General Discussion of Part II