



FACULTÉ  
DES SCIENCES ÉCONOMIQUES,  
SOCIALES ET DE GESTION

Département des sciences politiques, sociales et de la communication

**Presentation  
&  
Course Guide**

**Comparative politics**

**EPOL-B-366**

2014/2015

Professor: Nadim Farhat

**PLEASE DO READ CAREFULLY BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE COURSE**

**Meetings with students:** By appointment

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**Practicalities**

**Tuesday 28 January to 13 May: 08.30-10.30, Room E42**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Comparative politics is a subfield of Political science that touches to the various areas of the wider discipline. Initially focused on the comparison of the domestic policies of nation-states, its scope has expanded as to overlap with a variety of other subfields such as area studies and international relations. It has become a transversal approach that can be used to study a variety of topics in Political Science, ranging from institutions to revolutions, from the behavior of voters to the behavior of warriors, from democratic to dictatorial regimes. As such, it is an essentially interdisciplinary subfield.

This course is a graduate level one. Its primary purpose is to provide an introduction about Comparative Politics. It will offer a general overview of the methods, research designs and theorizing efforts that have been developed in the subfield. In doing so, it will also familiarize the students with the main paradigmatic approaches in the subfield, notably rationalistic (rational-choice), sociological, historical and structural explanations of political behavior, political systems and processes and related phenomena. It also ambitions to review some of the main substantive issues dealt with in Comparative politics in the last decades.

The course will rest on a combination of lectures by the professor and presentations and discussions by the students.

## **COURSE REQUISITES**

This course is part of the Political Science Programme, so no specific requisites are attached to it. However, a successful approach to the course requires a constant effort by each student to improve her/his language fluency and commit to read, speak and write in English.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of this course are:

1. introducing the subfield of Comparative politics;
2. presenting the challenges of Comparative politics: methods, research design and theories
3. acquainting the students with the variety of phenomena studied by Comparative politics: political systems and regimes; political behaviour; political processes...
4. introducing the major substantive issues addressed by Comparative politics
5. familiarizing the students with the relevant literature and authors
6. providing them with the knowledge and skills enabling them to undertake a comparative research.

## **TEACHING METHOD**

The course will be divided into 10 sessions:

- the first 5 sessions, 2 hours each, are a **lecture series** (1)
- the remainder 10 sessions, are closer to the **seminar setting** (2) as they are based on students' participation. These sessions will be animated by the students' presentations and discussions.

### **1. The lecture series**

The lecture series is presented by the professor and it will essentially deal with the basics of Comparative politics. A few readings are attached to each session. These readings are mandatory and must be dealt with in a critical and reflexive way. They will help the students understand the various issues raised during the lectures and get a better understanding of the field.

It is essential to bear in mind that the content of each session and the readings intersect but do not totally overlap. The readings are meant to synthesize, develop or simply illustrate one aspect or issue tackled during the class. Some of them are transversal and may tackle issues seen in different sessions.

The schedule of the lectures or their content may be slightly modified if need be, to adapt to the time needed for explanations or to make room for a guest lecturer.

No detailed lecture notes (i.e. syllabus) are provided. However, the lectures will usually be accompanied by a short PowerPoint presentation that will be uploaded on WebCampus after each lecture. These PowerPoints are a detailed outline of the issues at the core of the lectures, with some references to concepts, definitions and authors. They serve as a guideline and leave it to the students to make the personal effort to work the course.

## **2. The seminar sessions**

The remainder five sessions will be conducted by the students themselves. At the beginning of the course, the students will form 10 teams of 2 or 3-member each.

Each of the teams will have to prepare a presentation of about 50-55 minutes on a substantive issue (a variety will be proposed below). The presentation can rely on the relevant chapters of the main textbook (see below). Each presentation will be followed by a discussion that will be led by the *presenting team (PT)*. In addition, the members of another team (the *“debating team” DT*) will be responsible for nurturing the debate and they will hand over individual analytical papers on the chapters that were at the core of the discussion. The rest of the class is also expected to have read the chapters and to participate in the debates.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSESSMENT & MARKS**

The evaluation rests on a series of requirements:

- a) class participation and attendance (personal grade; 10% of the final grade)
- b) team presentation (team grade<sup>\*</sup>; 30% of the final grade)
- c) debate: personal contribution to the discussion of one specific presentation (10% of the final grade) + 2 page analysis of the relevant readings (10% of the final grade) (both personal grades)
- d) Final exam (40% of the final grade).

### **a) Class participation and attendance (personal grade, 10%)**

Attendance to this course is compulsory.

In addition, it is the responsibility of each student to prepare to discuss the issues found in the readings and that will be further presented and debated during classes. This means that each student should read each chapter/article on the reading list and think about the issues under scrutiny in order to be able to contribute to the collective reflection.

Expectations are of course higher when the students are part of the *Debating team* that is responsible for engaging in the discussion with the *Presentation team*.

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<sup>\*</sup> “Collective grade” means that the grade will assess the overall performance of the whole team, and all the members will share the same grade. However, in case a team member is absent that day, s/he will not benefit from that collective grade and will have to discuss with the professor an alternate assignment.

**b) Presentation (collective grade, 30%)**

The presentations (50-55 minutes) by each team will essentially derive from few chapters/articles related to a specific topic. The chapters/articles are posted on Webcampus under a folder having the title of one of the different substantive issues that should be treated by the students. Each presentation should basically comprise two parts.

The first (and largest one; i.e. 75% of the presentation) should offer a clear and structured explanation of the issues/phenomena under scrutiny.

The second part (25%) is expected to offer a more critical analysis and reflection:

- on the theories that are mobilized in order to make sense of these issues/phenomena
- on the sort of research methods and design that are used
- on the empirical data and the way in which they are collected
- on the explanations and findings that are proposed

In addition, the team should conclude the presentation by highlighting a couple of questions intended to start the debate, which should last about 35-40 minutes.

The team is also expected to contribute to the substantive debate and should not restrict itself to handing over the floor to the other students while standing silent.

Each member of the team is expected to contribute to both the presentation and the discussion.

The team is also expected to base its presentation on a fairly detailed Powerpoint document (more than the titles and subtitles!).

**c) Discussion during the debate (personal grade, 10%) and short analysis of one issue (analytical paper - personal grade, 10%):**

When the teams will be formed at the beginning of the course and the topics chosen, each team will also be appointed to nurture the debate of one specific presentation. The members of the *Debating team*, acting individually, will have a double assignment:

**- Nurturing the debate (35-40 minutes)**

In order to do so, it is suggested that each student from the *Debating team* brings in a couple of “talking points” and/or “questions” s/he thought of while reading and working on the relevant chapters. These talking points and questions will not be collected but are expected to serve as the basis of the input of each student from the *Debating team*. This method of preparation could of course be also used by all other students when preparing for the sessions.

**- Handing over an analytical paper on the readings (2-3 pages)**

This written assignment should offer a short analysis based on the readings. Within 2-3 pages, the document should explain the core issues at hand and also comment on the theories, research design, data and findings that can be identified through the readings.

**The analytical paper should be handed over the same day the presentation is made** (ex. if a student is part of the team that has to discuss the “democratization and dictatorship” presentation, s/he will hand over the analytical paper the day the presentation is made).

#### **d) Final exam (40%)**

This final exam will cover essentially, by not exclusively, the five first sessions. It will take the form of a multiple choice test.

**Observation:** **The students who fail the course have to submit a new analysis of one of the topics in August.** The attendance and presentation grades will not be modified, so the effort will need to focus on the quality of the written assignments.

#### **Further specifications for the written assignment**

- The font and size: Times New Roman, 12
- Line space: simple
- Page numbering: must not be forgotten
- The texts must be clearly structured
- All sources must be correctly referenced
- Though I am perfectly aware that some of you may have never made presentations and submitted papers in English, I expect each student to make the necessary efforts to achieve an acceptable level, especially in written assignments. You can find a very wide variety of tools on the Internet: dictionaries, translation sites... that can help you prepare properly. The oral presentations must be thoroughly prepared so the language does not become a problem. **But do not mind the accent!**

#### **PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Plagiarism consists of presenting tacitly as yours the writings or ideas of someone else without making any reference to this person and his/her writings through quotations and footnotes. Whether it is partial or total, literal or disguised, deliberate or resulting from carelessness, plagiarism is unacceptable and heavily punished. Plagiarism will indeed result in direct failure of the course and will be reported to the Faculty's authorities.

Each student is expected to refer transparently to the work and ideas of the authors who have helped him/her to build his/her own reflection and to elaborate his/her own intellectual contribution.

For an in-depth definition of plagiarism and advices on how to avoid it, please refer to the following website: [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org).

It should be noted that there is today a variety of efficient means and software enabling us to trace plagiarism.

## **OUTLINE**

### **ISSUES OF LECTURES (PROFESSOR)**

- Introduction
- Comparative methodology & research design
- Theories and approaches in Comparative politics

### **SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES (STUDENTS)**

- State formation and political consent
- Democracy
- Dictatorship and democratization
- The emergence of parties and party systems
- Governments, constitutions and the separation of powers
- National identity, ethnicity and war
- Revolutions and civil wars
- Contentious politics and protest movements
- Public policy and the welfare state
- Performance and accountability of governments

## **OUTLINE WITH READINGS**

### **LECTURES – SESSION 1 TO 5**

- Introduction
- Comparative methodology & research design
- Theories and approaches in Comparative politics

### **Readings (references in red are mandatory):**

From: Landman, Todd & Robinson, Neil (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2009

- Charles C. Ragin, Claude Robinson, “The Distinctiveness of Comparative Research”
- Paul Pennings, Hans Keman, Jan Kleinnijenhuis, “Global Comparative Methods”
- Darren Hawkins, “Case Studies”
- James A. Caporaso, “Is There a Quantitative-Qualitative Divide in Comparative Politics? The Case of Process Tracing”
- Jan W. van Deth, “Establishing Equivalence”
- Willfried Spohn, “Comparative Political Sociology”

- Vivien A. Schmidt, “Chapter 7: Comparative Institutional Analysis”

From: C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007

- Robert J. Franzese, JR., “Multicausality, Context-Conditionally, and Endogeneity”
- James Mahoney & Celso M. Villegas, “Historical Enquiry and Comparative Politics”
- John Gerring, “The Case Study: What it is and What it Does”
- Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Field Research”
- Adam Przeworski, “Is the Science of Comparative Politics Possible?”
- Robert H. Bates, “From Case Studies to Social Science: A Strategy for Political Research”

#### **Further readings:**

- Lichbach, Mark Irving & Zuckerman, Alan S., “Research traditions and theory in Comparative Politics: An introduction”, in M.I. Lichbach & A.S. Zuckerman (eds.), *Comparative politics: rationality, culture and structure*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 3-5
- Mair, Peter « Comparative Politics: An Overview”, in R. E. Goodin & H.-D. Klingemann (eds.), *A new handbook of political science*, Oxford: OUP, 1996, pp. 310-311
- Geddes, Barbara, *Paradigms and sand castles: Theory building and research design*, Ann Arbor: Michigan State University, 2003
- Landman, Todd, *Issues and methods in Comparative Politics. An introduction*, London & New York: Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2008.

### ***SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES (SEMINAR SETTING) – SESSION 6 TO 15***

#### **1. State formation and political consent**

##### ***Mandatory readings***

- Spruyt, Hendryk, “War, Trade, and State Formation” in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 211-235
- Hardin, Russel, “Compliance, Consent, and Legitimacy” in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 236-255

##### ***Further readings***

- Tilly, Charles, “War Making and State-Making as Organized Crime” in Peter Evans, Peter B., Dietrich Rueschemeyer & Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 169-191
- Mann, Michael, “The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results,” *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1984, pp. 185-213
- Spruyt, Hendryk, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 153-182.

## 2. Democracy

### *Mandatory readings*

- Welzel, Christian & Inglehart, Ronald, “Mass Beliefs and Democratic Institutions”, in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 297-316
- Sabetti, Filippo, “Democracy and Civic Culture”, in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 340-362

### *Further readings*

- Lijphart, Arend, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, pp. 25-52
- O'Donnell, Guillermo, “Repenser la théorie démocratique: perspectives latino-américaines,” *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2001, pp. 199-224
- Robert Putnam (with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti), *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 121-185.

## 3. Dictatorship and democratization

### *Mandatory readings*

- Geddes, Barbara, “What Causes Democratization?”, in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 317-339
- Acemoglu, Daron, James Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 15-46

### *Further readings*

- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No 1, pp. 69-105
- Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Huber Stephens, Evelyne and Stephens, John D., *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 12-78

## 4. The emergence of parties and party systems

### *Mandatory readings*

- Boix, Carles, “The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems”, in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 499-521
- Kitschelt, Herbert, “Party Systems”, in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 522-554

### *Further readings*

- Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan, “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction”, in Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, New York: Free Press, 1967, pp. 1-64.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. “Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities”, *Comparative Political Studies*, 2000, Vol. 33, pp. 845-879.



## 5. Governments, constitutions and the separation of powers

### *Mandatory readings*

- Samuels, David, "Separation of Powers", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 703-726
- Stone Sweet, Alec, "Constitutions and judicial power", in Daniele Caramani (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 217-239

### *Further readings*

- Müller, Wolfgang C., "Government formation", in Landman, Todd & Robinson, Neil (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2009, pp. 227-246
- Colomer, Josep M., "Institutional design", in Landman, Todd & Robinson, Neil (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2009, pp. 247-263

## 6. National identity, ethnicity and war

### *Mandatory readings*

- Greenfeld, Liah & Eastwood, Jonathan, "National Identity", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 256-273
- Varsheny, Ashutosh, "Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 274-294

### *Further readings*

- Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London; New York: Verso, revised ed., 2006, pp. 37-46.
- Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, pp. 53-62.
- Smith, Anthony D., *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism. A Cultural Approach*, London: Routledge, 2009, pp. 23-40.

## 7. Revolutions and civil wars

### *Mandatory readings*

- Pincus, Steven, "Rethinking Revolutions: A Neo-Tocquevillian Perspective", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 397-415
- Kalyvas, Stathis, "Civil Wars", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 416-434

### *Further readings*

- Skocpol, Theda, *States and Social Revolutions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979
- Goldstone, Jack A., "Comparative Historical Analysis and Knowledge Accumulation in the Study of Revolutions," in James Mahoney & al. (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 41-90
- Eller, Jack & Coughlan, Reed, "The Poverty of Primordialism", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1993, Vol. 16, pp. 183-202
- Roger Peterson, *Understanding Ethnic Violence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 17-84

## 8. Contentious politics and protest movements

### Mandatory readings

- Tarrow, Sydney & Tilly, Charles, "Contentious Politics and Social Movements", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 435-460
- Lichback, Mark & De Vries, Helma, "Mechanisms of Globalized Protest Movements", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 461-496

### Further readings

- McAdam, Doug, Tarrow, Sidney & Tilly, Charles, "Towards and Integrated Perspective on Social Movements and Revolution," in M.I. Lichbach & A.S. Zuckerman (eds.), *Comparative politics: rationality, culture and structure*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 142-173
- Boudreau, Vincent & Meyer, David S., "Social Movements", in Landman, Todd & Robinson, Neil (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2009, pp. 348-362

## 9. Public policy and the welfare state

### Mandatory readings

- Van Kersbergen, Kees & Manow, Philip, "The Welfare state", in Daniele Caramani (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 389-407
- Andersen, Jorgen Goul, "The impact of public policies", in Daniele Caramani (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 408-426.

### Further readings

- Carnes, Matthew E. & Mares, Isabela, "The Welfare State in Global Perspective", dans C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 868-885
- Knill, Christoph & Tosun, Jale, "Policy-making", in Daniele Caramani (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 375-388

## 10. Performance and accountability of governments

### Mandatory readings

- Keefer, Philip, "The Poor Performance of Poor Democracies", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 886-909
- Maravall, Jose Maria, "Accountability and the Survival of Governments", in C. Boix & S. Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 910-939

### Further readings

- Heywood, Paul, "Corruption", in Landman, Todd & Robinson, Neil (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2009, pp. 362-378
- Funderburk, Charles, "Political corruption: Causes and consequences", in Charles Funderburk (ed.), *Political corruption in comparative perspective*, Burlington: Ashgate, 2012, pp. 1-18.