

SYLLABUS

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**Course Description**

This course serves as an introduction to the basic concepts, methods, primary empirical materials, theoretical approaches, and current challenges of comparative politics. Students will be trained to think and write critically on substantive issues in the politics of different countries. Although comparative politics is often defined as “the study of all countries *excluding* the United States,” this course will not abide by that rather perfunctory definition. The U.S. will be included at different points in the course as a baseline for comparison.

As a primer for newcomers to this subdiscipline of political science, the course has been organized with an increasing level of difficulty. Students begin with an introduction to the most basic tools of political science; then they are trained to analyze complex empirical materials. Later, they must make their way up the “ladder of abstraction” to the tricky world of theory-building and hypothesis-testing.

In the first section of the course (Session 1), students will examine the methods, concepts, and epistemology of comparative politics. Learning how to use these tools to study politics is similar to “basic training.” I prefer: a “bootcamp for the mind” - not very pleasurable, but very necessary. Aspiring majors in political science and/or international relations will find this primer useful. I *strongly recommend* that such students enroll in POSC 230 Methods of Political Research soon after completing this course.

The second section of the course (Sessions 2-4) introduces students to six country cases - Britain, Germany, and the “BRICs” – Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Students will also receive a primer on the European Union. This survey will provide students with a basic lay of the political land. Students will learn about the crucial moments, institutions, processes, and individuals that shaped the political experiences of these major actors in world politics. The surveys will also present several “mid-range propositions” - causal statements about particular sets of countries that come in handy when attempting to understand complex empirical materials.

As students use these empirical cases and mid-range propositions, class lectures will introduce students to some of the theoretical arguments that have been built on the comparative study of the countries examined in this section. The study of Britain and Germany will inform our on-going discussion about diverse routes to democracy; Russia and China will provide empirical material for the application of theories about state-building and revolution that are taken from work on Western Europe; the study of China will highlight the problems of transitioning to democratic governance in the context of “late late” development; and analysis of the European Union will inform our examination of how the effectiveness of public policies might be evaluated using social science

methods. Study of Brazil or India will spearhead our examination of theories of modernization and democratization, the final section of the class (Session 4).

In addition to instruction on political science methods, theory, empirical data, and the data analysis project, students in this course will receive workshop instruction on writing, oral presentation skills, and research techniques. Workshops will occur during the regular class time though off-class time options for further instruction will be available on a recommended basis.

### **What is Expected of Students**

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. That means that students must keep up in their reading assignments and attend class regularly. Students must be fully prepared *at all times* to discuss the readings and concepts from previous lectures. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and their in-class discussion. Attendance is required.

### **Reading Materials**

This course requires your purchase of one textbook, which is presently on sale at the college bookstore:

Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger, and William A. Joseph, eds. 2015 (Seventh Edition). *Introduction to Comparative Politics*. Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage. The best collection of “middle-range” studies of comparative cases currently on the market. We will refer to this reading as “KKJ,” for short.

The following is optional for purchase (available on Amazon.com and other purveyors):

W. Phillips Shively. 2002. *The Craft of Political Research* Sixth Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

All the other reading materials for this course are available on Moodle. This includes clippings from periodicals such as *The New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, the *Economist*, and audio and video materials. Students wishing to deepen their quantitative skills will have access to podcasts and other materials providing instruction on multiple statistical techniques. Additional resources are available on the course’s web page (<http://people.carleton.edu/~amontero/cpr.htm>).

### **Grading**

Assessment of the students in this course will be based on their performance on two short papers, a group data analysis project with oral presentation and written report components, and classroom participation. The grade breakdown follows:

<b>First Writing Assignment</b>	<b>25%</b>

<b>Second Writing Assignment</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Group Data Analysis Project</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Class Participation (including periodic diagnostic exams)</b>	<b>20%</b>

### Writing Assignments

Paper assignments in this course are of varying lengths. Yet they must all be typed, paginated, and double-spaced with 12cpi font size and one-inch margins (unjustified). I require the use of Times New Roman font type as this is a cross-platform variety.

These assignments must be turned in as PDF files unless otherwise indicated by 5 p.m. in the student's hand-in folder on the Courses directory on the due date specified below. *Late work will receive no credit.* Technical problems involved in converting and uploading work onto Courses will not be accepted as a reason for late or improperly formatted work. Students remain responsible for addressing all glitches unless they are systemic. Proper use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar is expected. Since ability to edit your own work and produce concise argument is a touchstone for assessing and developing your critical skills, students will not be allowed to surpass the required number of pages. A handout will be distributed with the particular parameters of each of these assignments well before the due date. Note: This course is a WR2 course.

#### Paper #1 (Methods Exercise):

Students will be asked to select a single article from a list of citations, find and download a copy in PDF format. Once acquired, students will evaluate the article by identifying the main argument, the key variables, indicators for variance, and main concepts. Students must specify if the concepts are clear to them or not. If not, they must explain why. This paper must be four to five pages in length. Additional requirements of this Methods Exercise will be made available in a handout.

#### Paper #2 (Mid-Range Proposition Building Exercise):

Based on their study of Britain, Germany, Russia, and China students will prepare a five to six page paper proposing a causal argument about the formation and maintenance of democracy. They will support their argument with a brief qualitative comparison of two of the three countries listed above. Papers that integrate light research and present both quantitative and qualitative data to support the author's claims will receive the highest grades.

### Group Data Analysis Project

As the class begins to consider empirical cases, the students will be divided into groups of 3-4

members. Each group will be charged with the task of collecting quantitative data on a number of countries as part of a collaborative project involving a choice of hypotheses concerning the link between socio-economic development and democratization. Each group will work with the professor to focus their project and they will consult Danya Leebaw, one of the social science librarians, for help in acquiring the necessary data. Each research team will carry on some of their discussions in Moodle so that the professor may monitor the group's progress. Using Excel, each group will construct figures, graphs, charts, and other forms for illustrating quantitative tests of the hypotheses under study. Each group will present their data formally in a timed presentation to the class during the final week of the term. A detailed handout will describe the format and other aspects of this project during Session 2 or 3.

While each member of the research groups will receive a share of the group score on the written report and the oral presentation, peers will prepare confidential, written insights on the contribution of all other members. Additionally, group members will be required to post on their Moodle conference evidence of *consistent* progress. This data and the professor's own observations will be used to adjust the individual score for group members, if need be. Students ought to be aware that the poor performance of any one member of their research team can affect the scores of their colleagues. Hence, *group dynamics scores* are, like the presentation scores (although less strictly so), the products of *collective responsibility*.

### Class Participation

Communicating your insight into the subjects analyzed in this course is an integral part of the learning experience. In no way do I consider class participation a residual category for subjectively determining the final grade. In this course, I will evaluate your performance in both formal, scheduled presentations and informal class discussion. The following are structured presentation formats that will be used in this course, in addition to the formal presentation of the group research project:

- (1) A simulation on Russian democracy and state capacity.
- (2) Two debates: one on the future of the EU and a second on human rights and political liberalization in China.
- (3) Small group discussions on some reading.

In addition to these activities, occasionally students will prepare homework assignments or answer written and oral questions based on the readings and the lectures. These periodic "diagnostics" will assess listening and reading comprehension skills. They will compose half of the total participation score.

### Electronic Equipment Policy

For years I have allowed students to use laptops in class to take notes. However, based on much scientific evidence as well as personal experience, it is evident that such practices encourage inattention and multitasking that degrades the ability of students to learn. There is also plenty of

scientific evidence that taking pen-and-paper notes is far superior to note-taking on laptops. The use of laptops and tablets in this class will be strongly discouraged unless a student can prove that they absolutely need such a device in the classroom. Preference will be given to students who have an officially sanctioned accommodation (see Special Needs below), but students without such accommodations may also be given permission to use laptops and iPads for approved purposes. Use of such devices in class does not designate any student as having special needs.

### Global Trigger Warning

Many of the materials and ideas presented in this class are intended to make you uncomfortable and to challenge conventional wisdom. The intention is to inspire debate. All students are welcome to participate. If you believe that you are not prepared for this kind of experience, you are free to drop the course during the first two weeks of the term. I will agree to your request with no questions asked.

### The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:

98-100	A+
94-97	A
91-93	A-
88-90	B+
83-87	B
79-82	B-
76-78	C+
72-75	C
68-71	C-
67/below	D/F

### Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see the useful handout on “Avoiding Academic Misconduct,” available on the course webpage.

### Special Needs

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services to begin the process. Carleton faculty are strongly encouraged to wait for official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students.

**NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.**

## SECTION I

### **BOOTCAMP FOR THE MIND:**

#### **THE TOOLS OF STUDYING COMPARATIVE POLITICS**

##### **Session 1: Science! Assumptions, Causal Relationships, Concepts, Method, and Variables**

###### **Toward a *Science* of Politics: The Rational-Choice Assumption (March 28, Monday)**

Richard Harter, "Piltdown Man" (A Cautionary Tale About The Importance of Verification in Scientific Inquiry). (Study the webpage to get the main idea of what happened and listen to the PBS Nova podcast on Moodle).

###### **Epistemology: The Assumption of Rationality in Political Science (March 30, Wednesday)**

Analyze the treatment of the scientific method in one of three cases available on Moodle:

This American Life, "Mr. Holland's Opus," Nov. 11, 2011.

The Marc Hauser case (two articles: Bartlett (2012) and Wade (2010)).

Gina Kolata, "Behind Cancer Guidelines, Quest for Data," *New York Times* (November 23, 2009).

William H. Riker, "Political Science and Rational Choice." In *Perspectives on Positive Political Economy*, eds. James E. Alt and Kenneth A. Shepsle. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

###### **How Do We Know a Good Causal Argument When We See One? (April 1, Friday; April 4, Monday)**

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, Chapter 1.

Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, ch. 6.

###### **Variables, Definitions, and Conceptualization (April 6, Wednesday)**

Philippe Schmitter & Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is....and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* (Summer 1991).

###### **Skills Workshop #1: The Methods Exercise – Part I (April 8, Friday)**

Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995): 5-38.

**Skills Workshop #2: The Methods Exercise – Part II (April 11, Monday) – Meet in Weitz 138 (Computer Lab)**

Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, chs. 7 and 9.

Review Excel spreadsheet program. Prepare bivariate correlation homework assignment for April 12, Tuesday.

**SECTION II**

**DIFFERENT ROUTES TO MODERNITY AND DEMOCRACY**

**Session 2: The Advanced Capitalist States: Class, the State, and Institutions in the Building of Democracy**

**Britain**

**“No bourgeoisie, no democracy”: The Barrington Moore Theorem (April 13, Wednesday)**

Barrington Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966, pp. 413-432.

**Critiques of Barrington Moore: Skocpol and Institutionalist Arguments (April 15, Friday)**

Theda Skocpol, “A Critical Review of Barrington Moore’s *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*,” *Politics and Society* 4:1 (1973): 1-34.

KKJ, Chapter 2, Sections 1-3

**British Politics in Comparative Perspective (April 18, Monday)**

KKJ, Chapter 2, Sections 4-5

Assorted articles from *The Financial Times* and *The Economist* on Moodle.

**SHORT PAPER #1: METHODS EXERCISE DUE (April 19, Tuesday)**

**Germany**

**How Democracies Die: By Natural Causes or Murder? (April 20, Wednesday)**

Juan Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 14-32 and 50-58.

KKJ, Chapter 4, Sections 1-3.

**THE DATA ANALYSIS GROUP ASSIGNMENTS ARE DISTRIBUTED (April 21, Thursday) – MOODLE DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BEGIN AFTER THIS DATE**

**Bringing the Social Back In: Social Democracy and Its Crisis (April 22, Friday)**

KKJ, Chapter 4, Sections 4-5.

Roger Karapin. 2012. “Explaining Success and Failure in Climate Policies: Developing Theory through German Case Studies.” *Comparative Politics* 45:1 (October): 46-68.

**Skills Workshop #3: Data Analysis Research (Dataset Preparation and an Introduction to the EU) (April 25, Monday) – Meet in Weitz 138 (Computer Lab)**

Review Shivley’s chapters 6-7, and 9.

Europa webpage ([http://europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/index_en.htm)) (Become familiar with the material on this page. Also review the Statistics area).

**The European Union**

**History and Institutions (April 27, Wednesday)**

Helen Wallace. 2010. “An Institutional Anatomy and Five Policy Modes.” In *Policy-Making in the European Union* 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. Helen Wallace, William Wallace, and Mark A. Pollack, eds. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assorted articles from *The Economist* on the European Union on Moodle.

**The Travails of the Modern EU: The Euro Crisis (April 29, Friday)**

Virginie Mamadouh. 2009. “Establishing a Constitution for Europe during European Union Enlargement? Visions of ‘Europe’ in the Referenda Campaigns in France and the Netherlands.” *Journal of Cultural Geography* 26:3 (October): 305-326.

Assorted articles on the Euro crisis from *Financial Times* and *The Economist* on Moodle.

**NO CLASS - MIDTERM BREAK (May 2, Monday)**

**Debate #1: The Future of the EU (May 4, Wednesday)**

**Session 3: The BRICs: From Socialism to Capitalism**

**The Russian Federation**

### **State-Building As Organized Crime: The Russian Case (May 6, Friday)**

Charles Tilly. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.

KKJ, Chapter 8, Sections 1-3

### **Russian Democracy as a Problem of State-Building (May 9, Monday)**

KKJ, Chapter 8, Sections 4-5.

Stanislav Markus. 2012. "Secure Property as a Bottom-up Process: Firms, Stakeholders, and Predators in Weak States." *World Politics* 64:2 (April): 242-277.

### **Russian Democracy in Action: The Russia Simulation (May 11, Wednesday)**

#### **China**

### **From Political Revolution to Economic Reform (May 13, Friday)**

KKJ, Chapter 14, Sections 1-5

Film: "PBS Frontline: Young and Restless in China." (Watch prior to class meeting).

*Recommended*: Another communist country in transition: the Cuba Roundtable (TBA).

### **Does Economic Development Guarantee Democratization? (May 16, Monday)**

Christopher A. McNally. 2012. "Sino-Capitalism: China's Reemergence and the International Political Economy." *World Politics* 64:4 (October): 741-776.

An Chen. 2002. "Capitalist Development, Entrepreneurial Class, and Democratization in China," *Political Science Quarterly* 117:3 (Fall): 401-423.

### **China's Growth and Development: The China Debate (May 18, Wednesday)**

## **SHORT PAPER #2: PROPOSITION-BUILDING EXERCISE DUE (May 19, Thursday)**

### **Session 4: The BRICs: From Underdevelopment to Globalized Growth**

#### **Brazil**

### **Development Without Equity? (May 20, Friday)**

KKJ, Chapter 9, Sections 1-3

**Globalization and Improved Social Welfare? (May 23, Monday)**

KKJ, Chapter 9, Sections 4-5

*The Financial Times*, “The New Brazil” (June 29, 2010) on Moodle.

**Corruption and Political Accountability (May 25, Wednesday)**

Assorted articles on the corruption scandal and the impeachment proceedings against Dilma Rousseff (on Moodle).

**Class is cancelled on Friday, May 27 due to my attendance at the Latin American Studies Association meetings in New York City.**

**Session 5: Student Perspectives on the Development-Democracy Nexus**

**Data Analysis Group Presentations (May 30, Monday; June 1, Wednesday)**

**PEER EVALUATIONS DUE (June 2, Thursday)**