Course Description

This course has four inter-related goals. First, it is designed to introduce students to some of the most important questions in the field of comparative politics and to some of the most foundational and fruitful answers. The course focuses on the formation and evolution of the state, its expansion to include welfare provision, political cleavages and mass mobilization, emergence of nationalism, occurrence of ethnic conflict, and types of political regime. Each of these topics provides a theme for a week’s readings. The readings reflect both macro-historical and micro-foundational perspectives and both classic and new approaches to these themes.

Second, the course prepares students to be contributors to the field and to relate their own research interests to the broader literature. The course draws on works from major presses—Cambridge and Princeton, among others. It also draws on article in the leading journals, including the American Political Science Review, Journal of Politics, World Politics, Comparative Political Studies, Comparative Politics, International Studies Quarterly, and International Organization, among others. Readings in these journals reflect major contributions to and debates in the field. Going beyond the syllabus, students should begin to explore the current issues of these journals to see the direction of research in the field and prepare to make their own contributions.

Third, assigned readings expose students to diverse research designs and research methods in the field and give students the opportunity to evaluate different approaches to valid causal inference.

Finally, the course allows students to further develop the ability to present their ideas in multiple forms—in both shorter and longer writing assignments and verbally through class presentations and discussion.

Course Requirements

1) Short papers (40%). Students will write four short response papers over the course of the quarter. Response papers should develop an argument or explore a theme based on the readings for that week on the syllabus and should be about 1,000 words (or 2 pages double spaced) in length. Students should e-mail their papers to the class list (pols505a_au14@uw.edu) on the Tuesday evening before class.

2) Essay (20%). Students will write a World-Politics- or International-Organization-style review essay of about 7-8,000 words (or 15 pages) on three comparative politics works reflecting their own research interests. This essay is due on Monday, December 1st to Catalyst Dropbox: https://catalyst.uw.edu/collectit/dropbox/switing/32995. There will be no readings or class meeting for the week of November 24th to facilitate meeting this deadline. A World-Politics or IO-style essay takes a selection of important works on a single theme and uses them as a
springboard to lay out a fresh argument and agenda for further research. Examples on the syllabus include Fearon and Laitin’s (2000) “Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity” and Ziblatt’s (2006) essay “How Did Europe Democratize?” The syllabus also contains selections from two sources useful for mastering the field: The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics and the Annual Review of Political Science. Students may find additional selections from these sources to be helpful in providing background for their own research interests.

3) Final exam (20%). The final exam will be a take-home exam resembling the field exam in Comparative Politics—but shorter. The field exam is intended to provide a foundation for research and teaching, and the final exam for this course is good practice. The final exam will be distributed via the course e-mail list and should be submitted to Catalyst Dropbox by Friday, December 12th.

4) Reading and participation (20%). All readings on the syllabus are required. For books that do not have specific page or chapter assignments, students should spend several hours with the book, reading for argument and evidence in order to understand the work’s contribution. In addition, all students should read all response papers before class on Wednesday and be prepared to discuss them along with the assigned readings. Paper writers should be prepared to present and discuss their response papers in class.

Office Hours
Office hours are Fridays 10:00m-12:00noon in 147 Gowen Hall.

Additional Course Information
If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students, 011 Mary Gates Hall (http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs ). If you have a letter from Disability Resources for Students indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so that we can discuss the accommodations you may need for class.

Course Materials
The following books are available for purchase at the University Book Store and on reserve at Odegaard Library:
Bates, Prosperity and Violence
Tilly, Coercion, Capital, and European States
Boone, Political Topographies of the African State
Migdal, Strong Societies and Weak States
Levi, Of Rule and Revenue
Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions
Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy
Gellner, Nations and Nationalism
Anderson, Imagined Communities
Lust-Okar, Structuring Conflict in the Arab World
Acemoglu and Robinson, Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy
Haggard and Kaufman, Development, Democracy, and Welfare States
Esping-Andersen, Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism
Additional materials are available full-text online via E-Journals, E-Books, and E-Reserves through UW Libraries.

**Course Schedule**

**WEEK ONE**

**Wednesday, September 24, 2014**

**Introduction**

**WEEK TWO**

**Wednesday, October 1, 2014**

**State Formation**


**WEEK THREE**

**Wednesday, October 8, 2014**

**State and Society (“Strong” vs. “Weak” States)**


**WEEK FOUR**

**Wednesday, October 15, 2014**

**Revolution**

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).


WEEK FIVE
Wednesday, October 22, 2014
Political Cleavages and Mass Political Mobilization

WEEK SIX
Wednesday, October 29, 2014
Welfare State

WEEK SEVEN
Wednesday, November 5, 2014
Nationalism
WEEK EIGHT
Wednesday, November 12, 2014
Ethnic Politics and Violence

WEEK NINE
Wednesday, November 19, 2014
Authoritarianism
Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, “New Data on Autocratic Regimes, Ms. E-Reserves.

WEEK TEN
Wednesday, November 26, 2014
No class meeting.

WEEK ELEVEN
Wednesday, December 3, 2014
Democracy