

Seminar Sessions for "Comparative Politics"

2019-2020

Paris Campus

Course director: Prof Laura Morales (Sciences Po, CEE)

Seminar instructors: Lennard Alke, Andreas Eisl, Denys Gorbach, Ronan Jacquin, Bilal Hassan, and Foteini Panagiotopoulou.

The seminar sessions are an essential component of the course "Comparative Politics". Students will attend 12 seminars sessions of 2 hours each, distributed across eight groups of approximately 20 students each, taught by: Lennard Alke, Andreas Eisl, Denys Gorbach, Ronan Jacquin, Bilal Hassan, and Foteini Panagiotopoulou.

Seminars will consist of a first part with presentations from two students relating to the readings (up to 15 minutes each) and a collective discussion of the specific readings assigned for that seminar session focusing on the development of the understanding of political science scholarship.

The days that each student will give the oral presentation as well as the assigned seminar reading(s) on which it should focus – and their distribution between the students presenting – will be agreed with the seminar teacher at the beginning of the semester.

Most weeks, the second part will focus on the targeted discussion of practical cases outlined for each week by the course director (as well as others introduced by the seminar instructor, when relevant) that aim at developing students' analytical and argumentative abilities. Students should think about the practical cases in advance of the seminar sessions and bring some notes and/or sketches of their positions and responses to the practical cases, so that seminar discussions can be fruitful. However, students should note that these sketches are not expected to be more than a few bullet points: we are not expecting students to write a paper on these practical cases. In most cases, around 30-45 minutes of preparation of the practical cases the day before the seminar session will suffice.

On a few selected weeks the second part focuses, instead, on the oral presentation of the work in progress of the research paper that is due before the exams. In other words, every week seminar sessions require prior preparation by all students and not just by those who are giving a presentation on the readings for the week.

As well as the grades received for the oral presentations and the active participation in the seminar sessions (see course grade system in the general course outline), a considerable portion of the grade for the continuous assessment is allocated to the research paper that students need to deliver by the end of the semester. The research papers should:

- Focus on one specific aspect of comparative politics discussed throughout the course, comparing two or more countries in order to answer a substantive research question (see examples below);
- Contain original work: plagiarism and a simple summary of readings will be severely penalised;
- Conform to the required length: approximately 30,000 characters without counting spaces (roughly 15 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman font 12) and include a

character count at the end of the paper. Papers exceeding this limit by more than 10% (i.e. papers that are longer than 33,000 characters) will be penalised with a reduction of 2 points out of 20 for each portion of 2,000 characters in excess. For example, a paper that is between 33,001 and 35,000 characters will get 2 points deducted, and one that is between 35,001 and 37,000 will get 4 points deducted, and so on;

- Be written in English;
- Be delivered through Urkund to your seminar instructor, ideally in Word format;
- Be polished in terms of format: use the same font, text alignment and line spacing throughout; proof-read for typos and mistakes before delivery; include headings and captions for any tables or figures; cite sources and references appropriately, including a list of references at the end of the paper, etc. This list of tips might help you getting it polished: <http://www.mycollegesuccessstory.com/academic-success-tools/writing-tips.html>
- Be delivered before 11 pm on Friday 22nd November 2019. Late deliveries will be penalised with a reduction of 5 points (out of 20) for each 12 hours of delay. For example, if you deliver the paper any time between 11.01 pm and 11 am on 23rd November, 5 points will be deducted from your grade; if you deliver it between 11.01 am and 11 pm on 23rd November, 10 points will be deducted from your grade; and so on. This penalty will only be lifted if there are properly documented mitigating circumstances (illness, family bereavement, etc.). In this case, you should contact your seminar instructor, who will let you know how to document the mitigating circumstances.

Each student will choose the topic and focus for their own research paper and the work in progress presentations will serve to get feedback from the seminar instructors about clarity, suitability, etc, of the topic and the focus. As an illustration, here are some examples of questions that would be suitable for a paper for this course:

- Are failed states more likely to be also poorer states?
- Are federal states better able to deal with secessionist aspirations from peripheral nationalism?
- Are democracies better equipped to pacify homegrown terrorism in a shorter period of time?
- Are third wave democracies more likely to suffer democratic reversals than second wave democracies?
- Is turnout higher in consensual democracies?
- Are Australian prime ministers less stable in their tenures than British prime ministers? If so, why?
- Where and why did 'Occupy' (Wall Street, the City, etc.) movements emerge?

These are simply intended to illustrate how you can formulate research questions for your paper and you are not expected to choose from these or replicate them. The key message is that you need to formulate a clearly enunciated research question that can be answered empirically. You will then need to narrow down how you will approach the question and which cases you will select to answer it. Always bear in mind that you should be able to reasonably answer the question within the designated length of the paper, so don't be too ambitious! Please also bear in mind that this is a 2nd year course paper and not an undergraduate dissertation.

Detailed Outline

Week 0: Presentation of the seminar instructors and the seminar work plan

No readings for this seminar of the week of 9th September. Use the time to start reading the pieces for week 1.

- Presentation of overall seminar programme and evaluation requirements
- Distribution of days and readings for oral presentations among students
- Presentation of aims and format of the required research paper, and of intermediate presentations of progress
- Methods conference on how to undertake empirical comparative analysis.

Block 1: Introduction

Week 1: What is Comparative Politics?

Readings for the seminar, week of 16th September:

Compulsory:

- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682-93. Electronic copy: <https://doi.org/10.2307/1955513>
- Przeworski, Adam, and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: Wiley Interscience. Introduction & chapter 1. (Scanned in Moodle)

Recommended:

- Mill, John Stuart, *A System of Logic*, Book III, chapters 8 and 10, New York: Harper, 1846. A free online e-book version can be found here: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/27942>
- Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics", *Political Analysis*, vol. 2, 131-150. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/2.1.131>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Suppose that you work as a researcher for a think tank and you are asked to prepare a research report on the following question: "Why did some 'Arab Spring' uprisings succeed while others failed?" Before the seminar session, bring a one-page sketch of how you would propose to design a comparative study that would allow you collect the necessary information and data to answer the question. The various proposals prepared by the students will be discussed during the seminar.

Week 2: Approaches to Comparative Politics

Readings for the seminar, week of 23rd September:

- Hall, Peter A., and Rosemary C. R. Taylor. 1996. "Political science and the three new institutionalisms", *Political Studies* 44 (5): 936-57. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1467-9248.1996.tb00343.x>
- Putnam, Robert D., Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Y. Nanetti. 1988. "Institutional performance and political culture: Some puzzles about the power of the past", *Governance* 1 (3): 221-42. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0491.1988.tb00064.x>

Presentation of work in progress for the research paper:

Each student will need to do a 2-3 minutes presentation of the topic selected for the research paper — including the specific research question —, the definition of the key concepts involved, the case selection and its rationale, and the time period that will be covered. Bring a one-page outline of all these points for marking and feedback.

Block 2: Key Overarching Themes in Comparative Politics

Week 3: State formation and development

Readings for the seminar, week of 30th September:

- Tilly, Charles. 1990. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*. Basil Blackwell. Chapter 1. Available online here: <https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Soc924-2011/TillyCh1.pdf>
- Blydes, Lisa. 2017. "State Building in the Middle East", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20(1): 487-504. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051215-023141>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar and continuous assessment:

Explore the website of the Fragile States Index (<https://fragilestatesindex.org/>), paying particular attention to the overtime evolution of the index represented in the maps. Select 2 or 3 countries that catch your attention in terms of the time trends and search for more detailed information about them in the detailed reports in the country dashboard (<https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/>). Make some notes about your findings connecting them to the topics discussed in the lecture and with the readings for this week. We will discuss your analyses during the seminar.

Week 4: Beyond the State

Readings for the seminar, week of 7th October:

- Rodrik, Dani. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox. Why Global Markets, States, and Democracy Can't Coexist*. Oxford University Press. Introduction and chapters 1 & 9. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Acharya, Amitava. "Regionalism Beyond EU-Centrism" (chapter 6) in Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, Oxford University Press. Available online here: <https://www-oxfordhandbooks-com.acces-distant.sciences-po.fr/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199682300.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199682300>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Find background information on the secessionist/independence attempts in Catalonia, Québec and Scotland. Reflect on the following questions and bring a sketch of your answers to them. We will discuss your arguments in class.

1. How do these independence movements and attempts challenge their respective Nation-States?
2. What are the similarities and differences across these three cases in the way that the central state has reacted to and managed these challenges?

Week 5: Political Instability, Conflict and Change

Readings for the seminar, week of 14th October:

Compulsory:

- Seymour Martin Lipset. 1960. *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*. Doubleday, chapter 2. Online here: <https://archive.org/details/politicalmansoci00inlips>
- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 and Conclusion. (Scanned in Moodle)

Recommended:

- Moore, Barrington. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. Pages viii to xv (until the asterisks) and Chapter 7. Online here: https://valeriaribeiroufabc.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/barrington-moore-jr-social-origins-of-dictatorship-and-democracy_-lord-and-peasant-in-the-making-of-the-modern-world-penguin-books-1973.pdf

Presentation of work in progress for the research paper:

Each student will need to do a 2-3 minutes presentation of the structure of the paper: key sections in which it will be divided and a succinct summary of the

approach to each section. Bring a one-page outline of all these points for marking and feedback.

Week 6: Democracy and Democratization

Readings for the seminar, week of 21st October:

Compulsory:

- Dahl, Robert A., 1971, *Polyarchy. Participation and Opposition*, Yale University Press: Chapter 1. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, 1986, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Chapters 1-3. (Scanned in Moodle)

Recommended:

- Michael Ross, 2001, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics*, 53(3): 325-361. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.2001.0011>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Based on the seminar readings and the lecture materials, reflect on the following questions and bring a sketch of your key arguments for discussion in the seminar:

1. How would you classify the political regimes and (if applicable) the type of democracy of the following countries? Brazil, China, France, Kenya, Russia and the USA.
2. What has been the timeline of the process of democratization (where applicable) of these six countries?
3. Discuss which ones are, from your point of view, consolidated democracies and why (or why not).

No seminars on the week of 28th October (Fall break)

Week 7: Authoritarianism and democratic breakdown

Readings for the seminar, week of 4th November:

Compulsory:

- Linz, Juan J. 1975. "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes" in Fred I. Greenstein & Nelson W. Polsby (eds.), *Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 4, chapter 3. Addison-Wesley Publishers. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Howard, Marc Morjé, and Philip G. Roessler. 2006. "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes", *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 365–381. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3694278>

Recommended:

- Bellin, Eva. 2004. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: A Comparative Perspective", *Comparative Politics*, 36(2): 139-157. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4150140>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

We will watch the film “Missing”, directed by Costa-Gavras, on **Thursday October 24th at 7.30 pm (exact date, time and place TBC)**. The film crudely depicts the period of the first months after the *coup d'état* led by the military against the government of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973. Please be warned that the film contains scenes of extreme violence.

Drawing on the film, the seminar readings and the lecture material, reflect on (1) the main characteristics of the emerging military regime in Chile; and (2) the international context that fostered the success of the military uprising and the breakdown of the democratic regime. Bring a sketch of your answers to the seminar, where we will discuss students' answers.

Block 3: The Comparative Analysis of Political Institutions, Actors and Processes

Week 8: The Comparative Analysis of Political Institutions

Readings for the seminar, week of 11th November:

- Lijphart, Arend, 2012, *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Yale University Press: chapters 1-3. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Tsebelis, George, 1999, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies: An Empirical Analysis", *American Political Science Review*, 93(3): 591-608. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2585576>

Presentation of work in progress for the research paper:

Each student will need to do a 2-3 minutes presentation of the structure of the paper: key sections in which it will be divided and explicit discussion of empirical information that will be used for the comparison(s). Bring a two-pages outline of all these points for marking and feedback.

Week 9: The comparative analysis of interest formation and articulation

Readings for the seminar, week of 18th November:

- Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba. 1989 [1963]. *The Civic Culture*. Sage: chapter 1. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Hirschman, Albert O. 1969. *Exit, voice and loyalty*. Harvard University Press: chapters 1-3. (Scanned in Moodle)

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar:

Do a bit of background research on the process of introduction of women's right to vote in federal elections in Switzerland. Basing your reasoning on Lijphart's and Tsebelis' theories about how democratic political institutions shape policy

outputs and changes in the status quo (discussed in the previous week), and on the arguments by Almond & Verba around the various types of political culture, reflect on how each of these theories is able to account for this outcome. Bring a sketch of your answers and key arguments. We will discuss them in the seminar session.

Week 10: The Comparative Analysis of Interest Aggregation and Representation

Readings for the seminar, week of 25th November:

Compulsory:

- Sartori, Giovanni, 2016 [1976], *Parties and Party Systems. A Framework for Analysis*, ECPR Press: chapters 5 and 6. (Scanned in Moodle)
- Blais, André and Agnieszka Dobrzynska. 1998. "Turnout in Electoral Democracies", *European Journal of Political Research*, 33(2): 239-261.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.00382>

Recommended:

- Kitschelt, Herbert. 2000. "Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities." *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 845-879.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/001041400003300607>

Second part of the seminar:

The second hour of the seminar this week will be devoted to discuss in detail the exam structure, discuss with students the "sample" questions that have been asked in the past and what good answers to those questions would look like. Students will have the chance to have a Q&A session with seminar instructors on all matters relating to the exam and how to best prepare for it.

Week 11: The Comparative Analysis of Interest Processing

Readings for the seminar, week of 2nd December:

- Lijphart, Arend, 2012, *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Yale University Press: chapters 6-7 required (chapters 10-11 also highly recommended). (Scanned in Moodle)
- De Vries, Catherine and Héctor Solaz, 2017, "The Electoral Consequences of Corruption", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20: 391-408.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-052715-111917>

Practical case for active discussion during the seminar and written continuous assessment:

Familiarize yourself with the World Bank's "Worldwide Governance Indicators" (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>), both in terms of the various dimensions captured and the methodology used to compile these indicators. Explore the data with the Interactive Data Access and focus on comparing the results for the dimensions of "Voice and Accountability" and

"Control of Corruption" over time and across countries for the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Russia, and South Africa. Reflect on the findings around the following questions:

- 1) Are trends in improvement linear?
- 2) What seems to be the relation (if any) between these two dimensions of governance?
- 3) Is one dimension of governance more problematic than the other for these countries?

Bring a sketch of your answers and arguments to the seminar for the discussion.