This course offers a graduate-level introduction to the major themes and approaches in comparative politics. Among the points of emphasis: states and state formation; regime change and its causes; the varied institutional character of modern democracies; political culture; and comparative political economy.

Learning Outcomes: Participants in this course will acquire: (a) an understanding of comparative methodology and an appreciation of its applications; (b) substantial familiarity with the major concepts and lines of theory employed in the sub-discipline of comparative politics; (c) a strong and critical understanding of the character of economic, social, and political development; and (d) an awareness of the degree of variation that exists across the globe especially when it comes to political outcomes, as well as of the major causes of variation.

Requirements:

(a) Reading commentaries: you will prepare two short papers of 3-4 pages in length, each of which will offer critical consideration of the assigned reading materials for a particular week. You may emphasize any theme or themes within the readings, and you need not cover all of the assigned items for the week. The aim is to identify what is at stake in the selected material, evaluate the approach of the author or authors, and reflect briefly upon how the puzzle or debate in question might in your view best be addressed. These papers must be handed in before the week’s seminar begins. Grade: 15%.

(b) Seminar presentation: you will deliver one substantial presentation, of 15-20 minutes (up to 25 minutes for PhD students), which will offer a brief introduction to some (but not necessarily all) of the week’s readings as well as an additional reading component (one extra journal article or book chapter for MA students, two for PhD students) chosen by the presenter. In addition to effective summary and integration of the selected readings, you should raise questions and challenges in such a way as to stimulate seminar discussion in the time to follow. Your presentation and your reading commentaries must come on different weeks. Grade: 20%.

(c) Seminar participation: you will be expected to provide consistent, informed, and active participation throughout the term. Read the material, reflect on it before and during the seminar, and engage in the seminar discussion in an enthusiastic and also open-minded fashion. Missing seminar meetings without cause will affect your grade. If you don’t attend at least ten sessions during the term I will not accept your research paper. Grade: 25%.

(d) Research paper: you will write a research paper (15-17 pages for Masters students, 20-22 pages for Doctoral students) on a subject related to the themes and empirical content of the seminar. Grade: 40%. 
COURSE READINGS:

Comparative Theory and Method (September 13)


Recommended:
Gerald Schneider, “Causal Description: Moving Beyond Stamp Collecting in Political Science.” European Political Science vol. 9, no. 1 (2010).
Markus Haverland, “If Similarity is the Challenge – Congruence Analysis Should Be Part of the Answer.” European Political Science vol. 9, no. 1 (2010).
Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, “The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry.” Comparative Studies in Society and History vol. 22, no. 1 (1980).

Development and Democratization (September 20)


**Recommended:**

**Dependency and the Developmental State (September 27)**


**Recommended:**


**The State, War, and Regime Change (October 4)**


**Recommended:**


**Institutionalism and Implications (October 18)**


Recommended:
JM Carey, “Parchment, Equilibria, and Institutions.” *Comparative Political Studies* vol. 33, nos. 6-7 (2000).

**Transitology and the Historical Turn in Democratization Studies (October 25)**


Capoccia, Giovanni, and Daniel Ziblatt, “The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond.” *Comparative Political Studies* vol. 43, nos. 8/9: (2010).


Recommended:
Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War (Cambridge University Press, 2010).
Stephen E. Hanson, “The Founding of the French Third Republic.” Comparative Political Studies vol. 43, nos. 8/9 (2010).

**Electoral Systems (November 1)**


Laura Wills-Otero, “Electoral Systems in Latin America: Explaining the Adoption of Proportional Representation Systems During the Twentieth Century.” Latin American Politics and Society vol. 51, no. 3 (Fall 2009).

**Recommended:**
Alan Renwick, “Electoral Reform in Europe since 1945.” West European Politics vol. 34, no. 3 (May 2011).

**Parties and Party Systems (November 8)**


Recommended:


**Systems of Government (November 15)**


Recommended:


Jose A. Cheibub, Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy (Cambridge University Press, 2007).


Contentious Politics: Revolutions, Ethnic Conflict, and Civil Wars (November 22)

Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge University Press, 1979), chapter 2.


Recommended:
Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge University Press, 1979), chapters 1 and 3.
John Foran, ed., Theorizing Revolutions (Routledge 1997).

Culture and Politics (November 29)


Ronald Inglehart and Scott C. Flanagan, “Value Change in Industrial Societies.” American Political Science Review vol. 81, no. 4 (December 1987).


**Recommended:**

**Comparative Political Economy (December 6)**


Peter A. Hall, “Policy, Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain.” *Comparative Politics* (April 1993).


**Recommended:**