

## **17.50: Introduction to Comparative Politics**

**Thursday and Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

**Building 2, Room 142**

### **Instructors**

Professor Chappell Lawson  
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### **Why you should take this class**

This class will teach you about politics around the world, focusing on subjects like democracy, the political roots of economic development, and how America's political system compares to that of other countries. If you are interested in political science as a concentration, this class will prepare you for more advanced subjects. If you just want to understand what is going on in the world, this class will provide you with useful theoretical frameworks, as well as factual background on some of the most important countries in the world.

### **What this class is about**

This class first offers some basic analytical frameworks -- culture, social structure, and institutions -- that you can use to examine a wide range of political outcomes. We then use these frameworks to understand (1) the relationship between democracy and economic development and (2) the relative centralization of political authority across countries. We will use theoretical arguments and a wide range of case studies to address several questions: Why are some countries democratic and others not? How does democracy affect economic development and political conflict? Why do some countries centralize power while others threaten to fall apart through secession and civil war? We will use examples from a wide range of countries including Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Iraq, Italy, Mexico, and the United States. The lessons drawn from these countries will prepare you to analyze other countries of your own choosing in the paper assignments. At the end of the course, you should be able to analyze political events around the world, drawing on the theoretical explanations provided in the class.

### **Readings**

Readings total approximately 85 pages per week and should take you about three hours, depending on how fast you read. The only book required for the class is Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. All other readings can be found in your course reader. Both the reader and Putnam's book will be available on reserve in Dewey Library (Building E53, first floor).

## Requirements

### Class participation

You are expected to participate actively and intelligently in class discussions. As a rule of thumb, you should plan to spend about an hour going over your notes from the readings and preparing for class each week after you have completed the readings. If you must miss a class, please notify the instructors in advance. More than two unexcused absences or unprepared sessions will jeopardize your class participation grade.

### Class debates and presentation

There will be two in-class debates over the course of the semester. All students are expected to participate in all debates. You also will also be expected to present the results of your research paper.

### Final exam

There will be an ex-camera final exam on some aspect of Iraq, which will draw on issues we have covered during the semester. For instance, you may be asked to assess the desirability of certain institutional arrangements in Iraq (e.g., federalism). Alternatively, you may be asked to address

### Papers

You will write one longer (12-page) paper, involving independent research on a topic approved by the instructors, and present that paper in class. This paper may cover one of the cases we explore in substantially greater detail (e.g., Iraq), or it may address another topic. Papers cannot be rewritten for a higher grade, though we would be happy to read drafts ahead of time.

The short (4-page) essay due September 25 is intended to be a summary of course concepts to date.

### Assignments and Grading

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|--|-----|
| - Class participation (including debates):                         | 25% |
| - Short paper (four pages):  | 10% |
| - Longer research paper (12 pages):                                | 20% |
| - Presentation of research paper:                                  | 10% |
| - After revisions, a second draft of research paper:               | 10% |
| - A written ex camera final exam will be given during exam period: | 25% |

Sept. 4: *Introduction and review of syllabus* (Lawson and Rodden)

## I. Approaches to Comparative Politics

Sept. 5: What is the state and why have one? (Rodden and Lawson)

- W. Phillips Shively, *Power and Choice: An Introduction to Political Science* (Boston: McGraw Hill), Chapter 3, "The Modern State."
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Penguin Classics), pages 183-188 and 227-228
- Class assignment: Find pictures of the Doge's Palace in Venice and read about it on-line

*What is democracy and why have one?* (Lawson and Rodden)

- Aristotle, *The Politics*, in Stephen Everson, ed., *Aristotle: The Politics and Constitution of Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996). Read Book III, Chapters 6 – 12 (pages 69-80), Chapter 18 (page 91), Book IV, Chapters 1-2 (pages 91-94).
- Terry Karl and Philippe C. Schmitter, "What Democracy is...and is Not," *Journal of Democracy*, Summer 1991, 2(3): 75-86.

Sept. 11: *Cleavages, preferences, and identities* (Rodden and Lawson)

- James Madison, Federalist No. 10, in Isaac Kramnick, ed., *The Federalist Papers* (London: Penguin Books, 1987 [1788]): 122-28.
- Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party: Part I*, in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978): 473-83.
- "Cleavage Structures and Electoral Change," in Peter Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe* (McGraw Hill, 2000).
- Max Weber, "Class, Status, and Party," in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*: 180-186.

Sept 12: *Culture and beliefs* (Rodden and Lawson)

- Ronald Inglehart and Marita Carballo, "Does Latin America Exist? (And is There a Confucian Culture?): A Global Analysis of Cross-Cultural Differences," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 30 (March 1997), pages 34-46.
- Harry Eckstein, "A Cultural Approach to Political Change." [**Adam: could you find this article?**]

Sept. 18: *Institutions I: Presidentialism, parliamentarism, and the U.S. in comparative perspective* (Rodden)

- Hendrik Hertzberg, "Framed Up: What the Constitution Gets Wrong," (summary and review of Robert Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?*), *New Yorker* July 29, 2002.
- Arend Lijphart, ed., *Parliamentary versus Presidential Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 6-8, 14, 29-32.

Sept. 19: *Institutions 2: Proportional versus majoritarian electoral rules* (Rodden)

- Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999), Chapter 8.
- "Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referendums," in Peter Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe* (McGraw Hill, 2000).

Sept. 25: *Institutions 3: Federalism and decentralization* (Rodden)

- Alfred Stepan, "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. Model," *Journal of Democracy* 10: 4 (October 1999), p. 19-33.
- Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999), Chapter 10.
- Jonathan Rodden, "Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement" (unpublished paper).

[SHORT ESSAY DUE SEPT. 25]

## II. Processes

Sept. 26: *Transitions to democracy* (Lawson)

- Larry Diamond, "Is the Third Wave Over?" *Journal of Democracy* 7, 3 (July 1996).
- Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971): 1-16.
- Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966): 413-432 (Chapter 7).

Oct 2: *Does economic growth cause democracy? Modernization Theory* (Lawson)

- Seymour Martin Lipset, "Economic Development and Democracy," in *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981): 27-63.

- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49 (January 1997): 155-193.
- Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *National Interest* 16 (Summer 1989): 3-19.

Oct. 3: *Or does democracy cause economic growth?*(Rodden)

- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Political Regimes and Economic Growth," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7, 3 (1993): 51-69.
- Mancur Olson, "Big Bills Left on the Sidewalk: Why Some Nations are Rich, and Others Poor," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 10, 2 (1996): 3-24.
- Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," *Journal of Democracy* 10, 3 (1999), p. 3-17.
- Barry Weingast, "The Economic Role of Political Institutions: Market-Preserving Federalism and Economic Development," *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 11, 1 (1995).

Oct. 9 & 10: *Democracy, macroeconomic crisis and reform in Latin America* (Rodden and Lawson)

*Background:*

- Manuel Pastor and Carol Wise, "The Politics of Second-Generation Reform," *Journal of Democracy* 10, 3 (1999): 34-48.
- Scott Mainwaring, "Presidentialism in Latin America," in Arend Lijphart, ed., *Parliamentary versus Presidential Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 111-117.

*Brazil*

- Juarez Brandão Lopes, "Obstacles to Economic Reform in Brazil," in Arend Lijphart and Carlos Waisman, eds., *Institutional Design in New Democracies: Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996): 195-218.
- *The Economist*, "Country Survey of Brazil," March 27-April 2, 1999; "The Devaluing of a Presidency," p. 3-5; "Democracy's Difficulties," p. 7-9; "A Sorry State," p. 9-12; "A Federation in Dispute," p. 13-18.

*Argentina*

- Hector Schamis, "Argentina: Crisis and Democratic Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy* 13, 2 (April 2002), p. 81-94.
- Collection of newspaper articles (to be handed out in class).

Oct. 16 & 17: *Why does democracy break down? Weimar Germany* (Lawson and Rodden)

- Ursula Hoffmann-Lange, "Germany: Twentieth Century Turning Points," in Mattei Dogan and John Higley, eds., *Elites, Crises, and the Origins of Regimes* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998): 170-74. (handed out in class).
- Richard Overy, *The Historical Atlas of the Third Reich* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996): 8-21. (handed out in class).
- M. Ranier Lepsius, "From Fragmented Party Democracy to Government by Emergency Decree and National Socialist Takeover: Germany," in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978): 34-79.
- Seymour Martin Lipset, "'Fascism' – Left, Right, and Center," in *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981): 127-152.
- Henry Ashby Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power: January 1933* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1996): 1-2, 163-183.
- A. J. P. Taylor, "History Unfolds, 1918-1933," in John L. Snell, ed., *The Nazi Revolution: Germany's Guilt or Germany's Fate?* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company): 19-26.

[CLASS DEBATE ON OCTOBER 17]

### III. Student Presentations

[PAPERS DUE OCTOBER 23]

Oct. 23 Paper Presentations

Oct. 24 Paper Presentations

Oct. 30 Paper Presentations

Oct. 31 Paper Presentations

Nov. 6 Paper Presentations

Nov. 7 Paper Presentations

### IV. Comparative Case Studies

Nov. 13 & 14 *Corruption in Mexico* (Lawson)

- Stephen D. Morris, "Corruption and the Mexican Political System: Continuity and Change," *Third World Quarterly*, 1999, 20 (3): 623-43.
- Andres Oppenheimer, *Bordering on Chaos* (Boston: Little Brown., 1996):289-94.
- Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, "Mexico: Alienation and Aspiration," in *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1989), p. 310-12.

- Hernando de Soto, *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), p. 131-55.
- Daniel Treisman, "The Causes of Corruption: A Cross-National Study," *Journal of Public Economics* (forthcoming).

Nov. 20 & 21: *Economic development and democracy in Italy: History, social capital and institutions* (Lawson and Rodden)

- Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Nov. 27 & 28 Thanksgiving break

Dec. 4 & 5: *Will Iraq become a democracy?* (Lawson)

- Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha, "How to Build a Democratic Iraq," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2003, 82 (3). Available on-line at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030501faessay11218/adeed-i-dawisha-karen-dawisha/how-to-build-a-democratic-iraq.html>.
- Chappell Lawson, "How Best to Build Democracy: Laying the Foundation for a New Iraq," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2003, 82 (4). Available on-line at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030701faresponse82418/chappell-lawson/how-best-to-build-democracy-laying-a-foundation-for-the-new-iraq.html>.
- Chappell Lawson and Strom Thacker, "Will Iraq Become a Democracy," (To be handed out in class.)
- Class assignment: Independent research on Iraq