

Spring 2003
Mondays 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Meeting place: E51-393

Professor Suzanne Berger
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17.526 Dissertation Workshop in Comparative Politics and Comparative Political Economy

This course is designed for Ph.D. students embarking on dissertation research in the fields of comparative politics and comparative political economy. It is aimed particularly at those students who have already passed their General Exams, although others will be admitted with the permission of the instructors. This course focuses on the issues associated with designing and undertaking a substantive piece of research. We begin by examining a number of examples of successful research with a view to examining how they were designed, what research problems they confronted, and how they were surmounted. The second part of the course reviews alternative methodologies for carrying out the research. In the final part of the course, we will discuss research proposals prepared by the course participants with an eye to both their substantive and methodological dimensions.

Requirements

Each participant is required to complete all of the assignments, regardless of his or her registration status, that is, to do the reading each week, to write a critique of each of the other participant's proposals in the week(s) due, to submit a prospectus for each class discussion, and to hand in a final revised prospectus at the end of the term. As usual, everyone will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. The first class meeting is February 10. Before then please read first week's assignment.

All reading materials are on Reserve at the Dewey Library and are available for purchase at the MIT Coop with the exception of John Goldthorpe, Affluent Worker in the Class Structure; Paul Lauren, Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy; Peter Hall, Political Power of Economic Ideas; and Robert Ward, Studying Politics Abroad.

Readings denoted by a number sign (#) can be downloaded from the Stellar web site, <http://stellar.mit.edu/S/course/17/sp03/17.526/schedule.html>

1. February 10 Introduction

Problem: How to move from a single or small case to a theoretically interesting generalization?

Readings: # John H. Goldthorpe, et al, The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, Volume 3, Cambridge University Press, 1969:1-53;

Alexander George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured Focus Comparison," in Paul Lauren ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy, New York: Free Press, 1979: 43-68.

2. February 18 [Monday shifted to Tuesday class]

**CLASS CANCELLED DUE TO SNOW. LECTURE GIVEN FEBRUARY 24.
Note all other dates have been moved forward one week.**

Problem: Showing How Institutions Matter

Readings: Ellen Immergut, "The Rules of the Game: The Logic of Health Policy Making in France, Switzerland, and Sweden"; and Colleen A. Dunlavy, "Mirror Images: Political Structure and Early Railroad Policy in the U. S. and Prussia," both in Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen and Frank Longstreth, eds., Structuring Politics, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

3. March 3

Problem: Showing Ideas Matter

Readings: # Peter Hall, "Conclusion: The Politics of Keynesian Ideas," in Peter Hall ed., The Political Power of Economic Ideas, Princeton University Press, 1989;

Mark Blyth, Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century, Chapters 1 and 2, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

4. March 10

Problem: Does culture matter for outcomes? How to show it?

Readings: Edward Banfield, The Moral Basis of Backward Society, Free Press 1958;

Ann Swidler, Talk of Love: How Culture Matters, Chapters 1, 2, 5, and 8, University of Chicago Press 2001.

5. March 17 Method: Survey Research

Reading: Richard Freeman and Joel Rogers, What Workers Want, Cornell University Press, 1999.

6. March 24

NO CLASS – Spring Break

7. March 31 Method: Political Interviewing

Readings: Locke & Safford [*Awaiting Title From Locke*];

Suzanne Berger, "Religious Transformation and the Future of Politics," in Charles Maier, Changing Boundaries of the Political: essays on the evolving balance between the state and society, public and private in Europe, Cambridge University Press, 1987;

Myron Weiner, "Political Interviewing in Social Research," in Robert Ward, ed., Studying Politics Abroad, Little Brown, 1964: 102-133.

8. April 7 Method: Documentary Research

Readings: # Joan Wallach Scott, "*A Statistical Representation of Work*," in *Gender and the Politics of History*, Columbia University Press, 1989;

Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship*, Chapters to be assigned in class, Stanford University Press 2000.

9. April 14 The Research Proposal

Reading: # Adam Przeworski and Frank Solomon, "*On the Art of Writing Proposals*," New York, SSRN, September 1988;
<http://www2.ucsc.edu/cgirs/programs/pacrim/aowp.pdf>

Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Cornell University Press 1997.

10. April 21

NO CLASS – Patriots Day

11. April 28

Student Presentations

12. May 5

Student Presentations

13. May 12

Student Presentations