COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Degree Course in WORLD POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Teacher: Prof. Stefano Procacci

2017-2018 – 1st semester (Fall 2017)

Course description:
The course explores the basic principles of comparative analysis as a method for empirical research and theory building in political science, focusing on the intellectual process of concept formation, classification, elaboration of typologies and frameworks for the study of the world’s political systems.

It will provide an overview of the progress of comparative studies through the different theoretical approaches adopted in this field and will offer a close examination of the most important issues of contemporary research: democracy, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, party system and interest groups, participation and mass mobilization, political culture, state/society relationships, civilizational and religious identity. It will explain differences as well as similarities among countries according to the variation in political institutions and processes, economic and social structures, and civil-military relations. Moreover, it will ask how these domestic features respectively influence foreign policy and how international politics influences both the constitutional and process features of political systems.

Case-studies belonging to different regional areas of the international system will be offered in order to substantiate the above concepts and frameworks.

Course structure:
Lectures 20h; seminars 20h

Contents:

Week 1 (05/10-06/10)
Introduction: what is Comparative Politics

Readings:

• Lectures:

• Seminar:
  Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 6-8; IV 3-7.
  Richter, «Comparative Political Analysis in Montesquieu and Tocqueville», Comparative Politics, 1, 2, 1969.
Week 2 (12/10-13/10)
Modernization and state/society relationship

Readings:

- Lectures:

- Seminar:
  Moore, *The social origins of dictatorship and democracy*, p. 413-52.

Week 3 (19/10-20/10)
The classification of political systems (1): democratic regimes

Readings

- Lectures:

- Seminar:[Is it possible to measure democracy?]

Week 4 (26/10-27/10)
Democratization and economic development

Readings

- Lectures:

- Seminar:
Week 5 (02/11-03/11)
The classification of political systems (2): democratic and non-democratic regimes

Readings

- Lectures:

- Seminar:

Week 6 (9/11-10/11)
Political parties and party systems

Readings

- Lectures
  Boix, The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems, in The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics, ch. 21.
  Lipset, Party systems and the representation of social groups, in Bendix, State and society.
  Rose - Urwin, «Persistence and change in western party systems since 1945», Political Studies, 18, 3, 1970

- Seminar:

Week 7 (16/11-17/11)
Political culture and civil society

Readings

- Lectures

- Seminar:

Week 8 (23/11-24/11)
The political influence of religion

Readings

- Lectures:

- Seminar:
  Kang, D. C., «Why was there no religious war in premodern East Asia?», European Journal of International Relations, Vol. 20(4), 2014, pp. 965–986
Week 9 (30/11-01/12)
Political comparison in regional perspective: theories and cases

Readings

• Lectures:
  Magstadt, *Nations and Governments. Comparative Politics in Regional Perspective*, Wadsworth, 2011, chs. 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
  Simmons et al., «The International Diffusion of Liberalism», International Organization, 60, Fall 2006.

• Seminar: [Case studies: Africa, India, Russia, Latin America, the Middle East]
  Miller et al. (eds.), *Latin American Democracy*, Routledge, 2009, chs. 1, 2.

Week 10 (7/12-14/12)
Comparative foreign policy analysis

Readings

• Lectures

• Seminar:
Course requirements:

1) Full attendance is required (and will be checked by the teacher). Students are allowed up to two absences without justification. Further absences must be justified by supplying the course teacher with a medical certificate. Unjustified absences (beyond the allowance of two) will negatively affect your exam grade by reducing the mark assigned for participation, and prolonged unjustified absences will ultimately result in your being excluded from taking the exam. Justifications other than illness (such as grave family reasons) may be taken into account at the discretion of the course teacher. The occurrence of protracted illness will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Active participation in class will be considered as a part of the student performance. During the course, every single student will be asked to give a presentation (15 minutes) on one of the readings included in the course material.

2) At the end of the course, students have to write a final essay (4000-5000 words). (See below a list of topics suggested by the teacher).

(Student guidelines: “This is a standard term paper based on several specific texts (for example, 4 or 5 articles, which might be taken from your course reading or might be additional to it, going more into depth on a specific topic). An assessed essay should normally show some autonomous ability to construct or reconstruct debates, arguments or lines of reasoning, and if possible should show some critical distance”).

3) Oral examination - based on the following list of readings (from the course material):


v) from Dahl, Shapiro (eds.), The democracy sourcebook, The MIT Press, 2003:
   Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy;
   Huber, Rueschemeyer, Stephens, The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy;
   Przeworski-Alvarez-Cheibub-Limongi, Economic Development and Political Regimes;
   Huntington, Democracy’s third wave.


(or)

Grade breakdown:
20%: Attendance, participation and presentation
40%: final essay
40%: oral examination

English language requirement:
For students not enrolled in the degree course in World Politics and International Relations, counting as an attending student (frequentante) depends on satisfying one of the following requirements: having obtained at least 26/30 in the online English "Entry Test" taken for admittance to other Laurea Magistrale degree courses in the Department (students should supply the course teacher with a print-off of their mark); having reached at least B2 level in the English test for participation in the Erasums exchange program; having taken, or being currently enrolled in, another degree course taught in English; having an international certificate (such as IETLS with a score of at least 6,5 or TOEFL with a score of at least 90). Visiting students or students from other Departments without one of the above qualifications will be asked to take the online English test: http://elearning2.unipv.it/scipol/course/index.php?categoryid=1

List of topics suggested for the final essay:

- Bureaucracy
- Case study: a comparative analysis of African political systems
- Case study: a comparative analysis of India
- Case study: a comparative analysis of Latin America political systems
- Case study: a comparative analysis of Middle East political systems
- Case study: a comparative analysis of Russia
- Comparative foreign policy
- Democracy: concepts and theories in comparative perspective
- Democratization in world politics
- International systems and societies in comparative perspective
- Lobbies and interest groups
- Modernization and state/society relationship
- Non-democratic regimes
- Political culture
- Political parties and party systems
- Revolutions in domestic and international politics
- Social Movements
- The political influence of religion
- Women and politics in comparative perspective