UA 500 – Fall 2016
Introduction to Comparative Politics

This course will introduce students to the study of comparative politics, which is defined as the study of domestic politics anywhere in the world. As a way of cutting into this vast topic, we specifically focus on the process of democratic transition by analyzing the democratic revolution that has swept the globe during the last forty years. In turn we will explore the causes of democratization, threats to democratization, and factors that may aid in a successful consolidation of democracy. As part of this process, students will be exposed to a wide range of topics in comparative politics, including the politics of economic reform, party systems and voting, theories of ethnic politics, and social media and political protest.

Requirements

The course is taught in two lectures (M, W, 9:30 – 10:45 AM in Lecture Hall 101 in 19 West 4th Street) and one section each week. Grading is based on a final exam (50%, Monday, December 19th, 8:00 AM), a mid-term (20%, Monday, October 17), a 5-7 page paper (20%, due Monday, December 12th at the start of class), and section participation (10%). Note that the paper does not require outside research, so you can alternatively conceive of it as a take home midterm consisting of one essay question that you have a week to complete.

Office Hours

All TAs will hold office hours weekly. Students should always contact their TA first concerning any logistical questions regarding the course.

Professor Tucker will hold office hours on Wednesdays from 10:45 – 12:15 in his office in room 430 at 19 West 4th Street. If you need to schedule a time to meet outside of the scheduled office hours, please email Professor Tucker directly.

Readings

This course is not taught from a textbook. Students are welcome to purchase a comparative politics textbook if they like, but there is no particular text for this class. Instead, readings will be drawn from 2 books recommended for purchase and a collection of articles and book chapters which can be downloaded individually from the course website on NYU Classes. It is also suggested that students read the blog that Professor Tucker co-authors, “The Monkey Cage” at The Washington Post (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/). You can follow The Monkey Cage on Twitter at @monkeycageblog, and Professor Tucker on Twitter at @j_a_tucker. Professor Tucker also tweets about Russia from @NYUJordanCenter.

All students are expected to have completed the relevant reading before the recitation meeting each week. There are approximately 100 – 150 pages of reading a week; some are more and some are less. In particular, the weeks on the moment of transition, economic reform, and voting have more reading. Others are shorter. Please plan ahead accordingly! Also, please note that
“recommended” readings are included only for students who want to know more about the topic; you will not be expected to have read these works, nor will you be tested on them.

The following books are recommended for purchase and are available for purchase at the NYU Book Store:


Larry Diamond et. al. (eds.) *The Global Resurgence of Democracy 2nd Edition*, (Johns Hopkins, 1996)

For a few of the reading, I have provided a link as to where you can find the material online. All other readings are posted on NYU Classes.

**Class Schedule and Reading Assignments**

**I. Introduction to Comparative Politics: September 7, 12**

Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today* (8th Edition), 31-45


**II. Regimes: September 14, 19**

*Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Juan Linz and Albert Stepan, Johns Hopkins University Press, Ch 3 (38-54)

*Global Resurgence*: Schmitter and Karl, “What Democracy is..." Ch.4, 49-62


*Recommended:*


Brownlee, Jason. 2009. “Portents of Pluralism: How Hybrid Regimes Affect Democratic Transitions”, *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(5): 515-532: Note: you are only required to read the sections that define "hybrid regimes".
III: The Moment of Transition: September 21, 26

Ash, The Magic Lantern, all


Recommended:

*Global Resurgence*: Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave", Ch.1, p.3-25

*Global Studies: Russia*, "Central-Eastern Europe: From Dictatorship to Democracy", p.97-115


Mapping the Fall of Communism: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7972232.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7972232.stm)


September 28th

*Global Resurgence*, Ch. 8 –10, 12 (p.111-149, 154-161)


Recommended:


Cheibub et al. 2014. “Beyond Presidentialism and Parliamentarism"

Robert Eglie. "From Linz to Tsebelis: three waves of parliamentary studies


http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/ (just poke around the site – I'll refer to it in class. Useful for impressing your relatives when you go home for break.)

Recommended:


NOTE: No class on Monday, October 10 for Fall Recess

MID TERM EXAMINATION: Monday, October 17

Note: There will be no recitations the week of October 17 due to the midterm
VI: Four Approaches to Voting and Elections (Oct 19, 26, 31, Nov 2)

October 19: Sociological Approach to Voting


Recommended:


[INTERLUDE: A Brief Guide to Reading Quantitative Work, Monday, October 24]


October 26: A Rational Approach to Voting


Recommended:

**October 31: Economic Voting**


**Recommended:**


**Nov 2nd: Strategic Voting**


**Recommended:**


VII. Parties and Party Systems: Nov 7, 9


Noam Lupu and Rachel Riedl, “Political Parties and Uncertainty in Developing Democracies”. Comparative Political Studies. 2013 vol. 46 no. 11 1339-1365

Recommended:

Mair, Peter, ed. The West European Party System, Oxford Press 1990: Ch. 3 (37-45) 5 (50-60) 20, 21, 22 (285-310)


VIII. Partisan Identification: Nov 14, 16


Recommended:

The Michigan School

Campbell et al. 1960, Chapters 6-7


The Rational Revisionists


Social Identity Theory


IX: Politics of Economic Reform: Nov 21, 28


Daniel Treisman (2010) "Loans for Shares Revisited", Post-Soviet Affairs, 26:3, 207-227

Recommended:

Sachs, Jeffrey, Poland’s Jump to the Market Economy – all


Steven Fish, “The Determinants of Economic Reform in the Post-Communist World,” East European Politics and Societies, v. 12, no 1 (Winter 1997), pp. 31-78 (skim all of the first part until he gets to the argument)

X: Ethnic Conflict: Nov 30, Dec 5
NOTE: PAPER ASSIGNED IN CLASS ON MONDAY, DEC 5TH. DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 12TH.


Three quick Monkey Cage posts on Ukraine:


To skim:


XI. Protest and Social Media: Dec 7, 12

Note: PAPER DUE BEFORE CLASS, Monday, December 12


Recommended:


Dec 13: Documentary: The Square
Dec 14: Review and Democratic Consolidation

No Readings Assigned

Dec 19: Final Exam, 8:00 AM