COURSE SUBJECT, NUMBER AND TITLE: Political Science 856, Field Seminar in Comparative Politics (v. 10/4/23)
CREDITS: 3

MEETING TIME AND LOCATION: Fall 2023, Wednesdays 1:20-3:15pm, 422 North Hall

CANVAS COURSE URL: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/374754

INSTRUCTIONAL MODE: Classroom Instruction
REQUISITES: Graduate or professional standing
COURSE DESIGNATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES: Seminar, Grad 50% - Counts toward 50% graduate coursework requirement

HOW CREDIT HOURS ARE MET BY THE COURSE:
Traditional Carnegie Definition – This class meets for one 115-minute class period each week over the spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, studying, etc.) for about 8 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes more information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

INSTRUCTOR NAME, TITLE, AND PREFERRED CONTACT:
Professor, Yoshiko M. Herrera (https://polisci.wisc.edu/staff/yoshiko-m-herrera/), Department of Political Science, yherrera@wisc.edu

INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY:
Drop-in Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3:20pm - 4:00pm in 316 North Hall or sign up for other times at calendly.com/ymherrera

COURSE DESCRIPTION: http://guide.wisc.edu/courses/coli_sci/
Introduction to leading concepts and theories in the field of comparative politics, including those relating to states, nations, regimes and development. Includes work on many different regions and countries employing a range of research strategies and methodologies.
LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Understand, analyze and evaluate concepts and theories in Comparative Politics.
2. Identify and understand research methods and strategies and their implications.
3. Identify political science publication norms in top journals and university presses.
4. Develop critical reading, writing, collaboration, and presentation skills.
5. Become acquainted with UW-Madison faculty in Comparative Politics.

Course Goals:
(1) To become acquainted with many of the leading concepts and theories within the field of comparative politics. Students will be made aware of the relevant literatures so that they will be able to connect their own research to broad disciplinary concerns.
(2) To introduce and make students aware of the implications of research strategies. The seminar will emphasize the point that methodologies in the discipline are diverse, and that these methods have considerable import for both topic choice and the range of findings.
(3) To provide examples of how best to prepare work for future submission to leading journals and top university publishers. Students should also peruse journals, section newsletters, publisher lists, and the Annual Reviews of Political Science on a regular basis, not only to keep up with research trends in the field, but also to learn the styles and forms of contributions to comparative politics. This is the best way to learn about what Comparative Politics "is" and what the key debates in the subfield are.
(4) To develop among students critical reading, writing, collaboration, and presentation skills. Students will be asked to explain core concepts from the readings to the class, will write short memos on the readings, and will collaboratively work on presentations. In addition, students will write an integrated paper connecting readings with their own research interests.
(5) To substantively introduce students to UW-Madison faculty in comparative politics. For many of the weeks, a guest Political Science faculty member will join the class discussion.

REGULAR AND SUBSTANTIVE INTERACTION:
- Students participate in regularly scheduled learning sessions every week where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the student and the instructor, and students can come to office hours held by the instructor.
- The instructor will provide written and/or oral comments on student assignments.
- Instructor posts information and email check-ins about academic aspects of the class.
- The instructor will identify students struggling to reach mastery through observation of discussions and assessment of work, and offer additional opportunities for instruction.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK & OTHER COURSE MATERIALS:
- All readings are available online via Box or via the library. Readings may change. Any changes to the syllabus will be noted on an updated version in Canvas.
- Books marked "E-book" are online via library; read at least the introduction and one substantive chapter, and the conclusion, to get an overall sense of the book.
GRADING

Summary of course requirements and grading (see details below on syllabus)
1. Discussion questions and reading ratings (12 x .05%) 6%
2. Reading and participation in class 20%
3. Memos (5 x 6%) 30%
4. Group presentations (4 x 6%) 24%
5. Final Project 20%

Grade scale:
A 100% to 95%  B  <89% to 83%  C  <77% to 70%  F  <60% to 0%
AB <95% to 89%  BC <83% to 77%  D <70% to 60%

Grades are not curved.

ABSENCE, MAKE-UP, AND LATE-WORK POLICY

Absences will be excused due to religious conflicts, medical issues, or university-related business.
1. Contact me by email as soon as possible if you anticipate missing a class or assignment and I will confirm in writing that the absence is excused.
2. With an excused absence, missed class participation will be excluded from final grade total.
3. Online assignments must be submitted online by normal due date, unless the reason for the excused absence precludes doing the work by the normal deadline (e.g. medical reason). In this case, an alternative assignment will be accepted up to one week beyond the excused absence period. Any work not turned in by one week beyond the excused period will not be accepted.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Political Science department is located in North Hall, the oldest building on campus. Due to its age, this building is not accessible to individuals with mobility disabilities and does not have an elevator or accessible restroom. The department is committed to equal opportunity for all students to attend office hours, advising, and other department-related events. Please contact me if North Hall presents a disability-related barrier to you, and I will work with the department to ensure access. If you require a disability-related accommodation for the academic requirements of this course unrelated to North Hall, please see this: https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/#SyllabusAccommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may
result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT, https://diversity.wisc.edu/
Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND STATEMENTS:
See this link https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/#syllabustext for information on the following:
• Teaching and Learning Data Transparency Statement
• Privacy of Student Records and the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement,
• Campus Resources for Academic Success
• Course Evaluations and Digital Course Evaluations
• Students’ Rules, Rights and Responsibilities
• Academic Calendar and Religious Observances

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Week 1, Sept. 6: **Introduction to course:** No assigned reading.

Week 2, Sept. 13: **The State**

**Recommended:**

Week 3, Sept. 20: **Institutions and Institutional Change**

Recommended:

Week 4, Sept. 27: Regime Types: Definitions and Trajectories
• Magaloni, Beatriz. 2008 "Credible power-sharing and the longevity of authoritarian rule." Comparative Political Studies 41:4-5, 715-741.
• Forthcoming 2023 PS symposium on Democratic Backsliding: Papers by Knutsen et al. and Little & Meng
Recommended:


Week 5, Oct. 4: **Contentious Politics**


Recommended:

Week 6, Oct. 11: Law and Courts


Recommended:

Week 7, Oct. 18: Legislatures and Governance

Recommended:

Week 8, Oct. 25: Parties

Recommended:

Week 9, Nov. 1: Elections and Voting

Recommended:
Week 10, Nov. 8: Social Identities and Discrimination


Recommended:


Week 11, Nov. 15: Ethnic Politics, Nationalism, and Political Violence


Recommended:

Nov. 22 – no class Thanksgiving break

Week 12, Nov. 29: Development and Inequality
Recommended:


Week 13, Dec. 6: **Redistribution and Public Goods**


Recommended:


Final Project due Tuesday, Dec. 12th, 9:00 am

Week 14, Dec. 13: Student presentations

MAJOR GRADED WORK

1) Discussion questions and readings ratings (6% of class grade):
• Each week students should post 1 question, of no more than 50 words, to the course website by 12:00 pm on Wednesday. Discussion questions must be based on and reference the course readings.
• Student should also fill out an online rating for each of the readings.
• Discussion questions and online reading ratings are credit/no credit. If they are posted on time and contain required content students will receive credit (.05% x 12).

2) Reading and Participation in Class discussions (20% of class grade):
• This is a discussion-based class and active participation is essential. Attending is the first step and is important, but is not full participation. Active participation means being prepared by doing the reading and thinking about the material so that you can ask and answer questions related to the course material. Students should have the readings at hand in order to aid in the discussion.
• Four participation grades will be given—at the end of weeks 4, 7, 10, and 13, taking into account the previous three weeks of participation.
3) Memos (5 x 6% = 30% of final grade)
• For five of the weeks, each student will prepare a short memo based on the readings.
• The goals are to 1) categorize the readings; 2) to figure out what the contribution of each reading is; 3) to make connections between readings; and 4) to identify limitations of the readings. All memos should have 4 clearly marked sections:
  1. Sort readings into substantive categories (this is an important conceptual task). You can create a small table or figure and discuss categories briefly. For example, some readings explain or define a concept, some contribute to measurement of a concept, some advance a particular argument, others a different type of argument. In any case, explain your categorization in a few sentences, and be careful not to box readings into categories that do not fit. Whatever labels you choose, make sure they are accurate. Do not use methods labels in lieu of substantive or theoretical categories.
  2. Briefly highlight key contributions of each work; this should not be merely a restatement of the abstract. Consider why the work was published, and ask yourself why it was assigned; what does it contribute to the week’s topic? A methodological innovation might be appropriate to mention here, or a substantive theoretical contribution is also fine.
  3. Make connections among the readings; do not just discuss each text individually. Compare some or all of the readings and in a few sentences explain how readings are related to each other.
  4. Highlight some limitations or a criticism of one or more works, or the readings as a group (e.g. something left out, wrong, or that you disagree with).

Other memo requirements:
• Discuss all required readings for the week; memos should be written in prose (not bullet points) and divided into 4 sections noted above.
• Use parenthetical citation (last name, year, and page number if a quotation), e.g. APA citation style. Given that readings are from the syllabus, no bibliography necessary. Cite both authors if there are two (not just the male or more senior one); first author plus “et al.” is okay for more than 2 authors.
• Check and spell author names correctly. Look it up if you don’t know for sure. Pay attention to gender in referring to authors, or use names rather than pronouns; do not assume all authors are male. Google if you are not sure.
• Things to avoid: Do not discuss other non-required readings in these memos. Do not include sign-posting, intro, or conclusion, just the 4 sections noted above.
• Memos should be 1-2 single-spaced pages (12-point font, 1-inch margins), and should include your name, date, and a substantive title.
• Post on the class website as a PDF by 10:00 am on Wednesday. Late memos will be marked down.
• Unless you request otherwise, memos will be shared on the course website after the class discussion.
4) **Group Presentations**: (4 x 6% = 24% of final grade)
For four of the weeks, students will present readings to the class. Through this activity, students will develop the ability to concisely analyze, present, and discuss work in comparative politics.
- Presentations should be based on both the required and the recommended readings
- Each presentation should answer the following questions:
  1. **What are key debates/questions on this topic?** (based on required and recommended readings)
  2. **What are the core or classic readings on this topic, and why are they so special?** (based on required and recommended readings)
  3. **How do the week's required readings address the key debates and what do they contribute?**
  4. **What are some limitations of the week's required readings?**
  5. **What are some questions for discussion based on required readings?** (based on your own and also other students' contributed questions)
- Students should work together to develop an integrated presentation; do not just divide up the reading arbitrarily.
- Presentations should not be longer than 10-15 minutes; and should include slides that look professional (pay attention to fonts, figures/tables, images, etc).
- Presenters should engage with the class and not simply read notes.
- Group presentation dates will be set at the first class meeting. Each student will participate in four (with 4 other students).
- Slides should be uploaded to Box and Canvas before class.
5) Final Project: (20% of class grade)
The final project will consist of two elements: a discussion of your research interests and a
discussion of the course readings from two weeks on the syllabus. The goal of this project is to
draw connections between readings in the course and your research goals, which hopefully will
help you develop your dissertation research question and embed your dissertation in existing
literatures. You should be considering your own research interests as well as sources for this
project throughout the semester.

The final project should have 2 sections:
1) **A discussion of your own research interests** (1-2 single-spaced pages).
   a) Title: Give your project a title that describes your research topic.
   b) Define your field of interest in approximately one-half page
   c) Next discuss how your interests relate to two of the topics on the syllabus. This may be
easy or might require some stretching, but the idea is to think about how your interests
fit in the larger literature comparative politics. You can discuss how specific readings or
how specific concepts or arguments from work we read are related to your interests.

2) **A review and revision of readings from 2 different weeks on the syllabus**: the goal is two
   revised syllabus weeks and the audience would be other students taking PS856.
   a) For two separate weeks/topics, provide a revised, annotated list of 6 required readings
      and 6 recommended readings.
   b) Suggest at least 2 new readings (and include full bibliographic info for them; they must
      be published).
   c) For each reading that you keep on the list or add to the list, write a sentence or two for
      why it should remain on the syllabus.
   d) For any readings that you cut, list them below in a separate section and explain for each
      one why you want to remove them.
   e) Identify a few “classic” works on the topic and explain why they are, or are not, on your
      list (possibly superseded by some newer work).
   f) At the end, for each week write a short paragraph on how the readings fit together.

In the end you should have a complete revised and annotated list of 6 required readings
and 6 recommended readings, plus a list of readings you cut, a discussion of classic works,
and a paragraph on how the readings fit together. You could also propose a completely
new week, but you would have to cut one of the existing ones (and explain why).

Other important requirements:
- This should be around 4-5 single-spaced pages (1-2 pages for your research
  interests, around 1-2 pages each for the syllabus weeks)
- 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, include page numbers.
- The final paper is due as a PDF posted to the Canvas on **Tuesday, Dec. 12th, 9:00 am**. Late papers marked down.