

GREAT BOOKS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS (POLS 7951)
SPRING 2024
Thursdays 9:00-11:30
Gibson Hall 309

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Office: Political Science Department, 310 Norman Mayer Building
Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-11:30 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

Graduate classes rarely assigned entire books anymore. Yet, most dissertations are still on a book format. This course will expose students to some great recent books in Comparative Politics with the ultimate goal of helping students to think about their own dissertation ideas. More specifically, the goal of this seminar is threefold: a) to introduce students to the research frontier in Comparative Politics by focusing on (great) recent books originating in dissertations; b) to provide students with the opportunity to read carefully, emphasizing depth over breadth by focusing on one book a week, and c) to help students think about their own dissertation projects by focusing on issues of research design, case selection, strength of the argument, etc. Each week, students will also have the opportunity to ask both substantive questions about content and questions about the writing process directly to the authors over zoom.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to: 1. Be more familiar with recent research/debates in Comparative Politics, 2 Be more familiar with the process of writing a dissertation and a book, 3. Be more aware of fundamental issues of research design that they would have to address on their own dissertations.

BOOKS

Unless otherwise noted, all books are available as ebooks from Tulane's library. Print duplicates have been requested too and will be on reserves as soon as they arrived. In the meantime, if you prefer to read in print (I do!), you can follow Rachel Stein (our amazing librarian) advice and do the following: Use Inter Library Loan (ILL)! If the ebook is on the library, you should put in the note field "I know we have the ebook, but I'd like to read a print copy," and the ILL department will put it through.

REQUIREMENTS

	Date	Percent
Participation		50%
Book Review		10%
Alternative Research Design		10%
Response Paper		10%
Final Book Review	May 8, 11am	20%

1. PARTICIPATION (50%)

This is a PhD seminar therefore class attendance to all class meetings and active participation is mandatory. Though I understand that students may miss a class for whatever reason, if you missed more than one class without a documented medical or personal emergency, your grade will suffer. Students are expected to read the book of the week in full before class and come prepare to participate in a thoughtful discussion. Grades will be assigned based on the quality of the participation. Thoughtful participation means you need to spend time with the books and take notes.

We will be zooming with the author of the book each week at the end of class so we can ask them questions about the book, the dissertation that originated the book, and the writing process. To make sure we won't be wasting anyone's time, students will send two questions for the book's author by 8pm on Wednesday. Questions can be about both content or process, but they should reflect your engagement with the book.

2. BOOK REVIEW, ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN, RESPONSE PAPER (10% EACH)

You will write three assignments during the semester. All of them should be about 1000-1200 words and submitted by 8pm on the Wednesday before the book of the assignment is being discussed. Each assignment must be on a different book. You are allowed to talk to each other and collaborate on these assignments by exchanging ideas, but each assignment is individual, so it needs to reflect your own ideas.

Book reviews should not simply describe the books or the books' argument; they should explain how the book addresses theoretical debates within the discipline and how successful they are at doing so (see the documents on Canvas). **Response papers** tend to be narrower. They can focus on one specific aspect of the book. For example, you can highlight the main contribution, critique one aspect of the theoretical argument or the empirical strategy, question the selection of cases, raise questions about the result, the external validity, or conclusion, etc. The **Alternative research design** consist of your own ideas about what other research design could have worked better for the question posed by the book and why. We will discuss in class the specific details of each type of assignment.

3. FINAL BOOK REVIEW (20%)

This final book review can be on any of the books we read, except on the one you've already wrote a book review. The idea for this assignment is for you to take advantage of what we learnt during the semester. You are also allowed and encouraged to use your notes from class and borrow ideas from the discussion we had about the book for your review. Due on May 8.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 18 No book – Introduction to the class

Week 2: January 25

Emilia Simison, *Resetting public policy? Regime Transitions and Policy Change* (Book Manuscript, pdf will be provided)

Week 3: February 1

Mai Hassan, *Regime Threats and State Solutions: Bureaucratic Loyalty and Embeddedness in Kenya* (Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Week 4: February 8

Adam Michael Auerbach, *Demanding Development: The Politics of Public Goods Provision in India's Urban Slum* (Cambridge University Press, 2019)

Week 5: February 15

Laura Gamboa, *Resisting Backsliding: Opposition Strategies against the Erosion of Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Week 6: February 22

Martha Wilfahrt, Precolonial legacies in postcolonial politics: representation and redistribution in decentralized West Africa (Cambridge University Press, 2022) – Open access!

Week 7: February 29

Sandra Botero, *Courts that Matter: Activists, Judges and the Politics of Rights Enforcement* (Cambridge University Press, 2023)

Week 8: March 7

Iza Ding, *The Performative State: Public Scrutiny and Environmental Governance in China* (Cornell University Press, 2022)

Week 9: March 14

Niloufer A. Siddiqui, *Under the Gun: Political Parties and Violence in Pakistan* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Week 10: March 21

Sarah Brierley, *The Co-opted State: How Politicians Control Bureaucrats' Careers to Undermine Development* (Book Manuscript, pdf will be provided)

Week 11: March 28 – NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

Week 12: April 4 – NO CLASS (MPSA)

Week 13: April 11 – Milan Vaishnav, *When crime pays: Money and muscle in Indian politics.* (Yale University Press, 2017)

Week 14: April 18 - TBD

Week 15: April 25 – LAST CLASS! No book - Write a 2-page memo describing something that changed in your dissertation ideas after reading one (or a few) of the books. For instance, something you now want to include in your dissertation like a new method or a new case, something you realized you don't want to do, something you would like to avoid, etc. Due by 8pm on Wednesday 4/24.

ADA/Accessibility Statement

Tulane University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. I will never ask for medical documentation from you to support potential accommodation needs. Instead, to establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **Goldman Center contact information:** goldman@tulane.edu; (504) 862-8433; accessibility.tulane.edu.

Code of Academic Conduct

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Code of Student Conduct](#)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

Religious Accommodation Policy

Both Tulane's policy of non-discrimination on the basis of religion and our core values of diversity and inclusion require instructors to make reasonable accommodations to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is never acceptable for an instructor to compel a student to choose between religious observance and academic work. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. It is the obligation of the student to provide faculty within the first two weeks of each semester their intent to observe the holiday so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. Exceptions to the requirement of a make-up examination must be approved in advance by the dean of the school in which the course is offered. A [religious calendar](#) is available.

Title IX

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at allin.tulane.edu. Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either "Confidential" or "Private" as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure in a Care Connection to the Office of Case Management and Victim Support Services to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. The Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration is also notified of these disclosures. You choose whether or not you want to meet with these offices. You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at tulane.edu/concerns.

Confidential	Private
<p><i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one's self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277 ▪ The Line (24/7) (504) 264-6074 ▪ Student Health Center (504) 865-5255 ▪ Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9543 	<p><i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management & Victim Support Services (504) 314-2160 or srss@tulane.edu ▪ Tulane University Police (TUPD) Uptown - (504) 865-5911 Downtown – (504) 988-5531 ▪ Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration (504) 865-5611 or msmith76@tulane.edu ▪ Student Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7) (504) 920-9900

Emergency Preparedness & Response

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS: TU ALERT

In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff by email, text, and/or phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university.

Check your contact information annually in Gibson Online to confirm its accuracy.

SEVERE WEATHER

- Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirens
- Seek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is given
- Do not use elevators
- Do not attempt to travel outside if weather is severe

Monitor the Tulane Emergency website (tulane.edu/emergency/) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event

ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER

- **RUN** – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible
- **HIDE** – go into the nearest room that can be locked, turn out the lights, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT
- **FIGHT** – do not attempt this option, except as a last resort
- For more information or to schedule a training, visit emergencyprep.tulane.edu

EVERBRIDGE APP

- Download the Everbridge app from the App Store or Google Play store
- The Report feature allows you to silently and discreetly communicate with TUPD dispatchers
- The SOS button allows you to notify TUPD if you need help
- The Safe Corridor button serves as a virtual escort and allows you to send check-in notifications to TUPD

From: Tulane Office of emergency preparedness and response