This seminar provides an overview of the field of comparative politics targeted towards Ph.D students in the Government department. This course will introduce students to classic works as well as recent contributions that build upon those works. Readings draw from leading theoretical approaches—including structural, institutional, rational choice, and cultural perspectives—and cover a broad range of substantive topics, such as democratization, authoritarianism, states and civil society, political economy, and political participation and representation. Students from other programs may register only with the permission of the instructors. There are no prerequisites for the course.

The reading load for this course averages six to seven articles/chapters or approximately three hundred pages per week. Assigned readings are marked with an asterisk (*); we have listed additional background reading to identify important works that we will not be able to cover during our course. Students are expected to have done all of the assigned readings before each class.

There are four books available for purchase at the Cornell bookstore.


Remaining readings are drawn from a mix of books and journal articles. The assigned readings are available online from one of two sources:
• Journal articles are available online via the Cornell library catalogue, which may be accessed at [http://www.library.cornell.edu/](http://www.library.cornell.edu/). It is best to search for the journal title by clicking on the E-Journal Titles tab.

• Chapters and other selections are available at the Blackboard course site, which may be accessed at [http://blackboard.cornell.edu](http://blackboard.cornell.edu). The course ID is GOVT6353-Roberts-Fall2010. Readings are found under the Course Documents tab.

There are three requirements for this course:

1. *Active and thoughtful class participation.* All students are expected to participate actively and regularly in discussions. In addition, two times during the semester, students will serve as discussion leaders. Discussion leaders will write a short, two-page critical review of the weekly readings and circulate it in advance to other members of the class in order to identify key issues for classroom discussion.


3. *Final paper.* A 15-20 page paper that provides an overview and critical assessment of “the state of the literature” for one week’s readings. Due December 8.

We will not grant incompletes in this class except as a consequence of extraordinary personal circumstances. Late work will be penalized.

**Course Readings (assigned readings with *)**:

**Week 1 (Aug. 25): The Classics: Analytical Foundations of Comparative Politics**


Week 2 (Sept. 1): Nationalism and Political Identity


Additional Readings (includes political culture and the politics of identity)


**Week 3 (Sept. 8): States and State-Building**


Additional Readings


Max Weber, “Bureaucracy” in Gerth and Mills (eds) From Max Weber (pp. 198-244)


**Week 4 (Sept. 15): Institutions in Comparative Politics**


**Additional Readings**

Week 5 (Sept. 22): Democracy and its Origins


*Additional Readings*


**Week 6 (Sept. 29): Authoritarianism**


**Additional Readings**


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**Week 7 (Oct. 6): Regime Transitions**

**Group 1: Democratic Breakdowns**


**Group 2: Democratic Transitions**


**Additional Readings**


**Week 8 (Oct. 13): Fall Break (first paper due)**

**Week 9 (Oct. 20): Parties, Voters, and Elections**


*Additional Readings*


**Week 10 (Oct. 27): Civil Society, Social Movements, and Contentious Politics**


**Additional Readings**


Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (eds.). 1996. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. New York: Cambridge UP.


Week 11 (Nov. 3): Violence, Resistance, and Rebellion


Additional Reading


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**Week 12 (Nov. 10): Political Economy of Advanced Industrial Economies**


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**Additional Reading**


**Week 13 (Nov. 17): Political Economy of Development**


**Additional Readings**


Week 14 (Dec. 1): Globalization and Comparative Politics


Additional Readings


