

POLI 2053-section 3, Spring 2019
10:30 – 11:50 am Tuesday and Thursday, 124 Tureaud Hall

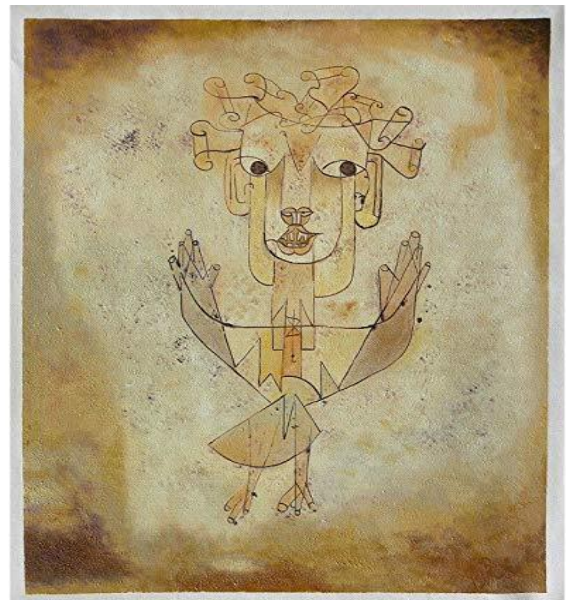
Introduction to Comparative Politics

Politics is the art of the possible.

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Office Hours: 3:00 – 4:00 pm Tuesday and Thursday, or by appointment
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*There is a painting by Klee called *Angelus Novus*. An angel is depicted there who looks as though he were about to distance himself from something which he is staring at. His eyes are opened wide, his mouth stands open and his wings are outstretched. The Angel of History must look just so. His face is turned towards the past. Where we perceive the appearance of a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe, which unceasingly piles rubble on top of rubble and hurls it before his feet. He would like to pause for a moment so far, to awaken the dead and to piece together what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise, it has caught itself up in his wings and is so strong that the Angel can no longer close them. The storm drives him irresistibly into the future, to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows sky-high. This storm is what we call progress.*

Walter Benjamin
“Theses on the Philosophy of History” (1940)



We study the essence of politics in this course. Understanding politics is a sine qua non of leading a good life, for politics fundamentally affects our “everyday life” – *la vie quotidienne*. Political science is a “master science,” in the words of Aristotle, on which all arenas of human activity depend, and from which all other practical sciences take their cue. Broadly speaking, studying politics necessarily involves comparison – for example, comparing countries (the USA and the PRC), systems (democracies and dictatorships; universal and selective social welfare), ideologies (conservatism, liberalism, and socialism), and time periods (the 19th century and 20th century; “the glorious thirty years” and the neoliberal era). Hence, comparative politics is the most important subfield in political science, which requires critical thinking and rigorous analytical skills. We will learn why we compare, what to compare, and how to compare.

The main purpose of this course is to equip students with solid understanding of ‘big issues’ in politics around the world. As an introductory course, this class has three major goals: 1) to understand various theories, approaches, and empirics widely studied in the comparative study of politics, 2) to provide an analytical and comparative framework to understand ‘big issues’ in the world, and 3) to provide a broad perspective about the world we live in and the ability to relate some of our own interests to existing concerns of other scholars. Therefore, we study politics explicitly from a **comparative and global perspective**, so that we categorically reject ethnocentrism still pervasive in the American politics literature.

The course is organized around questions that reflect both interesting phenomena and puzzles that call for explanations. We will examine some of the answers to these questions that have been proposed on the basis of comparative research. In this way, we will cover the areas in which research in political science is the most active and has contributed most significantly to the production of knowledge. To do so, this course is divided into four parts.

The first part entitled “Power, Ideology, and the Capital-Nation-State” constitutes the foundations of comparative politics. We will conceptualize politics, discuss competing ideologies, and understand the capitalist modern nation-state: its meaning and the historical formation. Some ontological and methodological issues will be discussed between the first and second parts. The second part “Democracies, Dictatorships, and People” will deal with the emergence and demise of political regimes (democracies and dictatorships), by focusing on various features of democratization, and by comparing top-down (elite-driven) and bottom-up (mass-driven) processes of democratic transitions. We will also study different types of dictatorship.

In the third part “Democratic Institutional Design” we will discuss the institutional design under democracy, by comparing different electoral rules (majoritarian and proportional), executive-legislative relationships (parliamentary and presidential), and different party systems (two-party and multiparty). The final part “Socioeconomic Policies under Globalization” will investigate why and how social welfare and economic policies differ across countries and their divergent consequences. Attention should be paid to varieties of welfare capitalism. Economic “miracles” and “disasters” will be examined as well. We will also study the impacts of globalization on domestic politics.

READINGS

Each student is expected to read (before class) all the assigned readings for each class meeting. There are three types of required readings. The first required reading is the course textbook by Shively. This book contains analytical, comparative and lively explorations of global politics, which is consistent with the spirit of this course. The textbook provides a background to understand topics and lectures.

Shively, W. Phillips. 2019. *Power & Choice: An Introduction to Political Science*. 15th Edition. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher.

The second is required readings from journal articles to book chapters. These readings are also essential to understanding lectures. Some of these readings written by prominent political scientists are the best exemplar of scholarly writing (e.g., Tilly, Przeworski & Limongi, and Linz). These required readings are posted as pdf files on Moodle. Please make sure that all of you have a LSU account so that you have an access to Moodle through your PAWS desktop.

Perhaps, the most serious issue currently haunting the world is the rise of demagogic, nativist nationalism again and democratic backsliding, synchronized by market globalization and deepened by the politics of memory. Many have written on this topic, but Levitsky and Ziblatt, two renowned comparativists, advance the most thought-provoking logic of argumentation (although I don't agree on all of their points). This is the third required reading. Students need to purchase and read the book to write a critical review paper (see the course requirements below).

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown.

REQUIREMENTS

Classes will involve lectures of the reading material assigned for each session. But, I will introduce and explain some concepts, issues and theories that are not in the readings, so attendance is crucial. This means that a significant amount of material on the examinations will come from class lectures presenting information not discussed directly in the textbook and other readings. Participation from students is important and will count toward the final grade. At the end of each week, I will distribute memos (posted on Moodle) that contain important points of my lectures.

N.B. Some materials and lectures are difficult, so ask questions whenever necessary. In addition, feel free to stop my lecture and ask, to e-mail me, and to stop by my office. The general philosophy is that students who are eager to learn should be rewarded.

Final grades are based on 1) three in-class examinations, 2) a critical review paper, and 3) attendance/participation for a total of 100 points.

1) Three in-class examinations (each exam worth 20%, so total 60%)

The exams constitute two parts. The first part is a set of “identification” questions that ask important concepts, events, and proper names; students should identify what they are in one or two sentences. Knowledge of some relevant historical facts is required as well. The second part is a set of “essay questions” that ask to explain some political phenomena and competing theories; students’ answers should be in three to five sentences.

First exam: February 12, Tuesday, 10:30 – 11:50 am

Second exam: March 14, Thursday, 10:30 – 11:50 am

Third final exam: May 3, Friday, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

2) Critical review paper (20%)

Students will write a critical review of Levitsky and Ziblatt’s *How Democracies Die*. The text should be no longer than ten double-spaced pages. The format and guide of the paper will be discussed in class.

The deadline of submission: April 11, Thursday

4) Attendance and participation (20%)

It is virtually impossible for you to receive a satisfactory grade if you miss several classes. Attendance will be taken for each session. Students may earn credit for their attendance at each class session, while repeated and unexcused absence will cause deduction in student’s total grade. In addition to attending class, students are highly encouraged to ask and answer questions, and to make appropriate comments on issues covered in class.

GRADING SCALE

A+	100 ~ 97	B+	89 ~ 87	C+	79 ~ 77	D+	69 ~ 67	F	59 ~ 0
A	96 ~ 93	B	86 ~ 83	C	76 ~ 73	D	66 ~ 63		
A-	92 ~ 90	B-	82 ~ 80	C-	72 ~ 70	D-	62 ~ 60		

SCHEDULE/OUTLINE OF TOPICS

(subject to change)

I. POWER, IDEOLOGY, AND THE CAPITAL-NATION-STATE			
1-2	Jan.	10-15	<i>Introduction and Preliminaries</i>
2-3	Jan.	17-22	<i>What Is Politics?</i>
3-4	Jan.	24-29	<i>What Do We Believe, and Why?</i>
4-5	Jan/Feb	31-5-7	<i>Where Does the State Come from, and Where Will It Go?</i>
6	Feb.	12	First Examination, 10:30 – 11:50 am
INTERMEZZO			
6-7	Feb.	14-19	<i>Three Research Traditions and Methods of Comparison</i>
II. DEMOCRACIES, DICTATORSHIPS, AND PEOPLE			
7	Feb.	21	<i>What Is Democracy? Which Countries Are Democratic?</i>
8-9	Feb/Mar	26-28-7	<i>Why and How Do Democracies Emerge and Endure?</i>
9	Mar.	5	Mardi Gras Holiday – No class meeting
10	Mar.	12	<i>Does Culture Matter for Democracy?</i>
10	Mar.	14	Second Examination, 10:30 – 11:50 am
III. DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN			
11	Mar.	19	<i>How Are the Elections Organized?</i>
11	Mar.	21	<i>Where Do Parties Come from? Are They Indispensable?</i>
12	Mar.	26-28	<i>How Are Governments Formed in a Parliamentary Democracy?</i>
IV. SOCIOECONOMIC POLICIES UNDER GLOBALIZATION			
13	Apr.	2-4	<i>What Do Governments Do for Their People?</i>
14	Apr.	9	<i>Why Are There “Miracles” and “Disasters”?</i>
14	Apr.	11	<i>Is Globalization Inevitable? Conclusion</i>
15	Apr.	16-18	Spring Break – No class meeting
16	Apr.	23-25	Conference – No class meeting
16	May.	3	Final Examination, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND SPECIFIC TOPICS

(subject to change)

PART I: POWER, IDEOLOGY, AND THE CAPITAL-NATION-STATE

Week 1-2 (01/10, 01/15) Preliminaries

Introduction. Why is politics so important? *La vie quotidienne*. Why compare? Causality, comparisons, and counterfactuals. Theory and empirics. Analytical framework. Political science and comparative politics.

No require reading.

Week 2-3 (01/17, 01/22) What Is Politics?

Concept of the political. Collectivities vs. individuals. Conceptions of power – four faces. Choice under constraints. Why comply? Sources of legitimacy.

Shively, Chapter 1.

Week 3-4 (01/24, 01/29) What Do We Believe, and Why?

Three classical blueprints: conservatism, liberalism, and socialism. Marxism vs. social democracy. Liberalism vs. libertarianism. Communitarianism vs. fascism. Polanyi's thesis. Neoliberalism. Alternative?

Shively, Chapter 2.

Week 4-5 (01/31, 02/05, 02/07) Where Does the State Come from, and Where Will It Go?

History of politics and the modern nation-state. Importance of war and capitalism in the formation of the state. Why Europe? Capital-nation-state (market-society-state) and three blueprints. Future of the state.

Shively, Chapter 3.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. Peter Evans, Dietrich Reuschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 6 (02/12) First Examination

10:30 – 11:50 am in our classroom.

INTERMEZZO

Week 6-7 (02/14, 02/19) Three Research Traditions and Methods of Comparison

Structure, culture, and rationality. Importance of theory. Providing a "compelling story." Inferences. Testable implications. Single-case studies, comparative methods, and large-N studies. Sufficient and necessary conditions.

Shively, Appendix, and the section on "Political Science" in Chapter 1.

Recommended reading:

Landman, Todd. 2013. "How to Compare Countries." In *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.

PART II: DEMOCRACIES, DICTATORSHIPS, AND PEOPLE

Week 7 (02/21) What Is Democracy? Which Countries Are Democratic?

Competition and participation. Minimalist vs. maximalist definitions. Institutionalization of uncertainty. “Miracle” of democracy. Authoritarian regimes. Trend and pattern of political regimes around the world.

Shively, Chapter 7.

Cheibub, Jose, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Vreeland. 2010. “Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited.” *Public Choice* 143(1-2):67-101.

Week 8-9 (02/26, 02/28, 03/07) Why and How Do Democracies Emerge and Endure?

Modernization theory. Structure vs. agency. Strategic interaction model. Top-down vs. bottom-up transitions Crisis-driven vs. non-crisis transitions. Mobilization curve. Tipping (threshold) model. Year 1989: “Autumn of Nations” in Eastern Europe vs. “Tiananmen solution” in China.

Shively, Chapter 7 (continue) and Chapter 13.

Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. 1997. “Modernization: Theories and Facts.” *World Politics* 49: 155-183.

Week 9 (03/05) Mardi Gras Holiday

No class meeting.

Week 10 (03/12) Does Culture Matter for Democracy?

Political socialization. Social capital. Is culture a dependent variable or independent variable? “Civic culture.” Three views. Culture as a religiosity vs. distribution of answers vs. epiphenomenon.

Shively, Chapter 8.

Week 10 (03/14) Second Examination

10:30 – 11:50 am in our classroom.

PART III: DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN

Week 11 (03/19) How Are the Elections Organized?

Constitutional design. Incentive compatibility. Unitary vs. federal states. Paradox of voting. Electoral participation. Majoritarian vs. proportional systems vs. mixed systems.

Shively, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10.

Week 11 (03/21) Where Do Parties Come from? Are They Indispensable?

“Iron law of oligarchy.” Representation and accountability. Social cleavages and party systems. Lipset-Rokkan “freezing hypothesis.” Duverger’s law. Pluralism vs. neocorporatism. Extra-parliamentary politics. Collective action problem. Party politics vs. movement politics.

Shively, Chapter 11 and Chapter 12.

Week 12 (03/26, 03/28) How Are Governments Formed in a Democracy?

Executive-legislative relationships. Parliamentary vs. presidential vs. semi-presidential democracies. Cabinet formation. Coalitional politics. Perils of presidentialism? Majoritarian and consensus visions of democracy.

Shively, Chapter 14 and Chapter 15.

Linz, Juan. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51-69.

PART IV. SOCIOECONOMIC POLICIES UNDER GLOBALIZATION

Week 13 (04/02, 04/04) What Do Governments Do for Their People?

Modern capital-nation-state revisited. Size of the government. Fiscal and monetary policies. "Three worlds" of welfare capitalism. Logic of industrialism. Power of labor movement. Partisan model vs. political competition model. Median voter theorem.

Shively, Chapter 4 and Chapter 6.

Recommended reading:

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. "The Three Political Economies of the Welfare States." In *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week 14 (04/09) Why Are There "Miracles" and "Disasters"?

Why are some countries richer than others? Trend and pattern of economic growth. Import substitution vs. export-led industrialization. Rent-seeking. East Asian "miracle." Developmental state vs. predatory state vs. *laissez-faire* state. Is "Asian miracle" miracle? The rise of China *again*.

Shively, Chapter 5.

Recommended reading:

Evans, Peter. 1989. "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State." *Sociological Forum* 4(1): 561-587.

Week 14 (04/11) Is Globalization Inevitable? Conclusion

History of globalization. Neoliberalism revisited. No more miracle. Socioeconomic policies in an era of financial globalization. Capital as power. Increasing exorbitant global inequality. Danger of market society. "The second machine age." Are democracies dying? Walter Benjamin's "angel of history." Importance of what we care about.

Shively, Chapter 5 and Chapter 18.

Week 15 (04/16, 04/18) Spring Break

No class meeting.

Week 16 (04/23, 04/25) Conference

No class meeting.

Week 17 (05/03) Third Final Examination

3:00 – 5:00 pm in our classroom.