

Politics 243-7, Comparative Politics
March, 2008
David Yamanishi

Syllabus

Contact Information

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Office hours: Monday-Friday, 1-3pm, unless otherwise announced. But I am generally on campus from about 8:30am to 4:30pm everyday.

Consulting Librarian: Tonnie Flannery, 308 Cole Library, x4256, tflannery@cornellcollege.edu.

Writing Studio: 125 Cole Library, hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am-5pm and 6-11pm; Friday, 9am-5pm; Sunday, 1-5pm and 6-11pm. Nicole Jackson will also work on your papers with you during class time.

Overview

It may seem strange to stress the point after the title that appears above, but this is a class in comparative politics. That is to say, our goal is to see what we can learn about politics if we study it *comparatively*. Hence we will, as is the norm in such classes, read about other countries, but we will move beyond learning about other countries taken separately to see what we can conclude about more general political questions by comparing the countries we study to each other. Questions such as: why do some countries have democratic governments and others dictatorships? What difference does it make whether a country is democratic or dictatorial? Why do some countries have lots of political parties and others only a couple, or just one? Why are some countries rich and others poor? Why do some countries experience civil war and others don't? What do countries that protect ethnic, religious, or social minorities, or that protect the common but powerless – the poor, women, and so on – have in common?

Disabilities

If you have a disability registered with the college that will require special accommodations for the exam or other assignments, please let me know by Wednesday, March 5.

Feedback

I am very interested in your suggestions for improvement of this syllabus and my teaching generally. Please email comments to me as you think of them or share them with me at my office.

Grading

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| Participation in class | 20% | includes required paper conferences, in-class written work, and oral participation |
| First quiz | 5% | Friday, March 7 |
| Second quiz | 10% | Monday, March 17 |
| Third quiz | 10% | Thursday, March 20 |
| Country and problem profile | 5% | due Friday, March 7 |
| Country causal paper | 5% | due Monday, March 10 |
| Comparative causal paper | 5% | due Friday, March 14 |
| Final paper | 20% | due Friday, March 21 |
| Rewrite | 10% | due Wednesday, March 26 |
| Presentation | 10% | Monday or Tuesday, March 24 or 25; includes formal discussion of another student's presentation |

While the particular things I'm looking for vary to some degree by assignment, in general an A on an assignment means that your work is outstanding in terms of:

- addressing the assigned question and avoiding digression,
- having a well-structured argument,
- expressing your argument clearly and effectively,
- making appropriate and properly cited use of material on the syllabus and other well-selected references,
- and demonstrating thoughtful mastery of the course material and discussions.

Lower grades mean that you have not done all of these things or have done one or more of them less well. The order of items on the above list should not be taken to indicate their order of importance in determining your grade on an assignment, nor should you suppose that the items will carry equal weight on an assignment or invariant weight across assignments. Moreover, I expect your work to improve during the course and across courses.

To simplify communication about grades, I grade all assignments using the same marks that appear on your academic transcripts: letter grades. When I combine assignment grades to produce your course grade, I will do so using the same numbers that the college uses to determine your GPA (A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, etc.). I will always round-up from the midpoint between grades (for example, a 3.85 rounds to an A, while a 3.84 does not). I may raise grades from what the raw numbers indicate in deserving cases, but I will never change the rank order of students' grades in the class in doing so.

Participation: If you punctually attend every class, appear to me to be paying attention, and never make a contribution to our common discussion, you will receive a C for participation. To get a grade higher than a C for participation, you must participate orally in our common discussion. I assess participation more by thoughtfulness and attentiveness to the flow of the conversation than by quantity of speech. I do, however, expect you to contribute regularly. This heading also includes a debate presentation of an issue from Hague & Harrop and a group presentation of a country from McCormick.

Quizzes: I will hand out reading notes for each day's readings to give you an indication as to what issues we will discuss at the next day's class. The quiz questions will be similar to those of the reading notes that contain an interpretive element (some reading notes will be merely factual in nature). I will hand out two or more questions at the morning session before each afternoon quiz, and choose which one you will answer randomly at the beginning of the quiz.

Papers: The research paper due Friday, March 21, at 4pm should address a domestic political puzzle in a country of your choice (but not a country addressed by McCormick or Charrad, nor used by another student in the class) that can be compared to similar political puzzles elsewhere. Your puzzle should have either competing "local" explanations (scholars explain the phenomenon in your country in different ways), competing "comparative" explanations (scholars explain the phenomenon in general in different ways), a discrepancy between the "local" and "comparative" explanations (scholars who explain the phenomenon in your country explain it differently than scholars who explain it elsewhere), or some combination thereof. In your paper, you should explain how scholars who study your country understand the phenomenon in question, how scholars who study your puzzle comparatively understand the phenomenon in question, and offer your own argument as to the best explanation of the phenomenon. At each of the first two stages – local and comparative – you should explain how the other scholars offer evidence for the validity of their explanations and clearly lay out competing explanations, if any, to identify the roots of their disagreement. In the third stage, you should offer original analysis of your own, using additional evidence from scholarly sources, to assess which approach offers the best explanation. You may change your country and/or problem if it begins to prove unworkable at later stages, and you do not need to re-submit the earlier stages if you choose to do so.

We will work on the paper in several stages. First, you should pick a few countries (so that we can avoid duplication) by the start of class on Tuesday, March 4. That afternoon, we will meet with Tonnie Flannery to identify sources for your research on your country.

Second, you should write up a profile of your country and problem by Friday, March 7, at 4pm. This profile should lay out the most important aspects of your country's political history and governance, treating themes and institutions similar to those given attention by Hague and Harrop; it should also lay out the puzzle that you mean to explain. You should draw upon a general, scholarly political history of your country for this step, perhaps supplemented by encyclopedia articles and factbook or almanac entries. (Note: on this and other assignments in this class, you may use Wikipedia with appropriate caution: you must note the presence of controversy or lacks-citation tags on the country/problem entry and read the full discussion page for the Wikipedia entry to detect possible bias and misinformation. You should also verify information from Wikipedia with other sources.) This portion of your paper will vary in length with the complexity of your country's political and social development, but should not be much longer than five double-spaced, conventionally formatted pages.

Third, you should write a paper that explains the explanation or explanations offered by scholars as to the cause or causes of the phenomenon in your country by Monday, March 10, at 9am. For this assignment, you should use literature that focuses specifically on your country, or at most a small group of countries, and not literature that deals with the problem in general. You should draw upon your country profile to make your country's problem and the explanations that others have offered of it clear in context. This portion of your paper will vary in length with the complexity of the literature regarding your problem in your country, but should not be much longer than five double-spaced, conventionally formatted pages.

Fourth, you should write a paper that explains the explanation or explanations offered by scholars as to the cause or causes of the phenomenon in general by Friday, March 14, at 4pm. For this assignment, you should use literature that focuses on the problem in general, the problem in a large number of countries, or the problem in a country or group of countries not including your own, and not on literature that focuses specifically on your country or a small group of countries including your country. You should not draw upon the material from your country profile and local causal paper that deals specifically with your country. This portion of your paper will vary in length with the complexity of the literature regarding your problem in general, but should not be much longer than five double-spaced, conventionally formatted pages.

Finally, your final paper should draw upon the three written parts above: the profile, the local paper, and the comparative paper, and follow the basic structure outlined in the first paragraph of this section. In piecing together your earlier work, in addition to editing all of it to fit together well, you will need to add new material as follows: a clear explanation as to how the comparative explanation or explanations of the phenomenon differ from the local explanation or explanations, an explicit identification of the fundamental differences that distinguish the various explanations, an analysis of what sort of evidence might help to determine which explanation is best, and an explanation of the evidence that you've found to decide the issue. Your final paper should add at least five double-spaced, conventionally formatted pages to your earlier work (which in total is likely to be 10-15 pages long), which you should edit to make the overall paper offer a coherent argument and to respond to my earlier comments upon your work.

I will return your graded final papers with comments by Monday, March 24. By Wednesday, March 26, at 9am, you should send me your revised paper. Your grade on the rewrite component will be no lower than your grade on the original paper so long as you make a serious effort to address my comments; if you make merely cosmetic changes, your grade on the rewrite may be lower than the original grade.

All papers must be submitted by email.

Presentation: Your presentation will address your paper project. You should present your puzzle, the local and comparative explanations that scholars have offered of it, and your analysis of their advantages and shortcomings in about 10 minutes. After each presentation, I will select another student or students in the class to serve as a discussant who will briefly summarize the presentation and ask one or more critical questions about it. I may ask you to serve as a discussant more than once. After the discussants speak, other students may ask questions and make comments. Your presentation grade will depend on your effectiveness in presenting your argument in a clear way to the class and your facility and thoughtfulness in answering questions about your work, as well as quality of your formal and informal comments on other students' presentations.

Attendance and Lateness Policy

To avoid a penalty on your participation grade for missing class, you must ask the campus clinic (in a health emergency) or the dean of students or other relevant campus official (in other types of emergencies) to send me an excuse on your behalf. Missing more than one class without a documented excuse will result in a zero for class participation.

I will lower the grade on work submitted late by one letter grade per two hours late (thus, a paper that

would have earned an A will receive an A- if one minute late, an F if 20 hours and one minute late). Except in cases of documented disability or emergency, I will not, on grounds of fairness, offer an extension to one student without offering it to everybody, and given the tightness of the block plan schedule, I simply can't afford to do that. Please do not experiment with my generosity. **Books to Buy**

Books to Buy

The following books are available at the bookstore in the Commons.

Rod Hague and Martin Harrop, *Political Science: A Comparative Introduction* (5th ed.), Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. ISBN 0-230-60000-X.

John McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition* (5th ed.), Thomson Wadsworth, 2006. ISBN 0-495-00760-9.

Mounira Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*, California, 2001. ISBN 0-520-22576-7.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

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| Monday, March 3 | 9am | Introductions |
| | 10am | Information Literacy Assessment |
| Tuesday, March 4 | 9am | Hague and Harrop, Part I |
| | 1/2pm | Research Paper Source Session with Tonnie Flannery (<i>Cole 127</i>) |
| Wednesday, March 5 | 9am | Hague and Harrop, Part II |
| | 1:15pm | Paper planning session with Nicole Jackson |
| Thursday, March 6 | 9am | Hague and Harrop, Part III |
| Friday, March 7 | 9am | Hague and Harrop, Part IV |
| | 1pm | Quiz on Hague and Harrop |
| | 4pm | Country profile due |
| Monday, March 10 | 9am | McCormick, Part I |
| | 9am | Country causation paper due |
| Tuesday, March 11 | 9am | McCormick, Part II |

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| Wednesday, March 12 | 9am | McCormick, Part III |
| | 1pm | Paper feedback and planning session with Nicole Jackson |
| Thursday, March 13 | 9am | McCormick, Part IV |
| Friday, March 14 | 9am | McCormick, Part V |
| | 4pm | Comparative causation paper due |
| Monday, March 17 | 9am | McCormick, Part VI |
| | 1pm | Quiz on McCormick |
| Tuesday, March 18 | 9am | Charrad, Part I |
| Wednesday, March 19 | 9am | Charrad, Part II |
| | 1pm | Paper feedback and planning session with Nicole Jackson |
| Thursday, March 20 | 9am | Charrad, Part III |
| | 1pm | Quiz on Charrad |
| Friday, March 21 | 4pm | Research paper due |
| Monday, March 24 | 9am | Presentations |
| | 1pm | Presentations |
| Tuesday, March 25 | 9am | Presentations |
| | 1pm | Presentations |
| Wednesday, March 26 | 9am | Evaluations, Conclusions |
| | 9am | Rewrite due |

Honesty in Academic Work (from the Compass)

The College considers Cornell students to be responsible persons whose maturity will develop in a community that encourages free inquiry. The College expects the highest degree of personal integrity in all relationships. Any form of dishonesty is a violation of this spirit and of College rules.

A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty.

Dishonesty in academic work includes both cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating refers to the use of unauthorized sources of information on examinations or any attempt by students to deceive the evaluator of an examination, paper, or project.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the work of another and presenting it as one's own, without acknowledgement of the original source.

There is not one set of rules for the acknowledgement of sources that is appropriate across all disciplines. For this reason, students are always encouraged to consult their professors and guidelines included in their syllabi. However, in general the appropriate acknowledgement of sources involves meeting the following requirements:

Quotations and Paraphrasing. All direct quotations, even if mingled with original words and ideas, must be placed within quotation marks and accompanied by a specific citation for the source of the quotation. Unless the information is generally known, all phrases that are not original to the author - even two or three words - must be placed in quotation marks and cited. If an existing idea is used but paraphrased or summarized, both the original author's words and sentence structure must be changed and a specific citation for the source must still be made. It is always the responsibility of the student to provide precise sources for all ideas, information, or data he or she has borrowed or adapted. Simply listing sources in a bibliography is not sufficient. Students who use information from the World Wide Web are expected to follow these same guidelines for the citation of sources.

Failure to cite sources properly constitutes academic dishonesty, whether the omission is intentional or not.

Ideas and Data. All students are required to acknowledge the ideas of others. Every student is expected to do her or his own work in the completion of an assignment or an examination unless either (a) the sources for these ideas are explicitly cited, or (b) the instructor explicitly allows such collaboration. In addition, a person giving unauthorized assistance to another on an examination is just as guilty of cheating as the person who accepts or solicits such aid.

Submitting revisions of academic work previously submitted, either in the current course or in previous courses, qualifies as academic dishonesty unless the student obtains the explicit permission of all of the instructors involved.

All data sources must be cited accurately. It is dishonest to fabricate or alter research data included in laboratory reports, projects, or other assignments.

A safe guide is to provide a full citation for every source consulted. Sources may include, but are not limited to, published books, articles, reviews, Internet sites, archival material, visual images, oral

presentations, or personal correspondence. In addition, students should always keep previous drafts of their work in order to provide documentation of their original work. Finally, due to disciplinary differences, students should consult their professor, a librarian, and/or the Teaching and Learning Center for specific instructions on properly providing citations for sources.

Procedures for Dealing with Dishonesty in Academic Work (from the Compass)

If an instructor judges that a student has violated the College's policies on academic honesty, the student may be charged with academic dishonesty and assigned an F either for the particular examination, paper, report, or project, or for the course. The instructor shall notify the student in writing of the charge and the penalty and shall include a statement of the circumstances which precipitated the action. A copy of the instructor's letter along with a copy of the paper shall be sent to the Registrar. The Registrar shall then advise the student in writing of the right to appeal. Within ten (10) days of notification, the student may appeal the charge and/or the penalty by submitting a letter to the Dean of the College requesting that he or she appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of three (3) faculty members, one of whom may be nominated by the student. The recommendation of this committee is advisory only and is not binding upon the instructor.

All material and information relative to the charge of academic dishonesty shall be kept by the Registrar in a special file during the period in which the student is enrolled at Cornell College, serving only as a statement of record if the student is charged a second time with academic dishonesty. In the case of an appeal after the first offense, the file shall be destroyed if the committee finds the student not guilty and the instructor concurs; otherwise, the recommendation of the committee shall be inserted into the special file. If there are no further charges, the file will be destroyed at the time of the student's graduation from Cornell.

Should a subsequent charge of academic dishonesty be brought against a student, the Registrar shall notify the Dean of the College who shall convene a committee consisting of the Dean of the College, the Dean of Students, and the Chair of the Academic Standing Committee, who shall determine the status of the student. The normal penalty for a second offense is indefinite suspension from the College.