

Teaching portfolio

I like classes that are interactive and based in discussions between students themselves and with the instructor. I believe a combination of reading [chapters in books, contemporary news articles, op-ed pieces], writing [article summaries, short essays] discussions and presentations, as well as the use of other kinds of interactive material [documentaries, email discussion forums] help keep the class relevant and engaging for students. While some students are great at discussions, others may be great at reading and writing, and so I like to spread the grading process among different categories, such as among attendance and participation, in class presentations, and short essays – in order to maximize the different ways that students can excel.

Drawing on my different experiences and knowledge bases, I would be excited to teach any number of courses having to do with contemporary politics, contentious political action, international relations and human development. Courses ideas/suggestions include:

- Contentious politics and contemporary grassroots activism: from social movements to revolutions
- Introduction to comparative politics
- Information, communication technologies and contemporary activism
- Social media and social networks in global politics
- Development studies and the role of international institutions
- Community development and the politics of empowerment
- Politics of underdevelopment: critiques of international development
- International aid: program planning and development

The experience I had teaching a seminar at Eugene Lang College while I was preparing my dissertation research really brought home the process of learning and deliberation. I really enjoyed the seminar format because I think it encourages participation, and helps students find their voice and confidence. The syllabus of the course I taught at Eugene Lang College is below. It was designed as a third-year level course to introduce key themes in the study of comparative politics and contentious action.

SEMINAR: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Social and Historical Inquiry • Eugene Lang College
Monday & Wednesday 2:10-3:50

R.K. Seward

This introduction to comparative politics examines the key themes of the field through the study of contentious politics. Themes of the course include revolution, terrorism, democratization, ethnicity, identity politics, and nationalism. We will be discussing arguments around the root causes of these episodes and the ways in which they are framed from a variety of methodological perspectives. We will also compare the perspectives of the various actors in these situations (ranging from individuals to states) and how actors are influenced in the social and cultural context.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation (20%)

Students are required to complete the required readings prior to each class and to participate in an informed manner in class discussions. Participation in class discussions is mandatory. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated.

In class presentations (20%)

Each student will be responsible for delivering at least one 10 minute presentation of the readings for the day. This presentation will summarize readings, identify major themes and critique the arguments made by the authors. In doing so, the presentation will raise questions about the readings that will guide our discussion. Summaries may also compare readings with previous class discussions. A presentation schedule will be decided in the first week of class.

Written assignments (60%)

10 one page, single-spaced reading summaries (30%)

Out of approximately 23 days of readings, for ten of those days, each student is required to write a short review of the day's reading. These short papers will serve as critical summaries and should include a concise summary of the argument, assess the strengths and weaknesses of the argument, as well as raise questions for discussion. They must be typed and finished prior to coming in to class. If the students agree, I would like to circulate these summaries by email the day before class in order that students can share their ideas prior to arriving.

2 short essays, 8-10 pages in length (30%)

These papers will further explore two themes of the course. Students are required to submit an initial outline and bibliography *at least* two weeks before the paper is due.

- Short essay 1: due at midterm March 22
- Short essay 2: due end of the term, May 17

READINGS

The course packet is available on reserve in Fogelman Library.

Students should also purchase the following books from Barnes and Noble:

Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1966.
 Kenneth Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.
 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Revised Edition, New York: Verso, 1991.
 George Collier, *Basta: Land & the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*, Oakland: Food First Books, 1994, 1999.
 Guidry, Kennedy and Zald, *Globalization and Social Movements*, Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2001.
 Alison Brysk, *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

Additional readings are available upon request for those who wish to explore particular topics in further detail.

WEEK 1

January 28

Class Introduction

January 30: Introduction to methodological themes

Lichbach and Zuckerman, "Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics: An Introduction" Chapter 1 in *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997: 3-16.

"The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium" *World Politics*, vol. 48 (October 1995): 1-49.

Gail Stokes, "Why the West? The Unsettled Question of Europe's Ascendancy," *Lingua Franca*, vol. 11, no. 8 (November 2001): 30-38.

WEEK 2

February 4: Long-run Historical Patterns: Democracy & revolutions

Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1966: Preface (pp. xvi-xxv), Chapter I (pp 3-39), Chapter VII (pp. 413-432),

February 6:

Moore, Chapter VIII (pp. 433-452), Chapter IX (pp 453-483).

WEEK 3

February 11: Other explanations of revolutions

Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 22, no. 2 (April 1980): 174-197.

Theda Skocpol, "The Origins of Revolutions" in Jack A. Goldstone, ed., *Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1986: 68-87.

Eric Selbin, *Modern Latin American Revolutions* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 1-31.

February 13: Movie/documentary

WEEK 4

February 18: Democratic Debates

Amy Gutman, "Democracy" no. 19 in *Blackwell Companion*.

Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens, "The Paradoxes of Contemporary Democracy: Formal, Participatory and Social Dimensions," *Comparative Politics*, (April 1997): 323-342.

February 20: Democratic Debates

Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Chapters 21, 22.

Phillippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," Ch 4 in Diamond and Plattner, ed. *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996: 49-62.

WEEK 5

February 25: The Resurgence of Democracy

Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History"

Robert Kaplan, "Was Democracy Just a Moment?" *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1997).

Samuel Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," Ch. 1 in Diamond and Plattner, ed. *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996: 3-25.

February 27: Insurgent democracy

Ruth Berins Collier, *Paths Toward Democracy: The Working Class and Elites in Western Europe and South America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 1-32.

Elisabeth Jean Wood, "An Insurgent Path to Democracy: Popular Mobilization, Economic Interests, and Regime Transition in South Africa and El Salvador," *Comparative Political Studies* vol. 34, no. 8 (October 2001).

WEEK 6

March 4: Participation & deepening democracy

Kenneth Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, Chapters 1-3: pp. 1-80.

March 6: NO CLASS

WEEK 7 PAPER OUTLINE DUE

March 11: Critiques of democracy

Bhikhu Parekh, "The Cultural Particularity of Liberal Democracy," *Political Studies* (1992), XL, Special Issue: 160-175.

Charles Taylor, "The Dynamics of Democratic Exclusion," *Journal of Democracy* vol. 9, no. 4 (October 1998): 143-156.

Anne Phillips, "The Promise of Democracy," *Democracy and Difference*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993: 123-138.

March 13: Nationalism

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Revised Edition, New York: Verso, 1991.

WEEK 8

March 18: Ethnicity

John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, eds., *Ethnicity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996: pp. 3-56.

March 20: Identity

Courtney Jung, Ch. 1 "Introduction" and Ch.2 "Born from Speaking: The construction of political identity" in *Then I was Black*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000: 1-39.

Jillian Schwedler, "Islamic Identity: Myth, Menace or Mobilizer?" *SAIS Review* vol. XXI, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2001): 1-17.

Paper I due March 22

WEEK 9 SPRING BREAK

March 25: NO CLASS

March 27: NO CLASS

WEEK 10

April 1: Social/psychological dimensions of political action

James Rule, *Theories of Civil Violence*, Ch. 3: 91-118

Kristen Renwick Monroe, James Hankin and Renée Van Vechten, "The Psychological Foundations of Identity Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* vol. 3 (2000): 419-447.

Neil Smelser, "Social and Psychological Dimensions of Collective Behaviour" in Smelser, *Essays in Sociological Explanation*: 92-121

April 3: Terrorism

Richard Rubenstein, *The Alchemists of Revolution: Terrorism in the Modern World*, New York: Basic Books, 1987: Introduction and Part I pp. xiii-45.

David Brannan, et al, "Talking to 'Terrorists': Toward an Independent Analytical Framework for the Study of Violent Substate Activism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 24 (2001): 3-24.

WEEK 11

April 8: Terrorism

Chris Dishman, "Terrorism, Crime and Transformation," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 24 (2001): 43-58.

Eqbal Ahmad, "Terrorism: Theirs and Ours".

Edward Rothstein, "Exploring the Flaws in the Notion of the 'Root Causes' of Terror" *New York Times*, November 17, 2001.

Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," unpublished, 2001.

Brian Whitaker, "A new US government report illustrates that any classification of terrorist groups is fundamentally motivated by self-interest," *Guardian* 5/7/01.

April 10: Case study: Shining Path

Gordon McCormick, "The Shining Path and Peruvian Terrorism," in David C. Rapoport, ed., *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988:109-128.

Kenneth Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999: Part III, Chapters 7,8, pp. 201-268.

WEEK 12

April 15: Social movements

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 1-28

Aldon Morris, "Political Consciousness and Collective Action," in Morris and Mueller, ed., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992: 351-373

April 17: Analyzing contentious politics

Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, "Towards an Integrated Perspective on Social Movements and Revolution" Chapter 6 in *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997: 142-173.

Mark Lichbach, "Contending Theories of Contentious Politics and the Structure-Action Problems of Social Order," *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 1 (1998): 401-424.

WEEK 13

April 22: Case study: Zapatistas

Neil Harvey, *The Chiapas Rebellion*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1998: 6-35.

George Collier, *Basta: Land & the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*, Oakland: Food First Books, 1994, 1999: 1-36.

April 24: Video

WEEK 14 PAPER OUTLINE DUE

April 29: Globalization & transnational relations

Suzanne Berger, "Globalization and Politics," in *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 3 (2000): 43-62.

Thoms Risse-Kappen, *Bringing transnational relations back in: Non-state actors, domestic structures and international institutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995: Introduction pp. 3-36.

May 1: Transnational movements

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998: 1-38.

Sidney Tarrow, "Transnational Contention," in *Power in Movement*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 176-195.

Guidry, Kennedy and Zald, *Globalization and Social Movements*, Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2001: selections

WEEK 15**May 6: Case study: Indigenous Rights**

Alison Brysk, *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000: pp. 1-27, 55-105.

May 8: Wrap up**WEEK 16: STUDY WEEK**

Paper II due May 17