

International Affairs 6202
SEMINAR IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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SEMINAR OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION

The ability to account for change within and across nations is a valuable tool in a variety of vocations ranging from market analysis to international diplomacy, and from journalism to academia. For example, how does one explain the economic dynamism of China and the countries of East Asia? Is the trend toward "democracy" and "market capitalism" irreversible in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the countries of the former Soviet Union? Is communism destined to collapse in China, North Korea, and Cuba? Does the experience of the advanced industrialized nations provide any useful insights for explaining change in Africa or Asia? Should we expect "convergence?" Or is the Western experience unique and irreplicable? What are the driving forces of change?

The primary objective of this seminar is to survey the major theories that purport to explain the forces of change within and across national borders. We will examine these theories, starting with the ideas of Adam Smith and concluding with the current fascination concerning "globalization." As we will discover time and again in this seminar, despite claims of originality, the roots of many of today's theories can be traced to the ideas of the "old masters" such as Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. We will see how much analytical purchase these theories provide in explaining regional politics in the European Union, Latin America, and East Asia. As de Tocqueville put it, "Without comparisons to make, the mind does not know how to proceed." The principal aim of this seminar is to provide you with the mental tools to understand domestic and international change through comparative analysis.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

A successful graduate seminar demands student participation. First and foremost, attendance at ALL seminar meetings is mandatory, and active, informed participation is expected. This means that you are expected to attend every seminar meeting having read and pondered the assigned readings. To this end, you are required to submit a brief summary (approximately two double-spaced typed pages) of the key points raised in each week's readings. These summaries will be collected at the outset of each seminar meeting. Beginning

on the third week of the term, you will be partnered with a classmate (or classmates) and charged with directing discussion in a specified seminar meeting. You and your partner (or partners) will be expected to give an oral presentation of professional quality, using PowerPoint, in which you review and lead discussion of the main points covered in the assigned readings for that week. I will provide you with a list of key questions and issues upon which to focus your presentation. You will be required to submit an electronic file containing the PowerPoint presentation within one week of the session in which you deliver the presentation. In addition, you are required to submit two response papers (approximately ten double-spaced typed pages) on topics to be assigned. Finally, the final seminar meeting will be devoted to a recapitulation of the major theories with a focus on contemporary issues. You and your presentation partner(s) will be required to assess these issues in light of the theoretical literature you presented in class. Course grades will be weighted as follows:

- * participation: 20 percent (includes attendance, participation, and weekly summaries)
- * discussion leader: 25 percent (team project)
- * response papers: 50 percent (25 percent each)
- * discussion presentation (final seminar meeting): 5 percent (team project)

Note: Always bear in mind that academic honesty is required of all Georgia Tech students by the Institute's honor code, the text of which is found at www.honor.gatech.edu.

READINGS

The books listed below can be purchased at the Engineer's Bookstore. Students wishing to pursue a particular topic in more depth should feel free to consult with the Instructor. Readings marked with an asterisk are available in full text on-line.

REQUIRED

Birchfield, Vicki L. *Income Inequality in Capitalist Democracies: The Interplay of Values and Institutions*. University Park, PA: PSU Press, 2009.

Durkheim, Emile. *The Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Free Press, 1997 (1893).

Friedman, Thomas L. *The World Is Flat 3.0: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. New York: Picador, 2007.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968.

Janos, Andrew C. *Politics and Paradigms: Changing Theories of Change in Social Science*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986.

North, Douglass C. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Woodall, Brian. *Japan Under Construction: Corruption, Politics, and Public Works*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.*

RECOMMENDED

Strunk, William, Jr. and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition* Longman; 4th edition, 1999.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Overview and Objectives
Date: 12 January (NO SEMINAR MEETING!!!)
Readings: Purchase textbooks and begin reading Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat*
2. Is Comparative Politics Obsolete?
Date: 19 January
Readings: Friedman, *The World Is Flat*
Presenter: Brian Woodall
3. Changing Theories of Change
Date: 26 January
Readings: Andrew Janos, *Politics and Paradigms*: 1-95, 147-154; "The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium." *World Politics* 48 (October 1995): 1-49 (download from GT Library eJournals)
Presenters: Brian Woodall
4. The "Invisible Hand" and Stages of Development
Date: 2 February
Readings: Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Book I, chapters 1-3 and 7; Book III, chapters 1-4; Book IV, chapters 1-2; and Book V, chapter 1 (online at www.marxists.org/reference/archive/smith-adam/index.htm); Margaret Levi, "The Economic Turn in Comparative Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (6/7, 2000): 822-844 (download from GT Library eJournals).
Presenters: TBA
5. Class Struggle and Economic Determinism
Date: 9 February
Readings: Karl Marx, "Preface to the First German Edition" of *Capital*; (with Friedrich Engels), *Manifesto of the Communist Party*; "The German Ideology"; "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," (www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/date/index.htm); Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World," *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Jan., 2002) (pp. 212-244 (upload from JSTOR).

Presenters: TBA

6. The Social Organism and Functionalism

Date: 16 February

Readings: Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism" (www.econlib.org); Durkheim, *The Division of Labor*; Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay," *World Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 3. (Apr., 1965), pp. 386-430 (download from JSTOR); Brian Woodall, "Introduction," in *Growing Democracy* (forthcoming) (posted to T-Square)

Presenter: Brian Woodall

7. Culture and Rationalization

Date: 23 February

Readings: Reading: Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WEBER/cover.html>); Marc Howard Ross, "Culture in Comparative Political Analysis," in Mark I. Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman, (eds), *Comparative Politics: Rationality Culture and Structure, Second Edition*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp, 134-61 (uploaded to T-Square); Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy* 6 (January 1995): 65-78 (download from GT Library eJournals).

Presenters: TBA

23 FEBRUARY: FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE

8. Neoclassical Approaches

Date: 2 March

Readings: Alexander Gerschenkron, "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective" (uploaded to T-Square); Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (distributed in class); Gabriel Almond, "A Developmental Approach to World Systems," *World Politics* 17, No. 2, January 1965, pp. 183-214 (download from GT Library eJournals); Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No. 1. (March 1959), pp. 69-105 (download from GT Library eJournals).

Presenters: TBA

9. World Systems and Dependency

Date: 9 March

Readings: Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment" (distributed in class); V.I. Lenin, Imperialism: *The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/index.htm), chapters. VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X; Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis" (download from GT Library eJournals); Fernando H. Cardoso, "Dependency and Development in Latin America," *New Left Review* 74 (1972): 83-95 (download from GT Library eJournals).

Presenters: TBA

10. Focus on East Asia – The Developmental State

Date: 16 March

Readings: Ziya Onis, "The Logic of the Developmental State," *Comparative Politics*, 24 (no. 1), 1991, pp. 109-26 (download from GT Library eJournals); and Brian Woodall, *Japan Under Construction*

(www.escholarship.org/editions/view?docId=ft5489n9zf&brand=eschol)

Presenter: Brian Woodall

23 March – Spring Break

11. Focus on Latin America

Date: 30 March

Readings: Bowman, ??????????????????

Presenter: Kirk Bowman

12. Focus on Europe – Explaining Income Inequality

Date: 6 April

Readings: Vicki Birchfield, *Income Inequality in Capitalist Democracies*

Presenter: Vicki Birchfield

13. Neo-institutionalism and Rational Choice

Date: 13 April

Readings: Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*; "Symposium: Controversy in the Discipline" with contributions by Robert H. Bates, Chalmers Johnson, Ian S. Lustick in *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (June, 1997) (pp. 166-179) (download from GT Library eJournals).

Presenters: TBA

14. The Second Image Reversed

Date: 20 April

Readings: Readings: Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed," *International Organization* 32, No. 4, Autumn 1978, pp. 881-912 (download from GT Library eJournals). Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization*, 42, No. 3, Summer 1988, pp. 427-460 (download from GT Library eJournals); and Stephen D. Krasner, "Revisiting 'The Second Image Reversed,'"

Paper prepared for a conference in honor of Peter Gourevitch, University of California, San Diego, April 23-24, 2010 (uploaded to T-Square)

Presenters: TBA

15. Is the World Really Flat?

Date: 27 April – final seminar meeting

Readings: Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*

Presenters: group debate

27 APRIL: SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE