INTL 8374: Comparative Political Behavior

Spring 2019
3:30-6:15pm, Candler Hall 214 (1/15-3/19)
6:30-9:15pm, Candler Hall 214 (2/6-3/20)

Dr. Mollie J. Cohen
Office: 311 Candler Hall
Office Hours: Tues., 2-3:30PM or by appointment
Email: mj.cohen@uga.edu
Phone: 706-542-6705

********************************************************************************
Note: this is a draft syllabus and is subject to change
********************************************************************************

Course Description: This course provides a broad survey of topics in the study of comparative mass behavior, including the origins of public opinion, partisanship, voter behavior, and protest. By the end of the semester, you should have an understanding of how scholars study comparative political behavior around the world, and knowledge of several current debates in the field. Students should also gain or reinforce skills that are core to studying comparative political behavior in an academic setting: providing and receiving constructive peer review, preparing and delivering conference presentations, and preparing journal-length manuscripts.

Grades:
Attendance/Participation: 20%
Reaction Papers and Questions: 25%
Final Presentation: 15%
Final Project: 40%

Attendance/Participation: This is a Ph.D. level seminar, and classes are discussion-based. You are expected to attend class, to engage thoughtfully with the readings, and to communicate your ideas, questions, and concerns about the readings in a respectful way with your peers. Your participation grade will include your role as a discussant for a peer’s final project presentation, as well as your participation in regular writing exercises.

Reaction Papers and Questions: Starting with class 3 (1/29), you will turn in a reaction paper for each substantive class session. You may miss two reaction papers without penalty. These reaction papers should be one to two pages, single spaced, and engage at least three of the week’s readings critically. While your response paper should include a summary of the argument, evidence, and conclusion presented in each reading, you are expected to go beyond summarizing each piece and to discuss how the articles speak to each other and inform the larger
debates we discuss in class. At the end of your reaction paper, please include 3 questions about the reading. These questions will be used in class discussion.

**Final Presentation:** You will give a 12-15 minute presentation of your final project in class. This presentation will mimic a conference presentation in style and substance. You should start with a brief introduction to the research question and relevant theory, develop your argument, present any results you have or your prospective design, and close with a discussion of implications. One of your classmates will be assigned as the discussant for your paper. Instructions for the discussant role will be provided during the semester.

**Final Project:** You can choose to write either a research proposal or a research paper as your final assignment for this class. Although class will stop meeting in March, your final project is due no later than May 2, 2019 at 5pm EST, by email.

- **Research Proposal:** For the purposes of this class, a research proposal is a research paper that is missing final data analysis. Research proposals should be of standard journal-article length and format, with references formatted per APSA style guidelines.

  Proposals will include (1) a research question, (2) a theoretical argument informed by a review of relevant literature, and (3) testable hypotheses that follow from your argument. A research proposal will also include (4) a detailed description of the data you would collect to complete the project (What is the dependent variable? What are the independent variables? What strategy(ies) would you employ to collect these variables?).

- **Research Paper:** Your manuscript should be standard journal-article length and format. It will include items 1-3 above, as well as (4) an empirical test of the argument, using data from existing sources. The goal is for you to write a manuscript you will eventually be able to submit for publication.

**Readings:** The vast majority of readings for this class are journal articles that you can access online, via google scholar or GIL. Several selections are also drawn from classic books in comparative politics. While you may wish to purchase these books, most selections are available online through GIL or the eLC. Book selections that are available on eLC are denoted with an asterisk (*) in the reading list below.

In addition to scholarly readings, you will complete a number of exercises from Wendy Belcher’s book:


You can access this book through the UGA library, or you can purchase it for your further use.
University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy:
As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Course Outline
Non-substantive classes are denoted using an *

Class 1: (1/15) Introduction*
Class 2: (1/22) Approaches to Studying Comparative Political Behavior*
Class 3: (1/29) Opinion Formation
Class 4: (2/5) Political Knowledge
Class 5: (2/6) Turnout
Class 6: (2/12) Participation in Illiberal Regimes
Class 7: (2/13) Individual Project Meetings*
Class 8: (2/19) Partisanship
Class 9: (2/20) Performance/ Economic Voting
Class 10: (2/26) Strategic/ Expressive Voting
Class 11: (2/27) Peer Review*
Class 12: (3/5) Clientelism and Vote Buying
Class 13: (3/6) Draft Project Presentations*
No Class (3/12) Spring Break
Class 14: (3/19) Social Movements and Protest
Class 15: (3/20) Final Project Presentations*

1/15: Introduction


Also read: Belcher, Ch. 1

1/22: Approaches to Studying Comparative Political Behavior


Also read: Belcher, Ch. 2

#### 1/29: Opinion Formation

• Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*, Ch. 3*


Also read: Belcher Ch. 3

#### 2/5: Political Knowledge


Also read: Belcher Ch. 5

2/6: Turnout

• Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Ch. 3*
• Shineman, Victoria Anne. 2018. "If you mobilize them, they will become informed: Experimental evidence that information acquisition is endogenous to costs and incentives to participate." *British Journal of Political Science* 48(1): 189-211.

2/12: Participation in Illiberal Regimes

2/13: Individual Project Meetings

Project Outline: 
You will schedule a 30-minute slot during the class meeting time to discuss your final project proposal with the professor. An outline detailing your proposed project is due to me via email by 12pm on 2/13.

Also read: Belcher, Chs. 6, 7

2/19: Partisanship

- Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*, Chs. 4, 6, 7*

2/20: Retrospective Voting


2/26: Strategic/Expressive Voting


2/27: Peer Review

- Reviews, Protest Via the Null Ballot: An Assessment of the Decision to Cast an Invalid Vote in Latin America.*

Peer review:

*Select a journal article that we have read for this class – not the article you read for today! – published after 1990, and write a referee report as if you were reviewing that article for publication in a general interest political science journal. This review should be 1-1.5 pages, single-spaced. Due by 12pm on 2/27.*

Also read: Belcher Ch. 9

3/5: Clientelism and Vote Buying


3/6: Draft Project Workshop

Project draft:
*Circulate a first draft of your project to your classmates and the professor via email by 12pm on 3/4. Come to class having read all of your classmates’ draft projects and ready to provide constructive feedback. Remember: for all critiques related to data or analysis, you must propose a solution!*

Also read: Belcher, Chs. 10, 11

3/12: Spring Break

3/19: Social Movements and Protest


3/20: Final Project Presentations

*Circulate a draft of your final project by email to the class no later than 12pm on 3/18.*

*Prepare a 12-15 minute conference presentation that walks through your research question, develops your argument, presents any results you have or your prospective design, and closes with a discussion of implications.*
The discussant for each paper will provide comments for five minutes, as well as a written peer review, which the discussant will share with the author and the professor by the start of class on 3/20. Peer reviews and comments count to your participation grade, and response to peer comments is a portion of the final project grade.

FINAL PROJECTS ARE DUE VIA EMAIL BY MAY 2, 2019 AT 5PM EST.