

POLS 5339 Seminar in Comparative Political Institutions
(cross-listed with MAIS 5350 The History of An Idea)
Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Taeko Hiroi

Office: Benedict Hall 312

Office Hours: M 1:30-2:30, W 1-2, and by appointment

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Class Time/Location: Mondays 6-8:50 pm/BEND 205

Course Description

Political institutions influence human interaction and political outcomes. They affect who gets elected, the kind of public policies adopted, and the speed at which these policies are implemented. Political institutions affect the stability and quality of democracy, economic development and performance, and the quality of public policy in general. Well-designed political institutions can help manage and organize political conflict; poorly designed institutions may contribute to citizens' dissatisfaction with democracy, economic stagnation, widespread corruption, and social violence. In short, political institutions matter; they matter greatly. Thus, it is important to have a good understanding of their varieties and consequences. In this seminar, we will examine various democratic institutions adopted in the world, including executives, legislatures, electoral systems, and federal and unitary systems.

This course is organized around thematic topics and focuses on empirical theories and analyses of institutions. We will discuss various examples from around the world. Students will specialize in a specific area of inquiry by writing a research paper.

Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- 1) identify the major theoretical approaches to the study of political institutions;
- 2) analyze alternative forms of political institutions and their varying consequences;
- 3) design democratic political institutions; and
- 4) have an early start on your Master's thesis or final project on political institutions (if you so choose).

Course Text

- Arend Lijphart. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy*. Second Edition. Yale University Press.
- Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds. 2006. *Electoral Systems and Democracy*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Eduardo Alemán and George Tsebelis, eds. 2016. *Legislative Institutions and Lawmaking in Latin America*. Oxford University Press.

Course Requirements

- 1) **Reading Assignment and Class Participation:** Since this is a graduate seminar, the success of the class critically depends on every student's commitment to making class discussions intellectually stimulating and rewarding. Do not expect to be lectured. I may occasionally provide brief lectures on certain topics to facilitate class discussion and learning, but the large part of the quality of the seminar is determined by each student contributing to collective learning by coming to every class, having completed assigned readings and actively discussing them. You will be evaluated on both the quality and quantity of your participation. Note that you cannot possibly participate in discussions if you miss a class, and unjustified absence will significantly affect your participation grade. Specifically, you will lose 25 percent of the participation grade for each unjustified absence.

Engagement is an important part of your participation. To prepare for class and to facilitate everyone's involvement, for each week **every student must prepare at least two discussion questions**. These questions should focus on concepts, theories, methodologies, data, and other key questions in the literature. Questions involving comparisons of various readings are welcome. **These questions should be posted in the designated space on the discussion board in the course's Blackboard page no later than 10 pm of Sunday before each class.** The quality and quantity of these questions and their punctual submission will be graded. Good questions will be rewarded with higher grades. You are also encouraged to respond to questions posted on the discussion board prior to the meeting. Good, thoughtful responses and comments will be rewarded with higher participation points. **Students should review posted questions and comments prior to coming to class.** Please keep in mind that you must post at least two questions for each week regardless of whether you will attend the seminar in that week. Each missed question will result in the loss of 2 percentage points of the participation grade.

- 2) **Critical Reviews:** You will write **two critical reviews** of the assigned weekly readings. Critical reviews are due at 6:00 pm in the next class. For example, if you choose to write a critical review of the readings assigned for week 2, your review is due in the class in week 3 at 6:00 pm. Please submit a hard copy.

Critical reviews should cover all the readings for the week, but should not merely summarize them. You should identify and discuss the main debates in the literature and critically analyze the week's readings. For example, what are the central questions and central controversies, and how does each reading approach them? What evidence do authors provide? What are their strengths and weaknesses, and how might you improve their theories and research? Emphasize theories, research designs, and methods. Additional readings are encouraged for your learning, but critical reviews should focus on the assigned readings.

The reviews should be **3 to 4 pages** (no more than 4 pages), typed using *Times New Roman* 12 pt. font size, double-spaced, paged with the standard one inch margins in all four sides, and all references must be appropriately cited. I will stop reading reviews on the fourth page if they are longer than the maximum length.

In general, *no late review will be accepted, including those resulting from being late to class.* You have an entire semester to choose from to write your reviews. If you cannot submit one on time, you just need to write another one. Since unexpected emergencies do happen, I strongly encourage you to submit your reviews early in the semester. Please do not email me your reviews.

- 3) **Discussion Leader:** We will have at least one discussion leader for each week. Assignments for discussion leaders will be made during the first class meeting. Your role as a discussion leader will be graded. Please think about how you intend to lead class discussions and **come see me during my office hours with a written proposal detailing your plan. If there is more than one student assigned to lead a week's discussion, you should coordinate your roles before meeting with me.** By being a discussion leader, you are not asked to lecture for the class. Your role is, jointly with me, to facilitate and stimulate class discussions.
- 4) **Research Paper:** Your research paper should address an important question in comparative political institutions. Please be sure to obtain my approval for your research topic. Your paper should be empirical and conform to the expectations of social science research. That means that it begins with a research question, followed by a theory and a hypothesis or hypotheses, and evaluating them with real world observations (called data). Merely descriptive studies are not acceptable as graduate research papers. If you need a brief review of social science research, I recommend W. Phillips Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*.

This assignment is evaluated in two phases. The first phase involves writing an advanced research proposal. A good research proposal includes a research question, significance of the project, literature review, theory and hypotheses, research design and methodology, and expected findings. As stated above, you need to obtain my approval for your research topic. Approval of your topic will require, at minimum, that you articulate your research question and a hypothesis (or hypotheses) and that you be able to discuss the sources of the data/information that you intend to use. An advanced research paper proposal will include an introduction that contains your research question and discusses the significance of the project, a thorough literature review, theory and hypothesis (or hypotheses), research design, methods, and data to be used, and expected findings. **Submit a hard copy of your advanced research paper proposal on April 3.**

The final two weeks of the semester will be devoted to research paper presentations. Each presentation should be approximately for **15 minutes** (and no longer than 15 minutes) and use Power Point. A **hard copy of your research paper is due to me on May 1.** Your research paper must be complete and will be between 13 and 25 pages, including notes, tables, figures, and a bibliography. It should consist of the following sections: introduction, literature review, theory and hypotheses, research design and methodology, analysis and findings, and conclusions.

Your paper should follow the standard paper requirement, i.e., it should be typed, using *Times New Roman* 12 pt. font size, double-spaced, and paged with the standard one inch margins in all four sides. All references should be appropriately cited both in the body of the text and bibliography. Please refer to APSA's style manual for stylistic guidance.

Grades

Final grades are determined as follows:

Course Requirement	Weight
Reading & Participation	30%
Critical Reviews	First review, 10%; second, 15%
Discussion Leader	10%
Research Paper (including presentations)	35% total (proposal 10%; presentation 5%; final project 20%)

Final Grade Scale	
90% ≤	A
80% ≤ & < 90%	B
70% ≤ & < 80%	C
60% ≤ & < 70%	D
<60%	F

Course Policy

- Cell phones must be off during class hours. They are allowed under emergency circumstances, but please notify me ahead of time.
- Please do not use your personal computer, cell phones, or tablet computers in class. Our classroom is small, and students have indicated that they find the use of personal computers by other students quite distracting, even for typing class notes.
- Please do not be late to class so that you will not disturb other students or interrupt class discussions.
- At times it may be necessary to make adjustments to reading assignments and course schedule as the semester unfolds. If necessary, I will make such announcements in class and/or on Blackboard. If you miss a class when these announcements are made, you are responsible for obtaining such information.
- Please check Blackboard on a regular basis.
- All assignments and papers need to be professional. They must be typed with standard citation and writing styles (see APSA's style manual) and standard margins of one inch in all four sides. All pages must be numbered consecutively (except for the title page) and stapled together. Where there is a page limit, you must follow it. All assignments and papers must be proofread before submission. If you need assistance in writing, I encourage you to go to the writing center. NEVER turn in your first draft: there is no excuse for turning in an unedited paper! Depending on the extent of editorial problems, your assignment's grade will be lowered by one-third of a letter grade to one full letter grade.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as one's own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Office of Student Life for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Refer to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm> for further information.

Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally within the first two weeks to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) (formerly known as the Disabled Student Services Office) in 302 Union East within the first two weeks of classes. CASS can also be reached in the following ways:

Web: <http://sa.utep.edu/dsso/>
Phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or TTY

E-Mail: dss@utep.edu
Fax: (915) 747-8712

Course Materials

Course materials are intended for your personal use only. An unauthorized use, dissemination, distribution, publication or replication of course materials is strictly prohibited. Course materials refer to those made available to you through this course and/or by me and teaching assistants. They include, but not limited to, materials made available on Blackboard (such as power point slides, lecture outlines, and supplementary readings), study guides, and exams.

Course Schedule

January 23: Course Overview

Assignment of discussion leaders

January 30: The Executive I (Presidentialism and Parliamentarism)

- Lijphart, Chs. 1-3.
- A. Stepan and C. Skach. 1993. "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism vs. Presidentialism." *World Politics* 46: 1-22.
- Juan Linz. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1 (1): 51-69.
- Alexander Baturo. 2010. "The Stakes of Losing Office, Term Limits and Democracy" *British Journal of Political Science* 40(3): 635-662.
- Kaare Strøm, Wolfgang C. Müller, and Daniel Mark Smith. 2010. "Parliamentary Control of Coalition Governments." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 517-535.

February 6: The Executive II (Refinements on the Presidential-Parliamentary Debate)

- Juan J. Negri-Malbran. 2008. "Myths about Presidentialism." *The Review of Politics* 70(3): 499-502.
- Kathryn Hochstetler. 2008. "Review of *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy* by José Antonio Cheibub; *Presidential Impeachment and the New Political Instability in Latin America* by Aníbal Pérez-Liñán." *Latin American Politics and Society* 50(3): 163-167.
- T. Hiroi and S. Omori. 2009. "Perils of parliamentarism? Political systems and the stability of democracy revisited." *Democratization* 16(3): 485-507.
- Oleh Protsyk. 2006. "Intra-Executive Competition between President and Prime Minister: Patterns of Institutional Conflict and Cooperation under Semi-Presidentialism." *Political Studies* 54(2): 219-244.
- John Gerring, Strom C. Thacker, and Carola Moreno. 2009. "Are Parliamentary Systems Better?" *Comparative Political Studies* 42(3): 327-359.

February 13: Coalitions and Cabinets

- Lijphart, Ch. 6
- Michael Laver and Kenneth Shepsle. 1990. "Coalitions and Cabinet Governments." *American Political Science Review* 84: 873-890.
- Paul Warwick and Jamie Druckman. 2001. "Portfolio Salience and the Proportionality of Payoffs in Coalition Governments." *British Journal of Political Science* 31: 627-649.
- John D. Huber and Cecilia Martinez-Gallardo. 2008. "Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracy." *American Political Science Review* 102(2): 169-180.
- Alemán and Tsebelis, eds., Chs. 3 & 5.

February 20: Legislatures

- Lijphart, Chs. 7 & 11.
- Alemán and Tsebelis, eds., Chs. 1, 9, and two of the following chapters: Chs. 2, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

February 27: Electoral Systems: Variation

- Lijphart, Ch. 8.
- Nils-Christian Bormann & Matt Golder. 2013. "Democratic electoral Systems Around the World, 1946-2011." *Electoral Studies* 32: 360-369
- Diamond and Plattner, Introduction & Chs. 1-3 & 6.

March 6: Electoral Systems: Consequences

- Lijphart, Ch. 5.
- Rein Taagepera. 1999. "The Number of Parties as a Function of Heterogeneity and Electoral System." *Comparative Political Studies*, 32(5).
- John Carey and Matthew Shugart. 1995. "Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote." *Electoral Studies*, 14 (4): 417-39.
- Diamond and Plattner, Chs. 7-10.

March 13-17 Spring Break!

March 20: Electoral Systems (Malapportionment & Redistricting)

- David Samuels and Richard Snyder. 2001. "The Value of a Vote: Malapportionment in Comparative Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science* 31:651-671.
- Stephen Ansolabehere, Alan Gerber, and James Snyder. 2002. "Equal Votes, Equal Money: Court-Ordered Redistricting and Public Expenditures in the American States." *American Journal of Political Science* 96(4): 767-777.
- Michael F. Thies. 1998. "When Will Pork Leave the Farm? Institutional Bias in Japan and the United States." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 23(4): 467-492.
- Alan I. Abramowitz, Brad Alexander, and Matthew Gunning. 2006. "Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 68(1): 75-88.
- Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon. 2008. "Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling: Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Success of Women Candidates." *Thomas Jefferson Law Review* 31(1): 29-52.
<http://www.tjeffersonrev.org/print/31/1/breaking-political-glass-ceiling-incumbency-redistricting-and-success-women-candidates>

March 27: Electoral Systems II (Country and Regional Experiences)

- Diamond and Plattner, Chs. 11-19.

April 3: Submit your research proposal

*There is no assigned reading for this week so that you can use this time to work on your proposal and research paper. Submit a hard copy of your *advanced* research proposal on April 3. See the section on *Research Paper* for more instructions.

April 10: Unitary System, Federalism, and Consociationalism

- Lijphart, Ch. 10.
- Diamond and Plattner, Chs. 4 & 5.

- Arend Lijphart. 1996. "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation." *American Political Science Review*, 90: 258-68.
- Jonathan Rodden. 2004. "Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement." *Comparative Politics* 36(4): 481-500.
- Carlos Gervasoni. 2010. "A Rentier Theory of Subnational Regimes: Fiscal Federalism, Democracy, and Authoritarianism in the Argentine Provinces." *World Politics* 62(2): 302-340.

April 17: Policy and Political Consequences

- Lijphart, Chs. 13-17.

April 24: Student Presentations

Students will present their research paper using Power Point. The presentation should not exceed **15 minutes**. See the section on *Research Paper* for more instructions. Please prepare handouts to guide your presentations and distribute them to me and other students in the class.

May 1: Student Presentations continued

*Research paper due in class