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<td>Parties &amp; Democratic Systems [Spring:16]</td>
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<td>6.4</td>
<td>Outcomes III</td>
<td>Policy Choice &amp; Policy Reform [Spring:16]</td>
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Table 1: Clusters and Topics
1. **Readings and Clusters**

Students will be expected to have deep knowledge of the arguments and evidence contained in the core reading list. The reading list will generally include between about 125 readings, each of relevance to one or two topics. *In addition to the core reading list students will be expected to be familiar with all Comparative Politics articles published in the APSR in the twelve months prior to the examination in question.*

This list exposes you to a diversity of approaches, theoretical perspectives, and thematic areas. It should not however be considered a “canon” — while most of the readings have been influential this does not mean that they are uniformly compelling; nor does omission from the list suggest readings are unimportant. You are **encouraged to read well beyond this list** as you engage deeply with topics; nevertheless it will be **possible** to pass your comprehensive exams drawing solely on deep understanding of the readings on this list and your ability to reason about research strategies and cases.

All readings are available online or on courseworks. You are encouraged but not required to buy books marked with a ♠.

2. **Readings, classes & exams**

The readings have been roughly allocated across two semesters of the Comparative Politics Field Seminar and you can expect that one topic will be covered in each seminar in each week on average, though instructors may split or aggregate topics differently in different years and may select which readings to treat as required readings for class discussion purposes differently in different years.

The reading list is liable to be updated from year to year. Exams will be based on the reading list of the immediately preceding year. So for example exams in May and September 2016 and January 2017 will be based on the 2015-2016 academic year list.

3. **How to read**

The Comps reading list is not especially large. But some readings are hard. You should aim to read carefully and reflectively. Here are guides to [critiquing](#) and to [reading](#).

4. **Exam Structure**

The exam contain **nine** questions divided into 6 sections plus a wildcard section as described below.

1. Majors will be required to answer 3 questions from at least two different sections.
2. Minors will be required to answer 2 questions from at least two different sections.
3. Questions in each section are likely to draw on knowledge of the theoretic and empirical literatures as well as knowledge of cases.
4. Some questions might request commentary and critique on specific readings from the list.

The structure of this exam is designed to ensure more regular and predictable coverage of the major topics covered in the survey courses. It allows students to select areas of specialization but requires minimal breadth of knowledge.
<table>
<thead>
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<td>Fall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Structures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes II</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<td>Outcomes III</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildcard</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: CP Topics Structure
5. Writing Good Exam Answers

A good answer to a Comps exam question:

1. **Answers the question.** It is very common to write questions that are only tangentially related to the question. Students routinely fail to answer questions of the form: “Is the effect of X on Y different in A areas and in B areas”, in some cases describing only the effects of X on Y or the differences in Y between areas, or the differences in X. Very often time is lost discussing what X is and whether it is a useful concept. There are no points for those kinds of answers. Engage in conceptual clarification only to the extent that it is asked in the question and to the extent that it is necessary to make sense of your answer. If essential you can have a short paragraph early on that stipulates and/or justifies what definitions you will use.

2. **Is structured.** Don’t start writing immediately. Sit back and think about the question. Jot down the three or four major points you want to make. Think about how they relate to each other and whether they can be ordered or developed in an integrated way. Note the key research you want to engage with for each point. Anticipate how others would critique your arguments and provide counter critiques. Only then start writing.

3. **Has signposting.** At the beginning say what you are going to say. Make your main points upfront and provide a structure. Put short headers in bold over various sections so that people can see quickly where the action is.

4. **Shows awareness of the big picture but goes deeper.** The hardest thing about Comps essays is that large questions are covered but space is very constrained. Should you give short overviews of a dozen approaches or should you go deeply in to one or two. The first approach risks looking shallow, the second narrow. An effective approach is to lead sections with a rapid overview, gathering contributions together analytically and then going into more depth in a small number, justified by your overview. (Of the form: “One set of authors focuses on domestic factors (a,b,c,d), others focus on the role of international pressures (e,f,g,h); more recently authors have argued that these factors interact and you cannot understand the effects of one without understanding the other (i,j,k). Since the arguments of this third group are more general than the first two I focus my discussion on two studies in this third set.”)

5. **Is not about you.** You should have a voice but this is not about you. Graders will want to see you engaging critically with the work, they want to hear your views but they are interested in your arguments not your opinions. Avoid hyperbole. Whether you find something exciting, fantastic, or boring is not relevant; whether something is seminal or groundbreaking is relevant, but you need to say why it is seminal or groundbreaking. Avoid unnecessary adjectives and avoid all adjectives that you cannot substantively defend.

6. **Says something new.** Comps essays don’t have to say something new, but it is nice when they do. Closing off with some speculations or hypotheses based on the preceding discussion, or a proposal for an approach to better address some problem, can be a satisfying way to end a Comps essay. You have more rope to take a risk here if the preceding discussion on the existing literature is solid.
6. Sample Exam (Largely Drawn From Jan 2014 Exam)

Majors: Please answer three questions from at least two different sections. Minors: Please answer two questions from two different sections.

In each essay, you should:

- Answer the question that is asked. Refine if necessary but do not expand.
- Discuss at least two theoretical accounts and at least two bodies of evidence as they relate to the theories (a body of evidence is a study or related set of studies that address a problem empirically).
- Include critical assessments of the theoretical and empirical literatures that you discuss.

Section I: Approaches

1. Some argue that while case studies may be useful for generating theoretical insights, quantitative analysis is needed to test theories. Provide arguments in favor or against the proposition with illustrations from research in comparative politics.

Section II: Primitives

2. Are models of collective action useful for understanding participation in contentious politics (choose a class of political events e.g. violence, protests, strikes or other)? Discuss in the light of at least two theories and empirical evidence.

3. Describe and critique at least two theories or empirical accounts for why social conflict is sometimes organized along identity (e.g. race, class, gender) lines.

Section III: Political Structures

4. Why do electoral rules vary across countries? What arguments have authors put forward to account for this variation and which do you find most convincing? Please discuss with reference to at least two countries.

5. In different parts of the world we have seen dramatic shifts in voting patterns and party systems. Why? In your answer, draw on appropriate theory and compare two cases.

Section IV: Outcomes I

6. Do the same factors that explain participation in violence by individuals also explain onset of violence in polities?

Section V: Outcomes II

7. Why do authoritarian regimes survive in some places but not others? Discuss with reference to at least two theories and two cases or empirical analyses.

Section VI: Outcomes III

8. Under what conditions are elections most likely to result in the representation of citizens preferences? In your answer describe the logic and evidence for at least two factors that matter.

Section VII: Wildcard

9. Why did Syriza call a referendum in the middle of the bailout negotiations? Remember to use theory and evidence from the study of Comparative Politics.

END
7. 2015-16 Comps Reading List

1. Approaches

1.1. Causal Inference and Identification [Fall:15]


1.2. Natural Experiments [Spring:16]


3. Thad Dunning. Natural and field experiments: The role of qualitative methods. *Qualitative Methods*, 6(2), 2009


1.3. Qualitative Methods, Case Studies and Process-Tracing [Fall:15]


1.4. Models of Politics [Fall:15]


2. Primitives

2.1. Collective Action & Applications [Fall:15]


- Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. Toward an integrated perspective on social movements and revolutions. *Comparative politics: Rationality, culture, and structure*, page 142, 1997


### 2.2. Bargaining & Applications [Fall:15]


2.3. Groups & Coalitions [Fall:15]


2.4. Identity Politics [Fall:15]


2.5. Political Culture [Fall:15]


2.6. Institutions [Fall:15]


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3. Political Structures

3.1. The State, Institutions, & State Strength [Spring:16]


2. Isabela Mares and Didac Queralt. The non-democratic origins of income taxation. *Comparative Political Studies*, page 0010414015592646, 2015


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3.2. Parties & Democratic Systems [Spring:16]


3.3. Voting, Elections and Electoral Systems [Spring:16]


3.4. **Non-Democratic Systems [Spring:16]**


3. Lisa Blaydes. *Elections and distributive politics in Mubaraks Egypt*. Cambridge University Press, 2010 pages ...


4. Outcomes I

4.1. Political Violence [Fall:15]


- Steven I Wilkinson. Votes and violence: Electoral competition and ethnic riots in India. Cambridge University Press, 2006

4.2. Non-Electoral Participation [Fall:15]


• Samuel P Huntington. *Political order in changing societies*. Yale University Press, 2006

### 4.3. Revolutions and Regime Change [Structures] [Fall:15]


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### 4.4. Democratization [Fall:15]


5. Outcomes II

5.1. Electoral Participation [Spring:16]


2. Pablo Beramendi and Francesc Amat. Inequality and electoral participation. APSA, 2015


5.2. Accountability & Citizen/Politician Linkages [Spring:16 – two weeks]


4. Herbert Kitschelt. Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities. *Comparative political studies*, 33(6-7):845–879, 2000. URL [http://cps.sagepub.com/content/33/6-7/845.short](http://cps.sagepub.com/content/33/6-7/845.short)


- David Lake and Matthew Baum. The invisible hand of democracy: Political control and the provision of public services. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34:587–621, 2001. URL [http://cps.sagepub.com/content/34/6/587.abstract](http://cps.sagepub.com/content/34/6/587.abstract)


5.3. Corruption [Spring:16]


6. Outcomes III

6.1. Inequality & Polarization [Spring:16]


6.2. Growth [Spring:16]


6.3. Redistribution & the Welfare State [Spring:16]


### 6.4. Policy Choice & Policy Reform [Spring:16]


Appendices: Syllabuses & Full Bibliography
A. Fall 2015 Comparative Politics Field Seminar Syllabus

**Instructor:** Macartan Humphreys | mh2245@columbia.edu

**Location etc.:** Monday 10:10pm-12:00pm 711 International Affairs Building.

A.1. Overview

This is the first of the two sequence comparative politics field seminar. The seminar is targeted at first and second year PhD students in the department of political science. This first part focuses on the (often micro) building blocks of comparative political analysis and begins to touch on the (largely) macro political outcomes. The course has two objectives. One is to expose you to leading work in the field. We focus on research that is innovative and strong. The second is to train you to think like a comparativist, honing your skills in analytical reading and critique. The second course in the sequence (taught by Isabela Mares) takes this material as given and focuses on political structures as well as further topics including topics focused on developed countries.

A.2. Material

The topics for each week are described in Table 3. The numbered items on the 2015-16 Comps Reading List are required for class. The bulleted items on each section are examinable for the topics in question but you are not expected to have read these for class. In Table 3 I also point to small numbers of additional readings that might support discussion, but which are not part of the Comps reading list. These include some segments from the manuscript formally known as *Hell is Other People* (HOP), which can be found on courseworks.

A.3. Requirements

**Admission.** To do now: Fill up [this form](http://tinyurl.com/CP2014SS) before midnight Tues 15 September; you will not be admitted if you do not complete this form by midnight Tuesday 15 September. Note that the target size for the class is 16 and there will be a hard cap of 18. Priority is given to PhD students in political science that need to take comprehensive exams in CP.

A.3.1. Reading and arguing [25%]

The Syllabus lists both required reading and further reading. You will be expected to have completed all the required readings before class to the point where you can be called on to critique or defend any reading at any time. You should contribute actively and be engaged in the discussion at all times. If the discussion does not make sense to you then stop the class and say so — it probably doesn’t make sense to others either. Any computer use should be for note taking only and quick checking of facts directly related to class discussion; emailing, SMSing etc are strictly not allowed and you will be asked to withdraw if you wander like that.

A.3.2. Writing [75%]

You will write three papers that engage with readings or topics of the course. Each paper will be no more than 3000 words in length and count for 25% of your final grade. Topics will be provided in advance. These topics will be similar in nature to the sort of topics that you will see on comps exams. You should be prepared to move well beyond the readings of the class to address them. Each paper will be followed by a discussion (see schedule in Table 4) with the instructor in which you will be asked to defend or expand on ideas provided in your written answers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches</th>
<th>14 Sept 1.1 Causal Inference and Identification [Fall:15]</th>
<th>Since this is the first class it will be more lecture style. Catch up on the readings afterwards however since these ideas will be used throughout the course. See notes on courseworks as well as <a href="http://egap.org/methods-guides/10-things-you-need-know-about-causal-inference">http://egap.org/methods-guides/10-things-you-need-know-about-causal-inference</a> and <a href="http://egap.org/methods-guides/10-strategies-figuring-out-if-x-caused-y">http://egap.org/methods-guides/10-strategies-figuring-out-if-x-caused-y</a>.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>21 Sept 1.3 Qualitative Methods, Case Studies and Process-Tracing [Fall:15]</td>
<td>A key idea here is that satisfactory causal accounts have to have both a measurement strategy and an identification strategy. We will focus especially on the identification strategy used in qualitative work and think through the implications of identification strategy for case selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28 Sept 1.4 Models of Politics [Fall:15]</td>
<td>We will discuss multiple approaches including game theoretic approaches and alternatives. We will go over key ideas from formal theory in class; for this the Harsanyi piece is a good primer, but any other introductory text can also be used. You may find the introduction to <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a> useful. Discussions will focus on what constitutes a theory and how theoretical work relates to empirical inquiry. Please also read: John Huber <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primitives</td>
<td>05 Oct 2.1 Collective Action &amp; Applications [Fall:15]</td>
<td>Also read items 1,2,3,4, 38 of <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a>. The bargaining framework can be used to understand a wide range of issues, particular ones in which outcomes are in some sense inefficient. Focus on clarifying what the moving parts are of a bargaining based explanation — what determines variation in bargaining outcomes. Also read items 27-30 of <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Oct 2.2 Bargaining &amp; Applications [Fall:15]</td>
<td>A key question in coalitional analysis is figuring out why we don’t always see grand coalitions — why do humans divide themselves into groups? Is the existence of groups an instance of bargaining failure? Though not required reading you might find <a href="http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/arps_coalitions.pdf">http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/arps_coalitions.pdf</a>, a useful review of this very wide field. It is dense though. See also: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a> 9, 13-15.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>19 Oct 2.3 Groups &amp; Coalitions [Fall:15]</td>
<td>It will be particularly useful to try to relate the ideas from this weeks readings to what we read in week 1.4 are cultural accounts consistent with methodological individualism or not? Do institutions matter? Or are outcomes driven by something more fundamental like the distribution of power and the structure of preferences? Also review <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">Riker</a> (1980) from section 2.3 and <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">Young</a> (1996) from section 2.5. See <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a> 17.</td>
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<td>26 Oct 2.4 Identity Politics [Fall:15]</td>
<td>People are often divided into various types of identity based groups. Are these special cases of coalitions or is there something distinctive about them?</td>
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<td>09 Nov 2.5 Political Culture [Fall:15]</td>
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<td>16 Nov 2.6 Institutions [Fall:15]</td>
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<td>30 Nov 4.2 Non-Electoral Participation [Fall:15]</td>
<td>We will focus especially on participation in violent collective action. Do the logics we explore also shed light on nonviolent collective action? Do explanations that account for participation in movements also explain the existence or success of those movements? See <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">HOP</a> 39-40</td>
</tr>
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<td>07 Dec 4.3 Revolutions and Regime Change [Structures] [Fall:15]</td>
<td>Review <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CPHUBER-MC">Kuran</a> (1991) from week 2.1. Is there a difference between a revolution and any other type of political transition? What are the revolutions that have not happened, and why haven’t they?</td>
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<td>07-Dec</td>
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B. Spring 2016 Syllabus

Material as described in Table 2.
C. Bibliography


Thad Dunning. Natural and field experiments: The role of qualitative methods. *Qualitative Methods*, 6(2), 2009.


Herbert Kitschelt. Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities. *Comparative political studies*, 33 (6-7):845–879, 2000. URL [http://cps.sagepub.com/content/33/6-7/845.short](http://cps.sagepub.com/content/33/6-7/845.short)


