Florida International University
Department of Political Science

Comprehensive Examination Reading List

THEORY AND METHODS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

revised summer 2005

The comprehensive examination assesses whether the candidate has a broad command of the literature in the comparative politics subfield, especially regarding the literature that falls outside of the geographic area and/or topical focus of the student. Thus, the reading list below is not organized by the traditional geographic divisions of area studies in political science. Regarding area-specific literature in comparative politics, the student is responsible for consulting his/her committee members and other departmental faculty who specialize in a given world region (Europe, Latin America, etc.). The candidate and faculty will work together to develop an appropriate reading program that includes course syllabi and additional literature necessary to understanding area-specific politics. Meanwhile, the list below emphasizes literature that is essential to developing a command of the intellectual history, theoretical debates, and methodological diversity of the subfield.

Candidates should complement the readings below by paying close attention to current trends in research and publication. Although general political science journals such as American Political Science Review, Journal of Politics, American Journal of Political Science, etc., give preference to American politics, they do continue to publish articles with broad implications for comparative politics. However, it tends to be in the three major subfield journals—Comparative Politics, Comparative Political Studies, and World Politics—that one finds the most important ongoing debates. Students should pay particular attention to these three publications, but should complement them by frequent reference to the appropriate area-specific outlets. For example, students of European politics should be reading the European Journal of Political Research and West European Politics; students working on Latin America should be following Latin American Research Review and Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs; and so on. Finally, there are a number of topical and "specialty" journals that may be relevant to a student's research program. For example, debates on political institutions appear in Electoral Studies and Party Politics; exchanges on democratization theory appear in Journal of Democracy; research on developing societies can be found in Studies in Comparative International Development and the Journal of Developing Areas, and so forth. Only by frequent consultation of these publication outlets can one acquire a good sense of intellectual directions in the subfield: who is publishing, what they are writing about, and why the journal felt compelled to print it. Therefore, students should get in the habit of going to the library and "walking the journals," at least once a month.

To help students study for this exam, this reading list organizes the readings by sections. (Students should understand that the creation of these sections, and the assignment of specific works to a given section, is necessarily somewhat arbitrary.) Within each section, the readings are organized chronologically, and they should probably be read that way, in order to gain an appreciation of the cumulative nature of social-scientific research. The readings with an asterisk (*) are “absolutely essential” readings. Other “important” sources are preceded by a plus (+)
sign. The remaining readings are items which are “influential” in the field and which all comparativists, no matter what their specific interests are, should know.

Organization of Readings

1. General Readers/Intellectual Histories
2. The Comparative Method
3. Modernization and Political Development
4. Political Culture
5. Development
   5.1. Dependency
   5.2. World Systems
   5.3. Macropolitical Economy
6. Interest Intermediation
   6.1. Pluralism
   6.2. Corporatism
   6.3. Consociationalism
7. The State
8. Political Regimes: Authoritarianism and Democratization
9. Political Institutions
   9.1. Presidentialism and Parliamentarism
   9.2. Parliamentary Government
   9.3. Political Parties
   9.4. Electoral Systems and Party Competition
   9.5. Voting Turnout and Behavior
   9.6 Legislative Institutions
   9.7 Judicial Institutions
   9.8 Public Policy and Bureaucracy
10. Collective Action and Contentious Politics

1. General Readers/Intellectual Histories

Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington (eds.), Understanding Political Development (Boston: Little Brown, 1987).


2. The Comparative Method


James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

### 3. Modernization and Political Development


Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington (eds.), *Understanding Political Development* (Boston: Little Brown, 1987). [Huntington and Almond Chapters]

4. Political Culture

+Larry Diamond (ed.), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993). [See Diamond Introduction and Conclusion.]

5. Development

5.1. Dependency

5. 2. World Systems


5. 3. Macropolitical Economy


6. Interest Intermediation

6.1. Pluralism


6.2. Corporatism


6.3. Consociationalism


7. The State


*Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).


*Peter Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.), Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).


8. Political Regimes: Authoritarianism and Democratization


9. Political Institutions

9.1. Presidentialism and Parliamentarism

+Scott Mainwaring, “Presidentialism, Multipartism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination,” Comparative Political Studies 26 (2) 1993: 198-228.
9.2. Parliamentary Government


9.3. Political Parties


9.4. Electoral Systems and Party Competition


9.5. Voting Turnout and Behavior

* G. Bingham Powell, Elections as Instruments of Democracy (Yale University Press, 2000).


9.6 Legislative Institutions


David M. Olson, Democratic Legislative Institutions: A Comparative View (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1994).

9.7 Judicial Institutions


9.8 Public Policy and Bureaucracy


10. Collective Action and Contentious Politics

Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (various editions).
+Theda Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).