

Poli 203 (Introduction to comparative politics)

- No term paper
- Get the course book; poli 203 course pack

- The Language of Politics: September 5th 2014 2nd class
 - Politics:
 - Harold Lasswell: Politics is about who get what, when, where and how
 - The authoritative allocation of values and resources
 - Power
 - The ability to make someone do something that you would otherwise not do
 - Coercion: power through force (war)
 - Influence: power through persuasion (negotiations)
 - Authority: A variant of power vested in an individual through their office or position (can be legitimate or illegitimate (president))
 - Ideology, institutions, interests
 - Ideology: An organized system of value and beliefs about the way the world is and about the way the world should be
 - Conservatism
 - An ideology that is resistant to rapid and radical change
 - Value traditions and traditional organizations
 - Tolerate of social hierarchies
 - Liberalism (Classical and Reformed)
 - Accept radical and rapid change through democracy
 - Reformed (early 20th century): rely on government to redress or remedy social inequalities and social hierarchies
 - Institutions: An organization or a set of rule
 - Informal Rules (conventions/ norms): No formal mechanism of punishment
 - Formal Rules (laws): Are written down and have punishments if broken.

- Focus' on the empirical, the evidence what can be shown etc
- The different populations have different opinions on value
- Canada is a profoundly conservative country
- Rules constrain individual abilities and restrain us from exercising power
- Democracy is a synonym for freedom
- Human beings can be good people but they lack in virtue

- Our actions in life are dictated by our desires our fulfill our self interests
- The US government was designed based on the idea that humans have a natural tendency to want more power
 - Was a response to that base human nature
 - ex. electoral college
- Power seeker and a potential tyrant resides in all human beings (or so is the assumption in this class)

9/10/2014 (Where Power Resides)

- Democracy
 - different forms of this everywhere
 - constitutions
 - form of government
 - Procedural Democracy
 - focusing on the rules of the game
 - free and fair election and regular temporals
 - Substantive
 - focuses on the outcome
- The State
 - Permanent set or political rules(institutions) and organizations
 - government is something that comes and goes
 - states and citizenship
 - The State is not the government
 - Bureaucracy is an important part of the state
 - in most democratic contexts as well
- Federal and Unitary States
 - Federal State has two forms of government
 - national and subnational governments (federal and state)
 - rules cannot be easily changed
 - Unitary has at least two levels of government
 - the rules of the state can be easily changed
- Parliamentary and Presidential Systems
 - Every government has 3 branches of government
 - However they have different understanding of how the power should be distributed
 - Presidential
 - Checks and Balances
 - Parliamentary
 - Legislative and Executive are overlapped or fused
- Political Parties
 - A group of individuals who join together for the purposes of capturing political authority and implementing a policy agenda

- Civil Society
 - The people and how the people socialize
 - Social Movements
 - Interest Groups
 - Groups of individuals who join together for the purposes of influence policy makers
- Francis Fukuyama
 - says it's the end of history because democracy is the the only form of government that can survive in the present day
- Duverger's Law

9/12/2014

- The Writing Center -> go to if need to know how to cite properly
- Constitution of canada has multiculturalism (look up)
- What makes someone successful
 - Connections help to be successful
 - Charisma
 - Timing/ luck
 - Talent
 - Demand
 - Seizing the opportunity
- Cause and Effect
 - Ex: Talent -> success
- Variables
 - Independent (Causes)
 - opportunity, luck, demand, etc
 - Things that can have different levels (a lot, not alot, average amount)
 - Dependent (Effect)
 - The resulting factor
- Subfields
 - International Relations
 - examination of the state
 - Domestic Politics
 - focus on local politics
 - Public Policy
 - looking at the decision making of administration
 - learning how to be a bureaucrat
 - Political Theory
 - normative concerns or normative politics

- Theories
 - Explaining things
 - Differences
 - Politics
 - Variables
 - Law like generalization
 - Puzzles
 - Allocation of resources and power
 - One of the five subfields of politics
- It's a subfield of politics where we study theories of differences, variables and things like lawlike generalizations. We also observe and compare different world views such as the relationships between independent and dependent variables.
 - Explain the political words used in the previous sentence basically
- Trust your instinct or opinion
 - Be able to explain and defend your instincts/ opinions systematically
- No research paper. The papers will begin with an observation of reality and then you will see if you can explain situations better than others
- Our decisions are driven by calculations, reasonably, rationally not through emotions or w/e
- There are irrational and rational types of actions/ choices

9/19/2014

● **Independent and dependent variables -> *might find way to exam,***
REMEMBER

- the DV is reliant on what the IV is
- ex. Success depends on talent
 - Positive relationship: As levels of talent increases so does your success and vice versa.
 - ie the variables move in the same direction
 - Negative (inverse) relationship: As levels of talent decrease your levels of success increase.
 - ie the variables move in opposite directions
- Only one dependent variable is looked at
- Diachronic/ Synchronic
 - Dia is the difference in a single case(unit, person etc) over time (a change that occurs over time)
 - the change in the US society* over time*

- Synch is many cases in a single time period
 - Northern and Southern Italy at the same time and their amount of democracy - the difference in amounts (North had most)
- Most similar/ most different Design Systems
 - allows us to look beneath the obvious answers and to what really is happening
 - MS: Sometimes when we observe reality we will see a great difference of the dv under similar conditions
 - allows us to eliminate certain hypothesis
 - MD: Very similar results under different systems/ conditions
 - class at mcgill and class at concordia have different systems but similar results

9/24/2014

- Diamond
 - uses the most different design system
 - looked at societies that failed throughout a lot of time (100 yrs?)
 - If you look at societal collapse across time, they all share in common is the fact is once they reach their peak the leaders focus on short term rewards at the cost of the society (self interests)
- Sartori
 - Primary purpose of comparative politics is actually comparative checking
 - nowadays it is about checking and questioning already existing theories of political phenomenons
 - Testing hypotheses and theories in ways that they haven't been tested before
 - If you do comparative politics you have to be aware to avoid 5 things
 - 1) Parochialism- don't limit your theories to a single case or aspect (like only American or Canadian)
 - 2) Misclassification- be sure to defined your terms and understand what you are talking about
 - do not assume that you're reader is smart and curious but has no previous knowledge on your subject/ theory
 - Anytime that you introduce a new term, follow it by a comma and then "by which I mean"
 - 3) Degreeism
 - we can't live in a world of infinite degrees or shades of grey- need black and white terms
 - 4) Concept Stretching

- Democracy for example- don't stretch it to incorporate all civilizations throughout time
- Expectations/ Evaluation (Midterm)
 - Demonstrate Critical Insight
 - Profs don't want to see simple regurgitation of facts, but able to argue, contend and persuade
 - Identify common themes across readings, etc
 - Take two sources that don't directly talk to each other and engage them in a conversation
- Questions
 - How should we compare?
 - Identify what it is you are trying to explain (the DV)
 - Tremblay
 - Make sure the that DV is comparable
 - Comparable according to the rules of Satori
 - rules of the game
 - Causes
 - use the MS and MD to limit independent variable
 - Tremblay
- Perhaps values are a detriment to society, as are social classes
- All good things come in threes
 - make three arguments in reading
 - 2-5 arguments is average
 - 1 is deterministic
 - 27 is too vague/ broad

9/26/2014 (Democracy)

- Origins
 - has existed for at least 25 hundred years
 - ancient greece
 - Demos and C
- Franchise
- Waves
- Understandings
- Variants
 - one exists everywhere
 - one for only exists in certain placed
 - Direct Democracy
- Democracy has come and gone through three major ways. It has never really been consistent
 -

- will there be a counter wave against democracy in the future or is democracy established as something that has to be

10/1/2014

- Videos
 - looking for the dependent variable
 - ie democracy
 - shared power and shared respect (high levels of both)
 - (low levels) When shared power and shared respect decline we are living in a despotism
 - harold laswell
 - Systems of government and fluctuate between democracy and despotism
 - Economic balance is the emergence of a middle class
 - Democracy is very tentative and can change over time
 - To predict the success of democracy you must see the emergence of a middle class and a lot of people having a sort of enlightenment knowledge/insight
- Karl and Schmitter
 - Looking at it with a procedural understanding
 - Asked, “Do they actually have the right to call itself a democracy?”
 - First 8-9 pages are an expansion of the features required to be a democracy
 - institutionalized competition
 - includes factions and societies
 - civil society
 - really about social mobilization and interest group
 - sovereignty of decision making
 - key to having a democratic state
 - Although there are certain rules that all states must have to be a democracy, many can differ- not be the exact same thing.
 - Every level of democracy has a certain level of uncertainty
 - you do not know who is going to win or which decisions will be carried through and followed
 - the outcomes are never predetermined
 - makes it keep on playing because you'll think that maybe you'll win next time
 - create the illusion of uncertainty
 - democracy will continue to persist as long as the factor of uncertainty is there in reality or in illusion
- The key to democracy according to Laswell is Economic Equality

- in the past years the Economic Equality or Economic Balance in the US has been declining
 - is not unbalanced
 - but democracy is still there
 - This is a puzzle
 - (I think it's because of the belief of equal opportunity)
- Questions:
 - What is a democracy?
 - Why do democracies develop and persist?
 - Where do power reside?
 - with the people
 - it's a relationship between the ruled and the ruler(s), but in the end the people have power over the rulers' fate and thus give people the power
 - is a common assumption
 - Depending on our perspective our answer to this question might differ
 - by "might" he means definitely

10/3/2014

- no quotes are direct references are needed, but use the names if u can remember them. The main point of this exam is to internalize the information and show that you understand the information
- 20% of the final grade
- What is the State?
 - Must have
 - Territory
 - clear and defined borders
 - Citizens
 - passports
 - Sovereignty
 - within territory
 - must be able to make decisions without being told they have to or cannot
 - Monopoly control over violence
 - within a particular territory the state is the only legitimate authority permitted to use the exercise of power
 - Taxation

- need to pay for the things inside of the State such as the bureaucracy, the police, teachers, etc is by taxing the citizens
 - “extraction” or “extraction of resources” at all times
 -
 - Bureaucracy
 - the people who continue to make the State run properly
 - Legitimate Authority
 - having power/ authority by the means of one’s office or position
 - traditional authority
 - authority that is just naturally there
 - like parents “do as I say because I said so”
 - the church
 - charismatic authority
 - someone who can convince someone to do things they wouldn’t normally do through his words and actions
 - Martin Luther King Jr
 - Trudo (the father)
 - (Rational) Legal Authority
 - the states power resides in a constitution
 - The workers and the State itself has legal authority because it derives its power from the Constitution
 - Constitution
 - the highest power of a State
- Nation/ Welfare State
 - every state should have it own national group or every national group should have their own state
 - a single group not a bi-party system
 - this idea has been very contested over the recent years where a nation should have multiple nation group
 - multi-nationalism
 - Classical Liberalism and Reformed Liberalism
 - Have very different terms on how people can increase their chances on living a good life
 - Classical
 - the state’s duty in regard to the economy is nothing. Laissez- faire attitude
 - Reformed
 - the state has a duty to help in the economy and controlling it through the distribution of wealth
 - brought upon welfare

- The State as a Variable
 - Strong State
 - Weak State
 - Provinces are sometimes referred to as Developing states or a provincial state + weak state
 - fulfills most of the eight categories but not all of them
 - Country and Strong State are not necessarily the same thing
 - A country can be a weak state
- Sartori says that you can no longer use guides during acceptations. It can still be used for other things not outliers
- Are taxations really necessary for a state to exist?
 - Roffman would refer to this as a puzzle

10/8/2014

- Test
 - Have to have done the reading
 - take notes and understand them
 - show that you don't have a convergent answer
 - 2-4 key arguments
 - Thesis and answer to the question and then the evidence
 - How?
 - Always leave a couple of lines blank at the beginning of the answer
 - use evidence from lecture, reading and videos
- Review
 - have the syllabus with you
- Tilly
 - the state is always in conflict with the society
 - society is strong state is weak
 - society is strong state is strong
 - the state is no really different fundamentally then a gangster protection system thing (protection racket)
 - state development (also talked about on the mongolia video)

10/10/2014

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