

PS840: Comparative Political Economy

Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin–Madison
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Spring 2024

Class times: Mondays, 1:20–3:15 pm
Class location: North Hall 422 (the Ogg Room)
Class website: canvas.wisc.edu/courses/390092

Office hours: Thursdays, 9:30–11 am
(Sign up at calendly.com/rikhil/)
E-mail: bhavnani@wisc.edu

Requisites

Graduate/professional standing.

Course overview

This class examines the effects of politics on the economy and vice-versa, in developing and developed countries. Topics covered include institutions, the state, regime type, conflict, accountability and responsiveness, inequality and redistribution, gender, ethnic differences, economic integration and the environment.

Instructional mode

Face-to-face.

Learning outcomes

Gain an awareness of some of the classics and cutting edge of the political economy literature. Develop an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary research designs. Learn how to replicate existing empirical work and write journal reviews. Be able to develop theoretically grounded and testable hypotheses, and to formulate and implement compelling research designs to evaluate hypotheses.

Regular and Substantive Student-Instructor Interaction

1. Providing direct instruction;
2. Assessing and providing feedback on students' coursework;
3. Providing information and responding to questions about the course content;
4. Facilitating group discussion regarding the course content.

Course credits

This is a three credit class. The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities, which include class meetings of two hours each week, multiple instructor-student meetings over the course of the semester, reading, data collection, analysis, writing, etc.

Assignments and grading

The class grade will be based on:

1. Active, informed class participation, for 15% of the class grade. Participants are expected to have read assigned works closely, and reflected on them, including possibly by discussing them with their colleagues before class.
2. An in-class presentation summarizing and critiquing the readings for a week, for 15% of the class grade. A PDF of the slide deck should be uploaded to Canvas before class. I will request you to sign up for presentations in the first class.
3. A replication of any recently published paper on the syllabus, for 15% of the class grade. The replication should consist of all the data and code (in R or STATA) used to duplicate and extend the results of the paper, and a brief (2–3 single-spaced pages, excluding tables and figures) memo outlining the findings. Students should duplicate the key tables and figures in the paper, and should extend the results by checking for robustness, including, as appropriate, by using an alternative estimator, analyzing heterogeneous treatment effects, examining other observable implications, using new data, etc. All replication materials should be placed in a folder with your last name and uploaded to the class Box folder no later than one week after the paper has been discussed in class. This is a time-intensive assignment, so please start early.
4. A referee report, for 15% of the class grade. These must be written on one of the unpublished readings, and should be posted on Canvas by 8pm the day before the reading is discussed. The report should be 1–3 single-spaced pages, and should start with a short appreciative paragraph (i.e., not a page or two) summarizing the work. See [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for advice on how to write a referee report.
5. A 20–25 page research paper and its presentation, for 40% of the class grade. Students should discuss their topics with me once by week 6, and a second time by week 11. A PDF of the slide deck should be uploaded to Canvas before your presentation. Papers are due on Canvas one week after the last class, on 5/6. The paper will be graded on the questions posed, theory, hypotheses and research design, and not the statistical significance of preliminary results.

Assignments will be given A, AB, B, BC, C, D or F grades. To calculate the final letter grade, these grades will be converted to numeric scores (A = 96.5, AB = 90.5, B = 85.5, BC = 80.5, C = 74.5, D = 68, F = 63), which will then be summed using the weights noted above. The total score will be converted to the final letter grade using the following scale:

$93 \leq A \leq 100$, $88 \leq AB < 93$, $83 \leq B < 88$, $78 \leq BC < 83$, $71 \leq C < 78$, $65 \leq D < 71$, and $0 \leq F < 65$.

The participation grade will be assigned as follows:

A: This student never misses class, always completes assigned readings, and comes to class prepared to think carefully, making connections between readings and across topics. He or she is willing to take the lead in discussion periodically, posing interesting questions or taking risks by answering tough questions. He or she avoids dominating discussion, instead participating mindfully in discussion with other students, considering their ideas and responding thoughtfully and respectfully. He or she helps to create a sense of a shared conversation in the group as a whole. This student shows passion for the work of the class and is committed fully to our work while in the classroom.

AB: This student does most of what an A student does, but may be slightly deficient in one area – for instance, he or she may be a conscientious reader and thinker who tends not to listen to other students or otherwise dominates conversation instead of engaging in productive deliberation. Or, he or she may have been late to class a few times, or may have missed a reading or two.

B: This student participates often, but not consistently. He or she may attend every class and do all the readings but avoids taking the lead in discussion, instead only responding to questions or adding periodically to others' ideas. This student may participate well but may have missed a class and failed to submit the makeup assignment.

BC: This student may be a frequent but superficial discussion participant. The student may let shyness keep him or her from participating as fully as he or she should. At times the student may seem not to have done the readings, though he or she usually comes prepared.

C: This student is intermittently prepared for class (e.g., participates well but has missed two classes without submitting a makeup assignment). He or she may have flashes of brilliance, but rarely participates beyond the occasional superficial comment.

D: This student very rarely participates, and only in superficial ways.

F: This student has missed three classes without submitting a makeup assignment and/or attends most classes but never participates.

North Hall

The Political Science department is located in North Hall, the oldest building on campus. Due to its age, this building is not accessible to individuals with mobility disabilities and does not have an elevator or accessible restroom. The department is committed to equal opportunity for all students to attend office hours, advising, and other department-related events. Please contact me if North Hall presents a disability-related barrier to you, and the department will gladly work to ensure access. If you require a disability-related accommodation for the academic requirements of this course unrelated to North Hall, please review the "Accommodations for students with disabilities" section below.

Rules, rights & responsibilities

See <http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/>.

Course evaluations

You will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester when your course evaluation is available. You will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID where you can complete the evaluation and submit it, anonymously. Your feedback is important to me.

Academic calendar and religious observances

See <https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/#religious-observances>.

Academic integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW–Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to <http://studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The University of Wisconsin–Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW–Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I, will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center (at 1305 Linden Drive and 608.263.2741; see www.mcburney.wisc.edu) to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student’s educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Diversity and inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW–Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, back-

ground, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin–Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background—people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Class schedule and readings

Class 1 (1/29): What is political economy?

Gerber, Elizabeth (2003). “What is Political Economy?” *The Political Economist*, Fall.

Ostrom, Elinor (2005). “A Letter from the Chair” *The Political Economist*, Winter.

Class 2 (2/5): Institutions rule

North, Douglass C and Barry R Weingast (1989). “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-century England”. In: *The Journal of Economic History* 49.4, pp. 803-832.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A Robinson (2001). “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation”. In: *American Economic Review* 91.5, pp. 1369-1401.

Bhandari, Abhit (2022). “Political determinants of economic exchange: Evidence from a business experiment in Senegal”. In: *American Journal of Political Science* 66.4, pp. 835-852.

Dell, Melissa and Benjamin A Olken (2020). “The Development Effects of the Extractive Colonial Economy: The Dutch Cultivation System in Java”. In: *The Review of Economic Studies* 87.1, pp. 164-203.

Nunn, Nathan and Leonard Wantchekon (2011). “The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa”. In: *American Economic Review* 101.7, pp. 3221-52.

Class 3 (2/12): State capacity

Garfias, Francisco (2018). “Elite Competition and State Capacity Development: Theory and Evidence from Post-revolutionary Mexico”. In: *American Political Science Review* 112.2, pp. 339-357.

Lee, Melissa M and Nan Zhang (2017). “Legibility and the Informational Foundations of State Capacity”. In: *The Journal of Politics* 79.1, pp. 118-132.

Suryanarayan, Pavithra and Steven White (2021). “Slavery, Reconstruction, and Bureaucratic Capacity in the American South”. In: *American Political Science Review* 115.2, pp. 568-584.

Charnysh, Volha (2019). “Diversity, Institutions, and Economic Outcomes: Post-WWII Displacement in Poland”. In: *American Political Science Review* 113.2, pp. 423-441.

Bhavnani, Rikhil, Alexander Lee, and Soledad Prillaman (2023). “Coethnic Rivalry and Solidarity: The Political Economy of Politician-Bureaucrat Cooperation in India”.

Class 4 (2/19): Regime type

Ferraz, Claudio, Frederico Finan, and Monica Martinez-Bravo (2024). “Political Power, Elite Control, and Long-Run Development: Evidence from Brazil”. In: *Journal of the European Economic Association*.

Harding, Robin and David Stasavage (2014). “What Democracy Does (and Doesn’t Do) for Basic Services: School Fees, School Inputs, and African Elections”. In: *The Journal of Politics* 76.1, pp. 229-245.

Miller, Grant (2008). “Women’s Suffrage, Political Responsiveness, and Child Survival in American History”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123.3, pp. 1287-1327.

Olson, Mancur (1993). “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development”. In: *American Political Science Review*, pp. 567-576.

Sanchez de la Sierra, Raul (2020). “On the Origins of the State: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo”. In: *Journal of Political Economy* 128.1, pp. 32-74.

Class 5 (2/26): Conflict

Gaikwad, Nikhar, Erin Lin, and Noah Zucker (2023). “Gender after Genocide: How Violence Shapes Long-Term Political Representation”. In: *World Politics* 75.3, pp. 439-481.

Dube, Oeindrila and Juan F Vargas (2013). “Commodity price shocks and civil conflict: Evidence from Colombia”. In: *Review of Economic Studies* 80.4, pp. 1384-1421.

Jha, Saumitra (2013). “Trade, institutions, and ethnic tolerance: Evidence from South Asia”. In: *American Political Science Review* 107.4, pp. 806-832.

Nunn, Nathan and Nancy Qian (2014). “US Food Aid and Civil Conflict”. In: *American Economic Review* 104.6, pp. 1630-66.

Condra, Luke N., James D. Long, Andrew C. Shaver, and Austin L. Wright (2018). “The Logic of Insurgent Electoral Violence”. In: *American Economic Review* 108.11, pp. 3199-3231.

Class 6 (3/4): Accountability and responsiveness

Besley, Timothy and Robin Burgess (2002). “The Political Economy of Government Responsiveness: Theory and Evidence from India”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117.4, pp. 1415-1451.

Ferraz, Claudio and Frederico Finan (2011). “Motivating Politicians: The Impacts of Monetary Incentives on Quality and Performance”.

Raffler, Pia J (2022). “Does political oversight of the bureaucracy increase accountability? Field experimental evidence from a dominant party regime”. In: *American Political Science Review* 116.4, pp. 1443-1459.

Achen, Christopher H and Larry M Bartels (2012). “Blind Retrospection: Why Shark Attacks are Bad for Democracy”. In: *Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Vanderbilt University. Working Paper*.

Fowler, Anthony and Andrew B Hall (2018). “Do Shark Attacks Influence Presidential Elections? Reassessing a Prominent Finding on Voter Competence”. In: *The Journal of Politics* 80.4, pp. 1423-1437.

Achen, Christopher H and Larry M Bartels (2018). “Statistics as If Politics Mattered: A Reply to Fowler and Hall”. In: *The Journal of Politics* 80.4, pp. 1438-1453.

Fowler, Anthony and Andrew B Hall (2018). “Politics as if Evidence Mattered: A Reply to Achen and Bartels”.

Dunning, Thad, Guy Grossman, Macartan Humphreys, Susan D Hyde, Craig McIntosh, and Gareth Nellis (2019). *Information, Accountability, and Cumulative Learning: Lessons from Metaketa I*. Cambridge University Press.

Class 7 (3/11): Gender

Alesina, Alberto, Paola Giuliano, and Nathan Nunn (2013). “On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128.2, pp. 469-530.

Betz, Timm, David Fortunato, and Diana O’Brien (2021). “Women’s descriptive representation and gendered import tax discrimination”. In: *American Political Science Review* 115.1, pp. 307-315.

Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra and Esther Duflo (2004). “Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India”. In: *Econometrica* 72.5, pp. 1409-1443.

Grosjean, Pauline and Rose Khattar (2019). “It’s Raining Men! Hallelujah? The Long-run Consequences of Male-biased Sex Ratios”. In: *The Review of Economic Studies* 86.2, pp. 723-754.

La Ferrara, Eliana, Alberto Chong, and Suzanne Duryea (2012). “Soap Operas and Fertility: Evidence from Brazil”. In: *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 4.4, pp. 1-31.

Class 8 (3/18): Ethnic differences

Atkin, David, Eve Colson-Sihra, and Moses Shayo (2021). “How do we choose our identity? a revealed preference approach using food consumption”. In: *Journal of Political Economy* 129.4, pp. 1193-1251.

Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel, and Daniel N Posner (2010). “Political competition and ethnic identification in Africa”. In: *American Journal of Political Science* 54.2, pp. 494-510.

Abdelgadir, Aala and Vasiliki Fouka (2020). “Political secularism and Muslim integration in the West: Assessing the effects of the French headscarf ban”. In: *American Political Science Review* 114.3, pp. 707-723.

Kasara, Kimuli (2007). “Tax Me if You Can: Ethnic Geography, Democracy, and the Taxation of Agriculture in Africa”. In: *American Political Science Review*, pp. 159-172.

Michelitch, Kristin (2015). “Does electoral competition exacerbate interethnic or interpartisan economic discrimination? Evidence from a field experiment in market price bargaining”. In: *The American Political Science Review* 109.1, pp. 43-61.

Class 9 (4/1): Integration

Feigenbaum, James J. and Andrew B. Hall (2015). “How Legislators Respond to Localized Economic Shocks: Evidence from Chinese Import Competition”. In: *The Journal of Politics* 77.4, pp. 1012-1030.

Baccini, Leonardo and Stephen Weymouth (2021). “Gone for good: Deindustrialization, white voter backlash, and US presidential voting”. In: *American Political Science Review* 115.2, pp. 550-567.

Serlin, Theo (2023). “The Export Boom and the Backlash: Reactions to Positive Economic Change in First World War America”.

Gaikwad, Nikhar and Pavithra Suryanarayan (2019). “Attitudes toward globalization in ranked ethnic societies”.

Helms, Benjamin, Sonal S Pandya, and Sheetal Sekhri (2023). “Bartering Bureaucrats: Foreign Direct Investment and Rent Seeking”.

Class 10 (4/8): The environment

Gaikwad, Nikhar, Federica Genovese, and Dustin Tingley (2022). “Creating climate coalitions: Mass preferences for compensating vulnerability in the world’s two largest democracies”. In: *American Political Science Review* 116.4, pp. 1165-1183.

Gulzar, Saad and Gemma Dipoppa (2023). “No Smoke Without a Fire: Bureaucratic Incentives, Crop Burning, and Air Pollution in South Asia”.

Gulzar, Saad, Apoorva Lal, and Benjamin Pasquale (2023). “Representation and Forest Conservation: Evidence from India’s Scheduled Areas”. In: *American Political Science Review*, pp. 1-20.

Burgess, Robin, Matthew Hansen, Benjamin A Olken, Peter Potapov, and Stefanie Sieber (2012). “The political economy of deforestation in the tropics”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127.4, pp. 1707-1754.

Harding, Robin, Mounu Prem, Nelson Ruiz, and David Vargas (2023). “Buying a Blind Eye: Campaign Donations, Forbearance, and Deforestation in Colombia”. In: *American Political Science Review*.

Class 11 (4/15): Final project presentations, 1/3

Class 12 (4/22): Final project presentations, 2/3

Class 13 (4/29): Final project presentations, 3/3

Final papers due on Canvas, 5/6