

Political Science 210: Politics in Historical Perspective

Wednesday 9-11am
291 Barrows

Professor Jason Wittenberg
732 Barrows Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday 9:30-11:30
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Course Description

According to William Faulkner, the past is never dead, it is not even past. Nearly everyone agrees that history somehow matters for understanding political life, but there are many disagreements concerning how much, how we would know, and the mechanisms of history's influence. What role do historical legacies, path dependence, and past critical junctures play in contemporary politics? What are the best methods for illuminating the influence of the past? What does it mean for a political phenomenon to persist? We explore these and related questions through close examination of an eclectic array of scholarly materials.

Course Requirements

Two-thirds of your grade will be based on a term paper, due in my mailbox by Monday, May 12, 5:00pm. You are free to choose any topic you wish, provided that it is relevant to the course. Be sure you discuss the topic with me in advance. A one-page synopsis of your proposed paper is due in class on March 12. One-third of your grade will be based on class participation and some short writing assignments that I will announce in class the week before they are due. These papers (usually no more than a few pages long) should be circulated to me and the other class members no later than 5:00pm on the Tuesday before class meets. Please come to class prepared to critically discuss issues raised in the readings.

Course Reader: The reader for this course is available at University Copy, 2425 Channing Way (549-2335). Readings available on bSpace are marked as such.

Note on Readings: I am always discovering new and better readings. Therefore I reserve the right to add or subtract readings as the course progresses.

TENTATIVE Course Outline

Jan 22: Introduction and Overview

Jan 29: An Example of History Matterring

- Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. (Princeton University Press, 1993).

Feb 5: Temporality and Political Life: An Overview

- Nathan Nunn, "Historical Development," forthcoming in Aghion et al., *Handbook of Economic Growth* (bSpace)
- Ronald Aminzade, "Historical Sociology in Time," *Sociological Methods & Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, May 1992, pp. 456-480.(bSpace)
- Paul Pierson, "Big, Slow-Moving, and ... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics," in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 177-207. (bSpace)
- Symposium, "Conceptions of Historical Time: Looking Beyond Time on the Clock," *Qualitative & Multi-Method Research*, Fall 2013. (bSpace)

Feb 12: Historical Institutionalism and Path Dependency

- Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, "Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science," in Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner, eds., *Political Science: the State of the Discipline* New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2002, pp. 693-721. (bSpace)
- Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, "Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence," *Political Analysis* Vol. 14, Issue 3, pp. 250-267. (bSpace)
- Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94, No. 2, June 2000, pp. 251-267. (bSpace)
- Scott E. Page, "Path Dependence," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 1, 2006, pp. 87-115. (bSpace)

Feb 19: Critical Junctures

- Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, “Framework: Critical Junctures and Historical Legacies,” in Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, pp. 27-39. (bSpace)
- James Mahoney, “Path-Dependent Explanations of Regime Change: Central America in Comparative Perspective,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 2001, pp. 111-141. (bSpace)
- Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism,” *World Politics*, Vol. 59, April 2007, pp. 341-369. (bSpace)
- Hillel David Soifer, “The Causal Logic of Critical Junctures,” *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 12, 2012, pp. 1572-1597. (bSpace)

Feb 26: Historical Legacies: Observational Research

- Timothy Frye, “The Limits of Legacies: Property Rights in Russian Energy.” Unpublished manuscript. (bSpace)
- Pauline Grosjean, “The Weight of History on European Cultural Integration: A Gravity Approach,” *American Economic Review: Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 101, No. 3, 2011, pp. 504-508. (bSpace)
- Konstantin Kashin and Daniel Ziblatt, “A Missing Historical Variable? The Long Run Effects of Nineteenth Century Landholding Patterns on Contemporary Voting in Central Europe, 1895-2009.” Unpublished manuscript, version June 2011. (bSpace)
- Grigore Pop-Eleches and Joshua A. Tucker, “Associated with the Past? Communist Legacies and Civic Participation in Post-Communist Countries,” *East European Politics & Societies and Cultures*, Vol. 27, No. 1, February 2013, pp. 45-68. (bSpace)

Mar 5: Historical Legacies: Experimental (and “Experimental”) Research

- Sascha O. Becker et al., “The Empire is Dead, Long Live the Empire! Long-Run Persistence of Trust and Corruption in the Bureaucracy.” Institute for the Study of Labor (Bonn) Discussion Paper No. 5584, March 2011. (bSpace)

- Irena Grosfeld and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya, “Persistent effects of empires: Evidence from the partitions of Poland.” Paris School of Economics Working paper no. 2013-05, version February 2012. (bSpace)
- Alexander Lee and Kenneth A. Schultz, “Comparing British and French Colonial Legacies: A Discontinuity Analysis of Cameroon,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 7, 2012, pp. 365-410. (bSpace)
- Nathan Nunn and Leonard Wantchekon, “The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa,” *American Economic Review*, December 2011, pp. 3221-3252. (bSpace)

Mar 12: Historical Legacies: A Critical Reappraisal

- Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*. (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), pp. 27-39. (bSpace)
- Paola Cesarini and Katherine Hite, “Introducing the Concept of Authoritarian Legacies,” in Katherine Hite and Paola Cesarini, eds., *Authoritarian Legacies and Democracy in Latin America and Southern Europe* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), pp. 1-24. (bSpace)
- Stephen Kotkin and Mark Beissinger, “The Historical Legacies of Communism: An Empirical Agenda,” in Mark Beissinger and Stephen Kotkin, eds., *The Historical Legacies of Communism* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming. (bSpace)
- Jody LaPorte and Danielle Lussier, “What is the Leninist Legacy? Assessing Twenty Years of Scholarship,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 70, No. 3, Fall 2011, pp. 637-654.

Mar 19: Class Presentations

Mar 26: Spring Break

Apr 2: Continuity: Empirical Analyses

- Leonid Peisakhin, “Long Run Persistence of Political Attitudes and Behavior: A Focus on Mechanisms.” Paper prepared for the 2013 American Political Science Association meeting, Chicago, IL, 28 August-1 September, 2013. (bSpace)

- Nico Voigtländer and Hans-Joachim Voth, “Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Violence in Nazi Germany,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, forthcoming. (bSpace)
- Jason Wittenberg, *Crucibles of Political Loyalty: Church Institutions and Electoral Continuity in Hungary*. (Cambridge University Press, 2006), selections. (bSpace)
- Luigi Guisio, Paola Sapienza, and Luigi Zingales, “Long-term persistence.” Unpublished manuscript. Version July 2013. (bSpace)

Apr 9: Continuity: Conceptualization

- Alexander Gerschenkron, “On the Concept of Continuity in History,” in Alexander Gerschenkron, *Continuity in History and Other Essays* (Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 11-39. (bSpace)
- Orlando Patterson, “Culture and continuity: causal structures in socio-cultural persistence,” in Roger Friedland and John Mohr, eds., *Matters of Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 71-109. (bSpace)
- Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 37-54. (bSpace)
- Jason Wittenberg, “What is a Historical Legacy?” Unpublished manuscript available at: <http://www.jasonwittenberg.org/research/work-in-progress>

Apr 16: What Counts as Discontinuity?

- Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 82-100. (bSpace)
- Jason Wittenberg, “How Similar Are They? Rethinking Electoral Congruence,” *Quality & Quantity*, Vol. 47, Issue 3, April 2013, pp. 1687-1701. (bSpace)
- Ellis Goldberg, “Thinking about how Democracy Works,” *Politics & Society*, 1996, Vol. 24, No. 7, pp. 7-18. (bSpace)
- Robert A. Kann, *The Problem of Restoration: A Study in Comparative Political History*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968, selections. (bSpace)
- Ruth Berins Collier and Sebastian Mazzuca, “Does History Repeat?,” *The Oxford handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, 2013. (bSpace)

Apr 23: Paradoxes of Continuity and Change

- Michael B. Burke, "Cohabitation, Stuff and Intermittent Existence," *Mind*, New Series, Vol. 89, No. 355, July 1980, pp. 391-405.
- Michael Chandler, "Surviving Time: The Persistence of Identity in This Culture and That," *Culture and Psychology*, Vol. 6, 2000, No. 2, pp. 209-231.
- Haskell Fain, *Between Philosophy and History*. (Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 68-80.
- Katherine Hawley, *How Things Persist*. (Clarendon Press, 2001), pp. 1-36.
- Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*. (Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 199-209.

Apr 30: Wrap-up

May 7: Reading Period

May 12: Paper due by 4pm in mailbox in 210 Barrows