Intro + Approaches to Comparative Politics

Section 1

Adrian Scheibler

Gov 20: Foundations of Comparative Politics

Fall 2025

Overview

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Section Syllabus
- 3. Practical Guide
- 4. Discussion

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Introductions

- Name
- College year
- Hometown
- Reason for taking the class
- Something you're looking forward to this semester

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Section Syllabus

Section Website

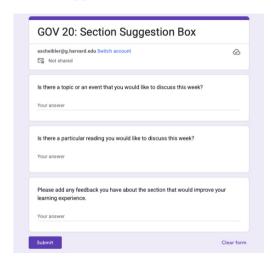
Home CV Research Teaching Course Schedule Gov 20: Foundations of Comparative Politics Week 1 - Introduction and Annroaches Teaching Fellow: Adrian Scheibler Week 2 - Politics of Sections: Thursdays at 1:30pm and 3pm in Room K108 Economic Development Week 3 - Politics of Late Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm at Jenny's Cafe (Harvard Art Museums). Please Development sign up here. Week 4 - The State Week 5 - Democracy and Contact: Email me at ascheibler@fas.harvard.edu. I will attempt to respond to emails within 24 Democratization hours except the day before a paper is due. All emails should have a subject line that begins Week 6 - Democratization with "Gov20:". and Democratic Breakdown Week 7 - Authoritarianism Section Syllabus: Please see the secion syllabus here. and Populism Week 8 - Social Revolution I Suggestion Box: I welcome suggestions at any point of the semester. Please submit Week 9 - Social Revolution II (anonymously) here. Week 10 - Institutions Week 11 - Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict I Week 1 - Introduction and Approaches to Comparative Politics Week 12 - Ethnicity and · Section 1 Slides Ethnic Conflict II Week 12 - Civil Society · Week 1 Recap

Alternatives

Week 2 - Politics of Economic Development: Modernization Theory and its

7 / 16

Section Suggestion Box



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How to Read Social Science I

Some things to consider when reading:¹

- 1. What question is the author trying to answer? [Question]
- 2. Why is this question important? [So what?]
- 3. What is the author's answer? [Hypothesis]
- 4. How does the author support their answer? [Evidence]
- 5. What are the main arguments they argue against? [Counterclaims]
- 6. Are you convinced? Why or why not? [Analysis]

¹Adapted from Sima Biondi.

How to Read Social Science II

- Separate the argument from the evidence
- Be mindful of concepts and definitions
- Do not become stuck on minute details that obscure the main picture
- Take notes on readings to make life easier
- Attend the workshop next Monday (8. September) at 5pm in S010

How to Participate in Section

There are different ways to participate:²

- Text Reviewer: What does the text say?
- Analyst: What do you think about what the text says?
- Respondent: What do you think about your classmate's analysis of the text?
- Synthesizer: Where is this discussion going? What are we missing?
- Be willing to think aloud; it is alright to not have a polished idea
- Interact with others respectfully

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- How do we define the state?

Upcoming Readings

- Reading list:
 - Weber
 - Lerner
 - Rostow
 - Gerschenkron
 - Inglehart and Welzel
- Challenges with older readings
- Next week we begin in earnest

Above all: Have fun!

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