SOC 792D: COMPARATIVE WELFARE STATES
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Office Hours: TuTh 11-12 and by appointment
Class Meetings: Monday 4-6:30 pm  
Classroom: Machmer W32

The welfare state is a central site for analyses of citizenship, inequality and politics. Indeed, research on welfare states is a key lens through which to examine the major theoretical questions that shape political sociology. In this course, you will be introduced to a number of enduring debates in the study of welfare states. How have welfare states been created? What factors support the expansion of the welfare state? Do welfare states mediate or simply institutionalize inequalities of class, race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, etc.? How do welfare states vary across countries or regions? How do they change over time? What factors support the restructuring or retrenchment of the welfare state? Are welfare states still relevant in an increasingly globalized world?

In addition, this course will serve as an introduction to comparative-historical methods. While comparative historical methods are a central research strategy for sociologists (particularly for those interested in global and macro-political processes), they remain widely misunderstood. Doing good comparative historical research requires detailed and systematic knowledge of cases that have been selected with great care. Therefore, in this course, we will read materials on doing comparative historical research and a number of excellent examples of comparative historical research. In doing so, I hope the course will provide both methods training and models for a wide range of students.

Students should leave this course with a good handle on the study of comparative welfare states, important theoretical debates relevant to political sociology, and the comparative historical method. I encourage students to take this course as one of a variety of graduate courses offered on political sociology, inequality (including courses in class, gender, and race/ethnicity), social policy, and social movements (including labor movements).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As a seminar, this course is based on active involvement of all participants. You should complete assigned readings before class, and be prepared to take part in class discussion. You will be in charge of leading discussion of the course material for at least one class session. Organizing the class discussion involves raising specific questions and issues for the week, and relating the material to previous readings and class discussions. Effective discussions should analyze the methods as well as the arguments in the readings. As a discussion leader, you must provide a list of FIVE questions to all students one week _before_ the class session you organize. These questions should help focus the other students as they do the readings, and provide a partial basis for class discussion. Your role as discussion leader will not be in “lecturing” on the material, but facilitating a thoughtful and active discussion of these materials.

You will also write seven short memos responding to materials covered in the readings, due _throughout the semester_. In these one page single-spaced memos, you will discuss and critically evaluate the readings for a particular class session. These memos help ensure that class participants are prepared to enter into good and productive discussions. The memos need not summarize the readings, but should integrate the readings and analyze their strengths and
Finally, you will write a course paper that (a) presents a research proposal for a comparative-historical project or serves as a draft of a comparative-historical paper (on any topic area), or (b) presents a research proposal for a welfare state project or serves as a draft of a paper on some aspect of the welfare state, or (c) both of the above. Final paper topics should be discussed with me and decided by March 7. Rough drafts of the paper are due April 25, no grades will be given these drafts, but 10% will be deducted from the final if a draft is not submitted. The final version of the paper is due May 9. Grades are based on the following criteria.

Class Participation 15%
Organizing class discussion 15%
Memos 35%
Final paper 35%

The grading scale for this course is A=>93; A-=90-93; B+=87-90; B=83-87; B-=80-83, C+=77-80, C=<77.

Required Readings

All books are available at Food for Thought Books, 106 N. Pleasant. They are also on reserve in the W.E.B. DuBois Library. Other course readings will be available through a reader or on the web.


Recommended Books:
COURSE SCHEDULE

**January 31 - Introduction**

Initial meeting to talk about class, and divide up discussion leading responsibilities.

**February 7 - Theoretical Overviews**


**Recommended Reading:**


**February 14 – Comparative Historical Methods**


**February 23 (Wednesday) – Comparative Historical Methods, Part II**

Recommended Readings:

February 28 - Citizenship, Class, and Welfare State Regimes


Recommended Readings:

March 7 – The Emergence of the Welfare State


Recommended Readings:
March 21 – “Maternalism” and the Emergence of the U.S. Welfare State


Recommended Reading:

March 28 - Welfare State Development


Recommended Readings:


April 4 – Race and the U.S. Welfare State

April 11 – Race, Ethnicity, Immigration and the Welfare State


Recommended Readings:

April 21 – Gender, Family, and the Welfare State


Recommended Readings:
April 25 – The Politics of Welfare State Development in Central/Eastern Europe


Recommended:

May 2 -- Globalization and Welfare State Restructuring


Recommended:

May 9 -- Student Presentations

In this session, each student will have a few minutes to present the main elements of their course paper.