DESCRIPTION

The goal of this seminar is to introduce students to the area of Gender and Politics through the lens of the sub-field of Comparative Politics, with a focus on methodology. Students will be exposed to some of the major analytical issues within the growing field of Gender and Politics. They will also become acquainted with a mix of approaches to designing research, including small ‘n’ analysis – the comparative method and the case study approach,’ large ‘n’ quantitative analysis, qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), and strategies that bring together or “bridge” qualitative and quantitative approaches. Concept operationalization and measurement in comparative contexts will be a central issue of this seminar as well. The major skill students will be developing is how to design good theory building studies in the field of comparative gender and politics.

The driving premise of this course is that studying gender and politics through comparing and contrasting political phenomena in a variety of different cultural settings, situated at the nation-state or sub-national level, should be an integral aspect of the new and growing field of Gender and Politics. Too often, both empirical and normative studies in this area have been bound by ethnocentric assumptions tied to the Anglo-American world. As a consequence, our readings cover a range of countries from different regions of the world. A major focus of these works will be questions of gender and the state.

In the first part of the course, you will be introduced to Gender and Politics as it crosscuts Comparative Politics. The major methodological issues and approaches will be reviewed as well as the key concepts used in comparative gender research. You will become initially acquainted with the relevant methodological approaches and contested concepts. In the second part of the class, students will examine how discrete studies in comparative gender and politics have dealt with, or not, the various methodological issues raised in the first part. Three sessions will be devoted to learning about the methodological issues in the RNGS study and then the remaining classes will examine other comparative gender and politics studies with a focus on the state.

The assignments this class are designed to help students develop skills of concept formation and research design; thus allowing students to work on links between theory building and methodological choices.

READING

The following books are available for purchase in the bookstore.


Some required readings will be in a class file in Johnson Tower 713. (The access code for the room is 6135.) You may also get the mainstream journal articles on JSTOR or PROQUEST. Some readings will be distributed to students electronically; others will be available on the RNGS homepage -- http://libarts.wsu.edu/rngs/. In the syllabus, readings in the JT class file are indicated by a J; e-mailed readings by E, and readings on the RNGS website by R.

Students should send me their e-mail addresses the first week of classes, so I can send them all of the electronic readings at once.

SOURCES
Throughout the semester, you should peruse back and current issues of some of the journals below. Women and Politics, International Feminist Journal of Politics, Social Politics, Gender and Society and the new journal Politics and Gender are particularly strong.

International Journal of Women's Studies
Feminist Studies
Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies
Signs
Journal of Women's History
Feminist Review

Gender articles are also frequently found in the general political science journals as well.

The following homepages contain cross-national data on gender and politics issues:
EU Women in Decision-making Data Base: http://www.db-decision.de/
UNIFEM/ UN: http://www.undp.org/unifem/
Interparliamentary Union: http://www.ipu.org/
Women’s e-News: http://www.womensenews.org/index.cfm
Worldbank Gender Stats: http://genderstats.worldbank.org/

REQUIREMENTS
Your grade will have four components. I do not accept late assignments.

1. Seminar Facilitation (10%)
Students will be required to lead one seminar in the second part of the course when we are discussing a book – 5 seminars in all. Two students may share the facilitation role. Rather than giving a formal presentation, seminar leaders are expected to facilitate group discussion of the readings within the bounds of the analytical foci of the class.

2. Participation (30%)

Students will be expected to come to all classes prepared to actively discuss the readings. Your grade will be based on the degree to which in-class participation reflects that you have done the assigned readings for each class and attempted to link them to the larger issues of the course.

3. Concept Review Essays (30%)

Each student is required to write two concept review essays (5 to 10 pages in length, typed and double-spaced, not including the bibliography). Essays may be turned in at any point throughout the semester and students may rewrite each essay once. You should select one of the concepts covered in class related to comparative gender and politics research. Your essay should review the literature that covers the concept both theoretically and empirically, identify and discuss the operational definitions and how the concept is measured. If possible, the essay should identify if there is a common definition, discuss the problems with the treatment of the concepts and suggest some ways of improving the use of the concepts for empirically-based theory-building. Your essays should assess the concept operationalizations in term of the common standards for good concept formation in comparative empirical theory building, elaborated in the early part of this class.

Essays will be evaluated on four components: 1) coverage of literature; 2) discussion of operationalization and measurement of concepts; 3) critique and 4) writing quality. There are no deadlines for this assignment. You should begin tackling this assignment after the two specific sessions on concepts. I will do my best to grade your paper and return it to you within a week from when you turn it in. I would discourage you from waiting until the end of the semester; you will learn from each paper and you may rewrite each paper once. Final rewrites are due no later than December 16th.

4. Comparative Research Design (30%)

You are required to write a research design for an empirical comparative study that addresses one of the theoretical issues raised in the current comparative gender and politics literature. The research design should reflect an understanding of the various methodological issues touched upon in this class. Students will make an informal presentation of their in-progress designs at the last seminar as a means to receive collective feedback from the class for the final paper. Papers must be double-spaced, typed, 15 to 25 pages (excluding, endnotes and bibliography) and use the APSA style format. Research designs are due Friday December 16th, in my office at 5:00 pm.

SCHEDULE

I. CONCEPTS AND METHODS

August 23rd
Presentation of Course and Syllabus

**August 30th**
Class cancelled; APSA meetings.

**September 6th**
*Introduction to the Study of Gender and Politics in Comparative Perspective*
Reading:
*Wiarda*. Chapters 1, 3, 5, & 11.

**September 13th**
*Methods and Approaches in Gender and Politics*
Reading:

APSA 2005 Papers:
*E Ortbals*, Candice D. “ N = 5 to 20: A Challenge to Feminist Research?”

**September 20th**
*Methods and Approaches in Comparative Politics*
September 27th and October 4th
Concepts in Comparative Gender and Politics

For these two seminars, each student will select one concept (or series of concepts) to discuss in class. You should be prepared to discuss competing definitions of the concept(s), debates over their meanings, and operationalization. These sessions will help you out a great deal with your concept essays. Readings may cover several different concepts. Remember that these concepts will be used throughout the semester. Note that these readings are supposed to generate discussion about the application of these concepts; they are by no means the definitive works on these issues.

9/27

Sex/Gender
Intersectionality
Women's interests/Issues
Feminist/Feminism/ Women Friendly
Equality/Equity/Difference/Parity
Discrimination/ Patriarchy/ Male Domination/ Gender Bias/Sexism
Women’s Empowerment and Representation
Women’s Movements/ Feminist Movements

**Note that many of these concepts were covered in gender readings previously assigned.**


Mazur (2002) . Appendix A.

APSA 2005 PAPERS:
R McBride, Dorothy and Amy Mazur “Comparative Study of Women’s Movements: Conceptual Puzzles and RNGS Solutions”
EWeldon, Laurel. "Rethinking Intersectionality: Conceptual Problems in Comparative Research on Gendered Welfare States"
State/Nation/ Nation-state
Regime Types: Authoritarian/Totalitarian/Socialist/Communist/ Liberal
Democratic
Democratizing/Democratic Development
Economic/Social Development
Traditional/Modern/Post-Industrial
Political Culture

Wiarda, Chapters 4,6,7, 8&9
JFrederich, Carl J. and Zbignew K. Brzezinski. 1962. Totalitarian Dictatorship and
Autocracy. Chapter 1.
Innovation in Comparative Research.” World Politics 49(3): 430-451. Also available
online.
Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. (2003). Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural
Chapter 1.

II. APPLICATIONS

Women’s Movements and Women’s Policy Agencies: RNGS and Beyond
October 11th
Getting to Know RNGS
Review the RNGS homepage and read over the following materials:
1) RNGS Project Description
2) Executive Summary (2004)
5) RNGS IWPR Paper Packet ( Hard copy available in class.)

October 18th
A Sectoral Perspective: The Prostitution Network Results
States and the Globalisation of Sex Commerce. Cambridge University Press.

FACILITATOR (s):

October 25th
QCA and RNGS
Reading:
ERNGS QCA Primer
ERNGS QCA Tables
Check out Internet sites for QCA:
http://www.compasss.org/
http://www.u.arizona.edu/~cragin/fsqca.htm

November 1st
**State Feminism in A Global Perspective**

**FACILITATOR(S):**

November 8th
**Feminist Policy in Western Post Industrial Democracies**

**FACILITATOR(S):**

November 15th
**Modernization, Attitudes About Gender Equality and Women’s Status: A Cross-National Perspective**

**FACILITATOR(S):**

Week of 11/21 Thanksgiving Break

November 29th
**Gender and the State in Latin America**

**FACILITATOR(S):**

December 6th
**Presentations on In-Progress Research Designs**