

Summer Term 2025

University of Cologne, Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics

**Chair of International Comparative Political Economy and Economic Sociology (Liaison Chair to the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies)**

**Doctoral and Master Course: We Need to Go Deep: How to Study the Political and Institutional Foundations of Political Economies**

**ECTS:** 6 ECTS

**Instructor:** Prof. Dr. Christine Trampusch

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**Office Hours:** By appointment! Please write an email to: christine.trampusch@uni-koeln.de

**Time:** 1) **Tuesday, April 8, 4.00pm-5.30pm (Room: Seminar Room 3.40 (IBW Building): Introduction**

2) **Friday, April 25, 9.00am-4.00pm (Room: Seminar Room 3.40 (IBW Building)): Basics**

3) **Friday, June 6, 9.00am-5.30pm (Room: Seminar Room 3.40 (IBW Building)): Methods**

4) **Friday, July 4, 9.00am-5.30pm (Room: Seminar Room 3.40 (IBW Building)): Mini-Conference**

**Course Description:** To understand the political and institutional foundations of political economies, we need to go deep. While quantitative and experimental methods test broad claims, they are weaker at studying path dependency, institutional change, equifinality, and causal mechanisms and processes. In this course we will learn more about these comparative advantages of case studies. With case studies we can generate new theoretical insights, identify unknown causes and complex interactions between them, and examine how a cause produces an effect. In the first part of the course we will discuss why it is important to analyze the institutional and political foundations of political economies, what case studies are, and what kind of causality and causal mechanisms we can study with case studies. We will also learn that with the right case selection strategies, our insights can extend far beyond the cases we study, and that generalizability is not the sole domain of quantitative studies. In the second part of the course, we will learn more about specific case study methods for studying the political and institutional foundations of political economies: the comparative method, the parallel demonstration of theory, the method of contrasting contexts, process tracing, and systematic process analysis. We will not only discuss these methods, but also learn how they are applied in practice by case studies in comparative political economy to understand phenomena such as social revolutions, transnational labor activism, the historical co-evolution of skills and welfare regimes, the origins of capitalism, business power, policy feedback, and institutional and preference change. In the third part of the course ('Mini-Conference'), we go into the field and students design their own case study projects to investigate the political and institutional foundations of political economy (the specific topic and research question is each student's choice). As the seminar's overarching goal is to enable participants to write their own research papers, regular attendance is of utmost importance for the quality of term papers. All texts are available on the ILIAS-website of the course.

**Requirements and evidence of academic achievement:** Participants are expected to hand in a two-page outline of their planned term papers until June 27, 2025, 8am. This outline will be discussed in our mini-conference on research projects on July 4, 2025.

**Final grading is based on individual presentations** (which means that you present a paper in class (power point presentation); see syllabus "presentation" and the **term paper** in which the participants develop a research design for an empirical research project (handed in on September 1, 2025, 8am). The **final marking** is as follows: **30% individual presentation; 70% term paper**. Students must fulfill both assignments as requirement. Please note that presentation assignments will be made at the introductory session on April 8; students who do not attend this session will be assigned a presentation by the instructor on April 8.

**Students are expected to:** attend sessions regularly, actively contribute to class discussions, complete assigned readings according to schedule: "compulsory reading" – all students read; "presentation" – only reading by the respective presenter; write a term paper of not more than 10,000 words, own research on literature/data/material is required. All papers will be checked for plagiarism. Term papers have to be written in English language. Since all reading assignments are in English, this will be the general classroom language as well. Participants therefore must know enough English to be able to participate actively. Perfection is not required – you just need to understand and make yourself understood.

**Guidelines for the use of AI in assessments in this course:**

Studying at university is not only about learning subject-specific skills, but also about developing general skills such as critical and structured thinking. The benefits and limitations of AI therefore need to be considered independently by each student. In general, AI can enhance the research process, but it cannot replace it.

**Whenever AI is used, the following points must be strictly adhered to:**

1. Students must undertake independent research, and it must be recognizable as their own work.
2. Students must make the use of AI as transparent as possible and document its use. This includes identifying the content involved, the purpose of the use, the model used, the prompts and settings used, the date of retrieval, and the storage of generated content. If AI tools are used for text processing that goes beyond spellchecking, this must be indicated in a footnote at the beginning of the paper, citing the model used.
3. AI models are not authors and AI-generated content is not a scholarly source and cannot be cited as such.
4. Students are solely responsible for the accuracy of the content. This means that they must correctly cite the sources of the information they use, avoid plagiarism and prevent the spread of false information (e.g. AI hallucinations).
5. According to the current Joint Examination Regulations of the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne (GPO), the declaration of independence must be worded as follows: "I hereby affirm that I have completed the present work independently and without the use of any aids other than those stated. All parts that have been taken literally or analogously from published and unpublished third-party sources, including content generated by AI tools, have been marked as such." (§12(2b), GPO, November 24, 2024)

Tuesday, April 8, 4.00pm-5.30pm	
09.00 - 10.30	<b><u>Introduction</u></b>
Friday, April 25, 9.00am-5.30pm: Basics	
09.00 - 10.30	<b><u>Political &amp; Institutional Foundations of Political Economies</u></b> <b>Compulsory reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clift, B. (2012). Ch. 2. Comparative Political Economy: Lineages from Classical Political Economy, Linkages to international Political Economy &amp; Ch. 4. Disciplinary Politics and the Genealogy of Comparative Political Economy. In B. Clift (2012), <i>Comparative political economy: States, Markets and Global Capitalism</i> (pp. 27-42 &amp; pp. 67-92). Red Globe Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.</li> <li>• Hall, P. A. (2003). Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research. In J. Mahoney &amp; D. Rueschemeyer (eds.), <i>Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences</i> (pp. 373-404). Cambridge University Press.</li> </ul>
10.30 - 12.00	<b><u>Why and How Case Studies?</u></b> <b>Compulsory reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 12(2), 219-245.</li> <li>• George, A.L., Bennett, A. (2005). <i>Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences</i>. Cambridge: MIT Press. Chapter 4.</li> </ul> <b>Student Presentation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ragin, C. (1997). <i>Turning the Tables: How Case-oriented Research Challenges Variable-oriented Research</i>. <i>Comparative Social Research</i>, 16, 27-42.</li> </ul>
12.00 - 01.00	<b>LUNCH ☺</b>
01.00 - 02.30	<b><u>Causality &amp; Causal Mechanisms</u></b> <b>Compulsory reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mahoney, J. &amp; Rodríguez-Caceres, A. (2023). Causal Analysis in Comparative-Historical Analysis: A Pluralistic Approach. In J. M. Box-Steffensmeier et al. (eds.), <i>Oxford Handbook of Engaged Methodological Pluralism in Political Science</i> (Vol 1). Oxford University Press.</li> </ul> <b>Student Presentation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ziblatt, D. (2009). <i>Shaping Democratic Practice and the Causes of Electoral Fraud: The Case of nineteenth-century Germany</i>. <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 103(1), 1-21.</li> </ul>

02.30 - 04.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Case Selection &amp; Context &amp; Generalization</u></b></p> <p><b>Compulsory reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Levy, J.S. (2008). Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference. <i>Conflict Management and Peace Science</i>, 25(1), 1-18.</li> <li>Bennett, A. (2022). 4. Drawing Contingent Generalizations from Case Studies. In J. Widner, M. Woolcock &amp; D.O. Nieto (eds), <i>The Case for Case Studies</i> (pp. 62-86). Cambridge University Press.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Presentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locke, R. M. &amp; Thelen, K. (1995). Apples and Oranges Revisited: Contextualized Comparisons and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics. <i>Politics &amp; Society</i>, 23(3), 337-367.</li> </ul>
<b>Friday, June 6, 9.00am-5.30pm: Methods</b>	
09.00 - 10.30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Comparative Method: Social Revolutions &amp; Transnational Labor Activism</u></b></p> <p><b>Compulsory reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skocpol, T. (1979). Explaining Social Revolutions. Alternative to Existing Theories. In T. Skocpol (1979). <i>States &amp; Social Revolutions. A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China</i> (pp. 3-43). Cambridge University Press.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Presentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brookes, M. (2018). Explaining Employer Responses to Transnational Labor Activism: Indonesia and Cambodia Compared. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i>, 51(6), 699-729.</li> </ul>
10.30 - 12.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Parallel Demonstration of Theory &amp; Contrast of Contexts: The Historical Co-evolution of Skills and Welfare, the Origins of Capitalism</u></b></p> <p><b>Compulsory reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skocpol, T. &amp; Somers, M. (1980). The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry. <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>, 22(2), 174-197.</li> </ul> <p><b>Students' Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trampusch, C. &amp; Spies, D. (2014). Agricultural Interests and the Origins of Capitalism: A Parallel Comparative History of Germany, Denmark, New Zealand, and the United States. <i>New Political Economy</i>, 19(6), 918-942.</li> <li>Trampusch, C. (2010). Co-evolution of Skills and Welfare in Coordinated Market Economies? A Comparative Historical Analysis of Denmark, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. <i>European Journal of Industrial Relations</i>, 16(3), 197-220.</li> </ul>
12.00 - 01.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LUNCH ☺</b></p>
01.00 - 02.30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Process Tracing: Business Power Mechanism &amp; Policy Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Compulsory reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trampusch C. &amp; Palier B. (2016). Between X and Y: How Process Tracing Contributes to Opening the Black Box of Causality. <i>New Political Economy</i>, 21(5), 437-454.</li> </ul> <p><b>Students' Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trampusch, C. &amp; Fastenrath, F. (2021). States' Interests as Limits to the Power of Finance: Regulatory Reforms in Early Local Government. <i>Regulation &amp; Governance</i>, 15(2), 245-261.</li> <li>Trampusch, C. (2018). Liberal Financial Markets in the Interest of Staatskredite - A Process Tracing Study of the Link between Sovereign Debt Policy and the 1908 Bourse Law Reform in the German Empire. <i>Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte</i>, 59(1), 105-134.</li> </ul>
02.30 - 04.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Systematic Process Analysis (SPA): Institutional Change and Preference Change</u></b></p> <p><b>Compulsory reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hall, P. (2008). Systematic Process Analysis: When and How to use it. <i>European Political Science</i>, 7(3), 304-317.</li> </ul> <p><b>Students' Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trampusch, C. (2015). The Financialisation of Sovereign Debt: An Institutional Analysis of the Reforms in German Public Debt Management. <i>German Politics</i>, 24(2), 119-136.</li> <li>Trampusch, C. (2014). Why Preferences and Institutions Change: A Systematic Process Analysis of Credit Rating in Germany. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i>, 53(2), 328-344.</li> </ul>
04.00 - 05.30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Preparation of Mini Conference: Discussion of your first ideas on your research project (term paper)</u></b></p>

Friday, July 4, 9.00am-5.30pm	
09.00 - 10.30	<u>Discussion of Students' Term Paper Outlines</u>
10.30 - 12.30	<u>Discussion of Students' Term Paper Outlines</u>
12.30 - 01:30	LUNCH ☺
01.30 - 04.00	<u>Discussion of Students' Term Paper Outlines</u>
04.00 - 05.30	<u>Discussion of Students' Term Paper Outlines</u>

**General references on methodological contributions which are recommended for further reading:**

- Beach, D. & Rasmus, B. P. (2013). *Process Tracing Methods – Foundations and Guidelines*. University of Michigan Press.
- Bennett, A. & Checkel, J. (2015). *Process Tracing. From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brady, H. A. (2008). Causation and Explanation in Social Science. In J. M. Box-Steffensmeier et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology* (pp. 217-270). Oxford University Press.
- Brady, H. A. & David, C. (2004). *Rethinking Social Inquiry. Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Ebbinghaus, B. (2005). When Less is More. Selection Problems in Large-N and Small-N Cross-National Comparisons. *International Sociology*, 20(2), 133-152.
- Eckstein, H. (1992). Case Study and Theory in Political Science. In H. Eckstein (ed.), *Regarding Politics. Essays on Political Theory, Stability, and Change* (pp. 117-176). University of California Press.
- George, A. L. & Andrew B. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press.
- Gerring, J. (2007). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge University Press.
- Goertz, G. (2006). *Social Science Concepts. A User's Guide*. Princeton University Press.
- Goertz, G. (2017). *Multimethod Research, Causal Mechanisms, and Case Studies: An Integrated Approach*. Princeton University Press.
- Haverland, M. & Blatter J. (2012). *Designing Case Studies: Explanatory Approaches in Small-N Research*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Hedström, P. & Ylikoski, P. (2010). Causal Mechanisms in the Social Sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36(1), 49-67.
- Jacobs A. M. (2015). Process Tracing and the Effects of Ideas. In A. Bennett & J. T. Checkel (eds.), *Process Tracing. From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (pp. 41-73). Cambridge University Press.
- King, G., Keohane, R. & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.
- Kreuzer, M. (2023). *The Grammar of Time. A Toolbox for Comparative Historical Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kreuzer, M. (2024). *The Architecture of Theory. How Historical Thinking Improves Causal Inference*. Unpublished Book Manuscript.
- Mahoney, J. (2001). Beyond Correlational Analysis: Recent Innovations in Theory and Method. *Sociological Forum*, 16(3), 575-593.
- Mahoney, J. & Rueschemeyer, D. (2003). *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ragin, C. (1987). *The Comparative Method: Moving beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. University of California Press.
- Rohlfing, I. (2012). *Case studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Seawright, J. (2016). *Multi-method Social Science: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Tools*. Cambridge University Press.