



## The comparative method in the social sciences

### Presentation

The goal of this class is to provide students with the epistemological and theoretical tools that will enable them to conduct solid comparative analyses in their own work, whatever the scale at which their study is carried out, and without limiting themselves to comparing several national cases. Emphasis is placed on the different lines of reasoning (positivism, realism, constructivism, relativism) that can be used in comparative studies. The class will also shed light on the criticisms leveled at the comparative approach and on the responses to these criticisms. Finally, in order to put things into perspective, particular attention is paid to the history of comparatism and the successive shifts it has undergone with the flows of exchange between European and North American academic circles. The class is divided into thematic sessions. Each theme is illustrated with representative empirical investigations, which should help students to construct, by analogy or opposition, his/her own comparative analysis.

### In brief

**ECTS credits** : 3.0

**Number of hours** : 18.0

**Teaching term** : Six-monthly

**Teaching activity** : Seminar

**Year** : Fifth year

**Validation** : Continuous assessment

### Contacts

#### **Responsible(s)**

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## Bibliography

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- \* Collier David, "The comparative method. Two decades of change", in Rustow D., Erikson K.P. (eds.), *Comparative Political Dynamics. Global Research Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 1991, p. 7-31.
- \* Hassenteufel P., "Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle. Remarques à propos d'expériences de comparaisons européennes", in Bachir M. & al., *Les méthodes au concret. Démarches, formes de l'expérience et terrains d'investigation en science politique*, Paris, PUF, 2000.
- \* Lange M., *Comparative-Historical Methods*, Londres, Sage, 2013.
- \* Lijphart A., "Comment, en considérant les analogies, mettre en évidence les différences", in Dogan M. & Pelassy D., *La comparaison internationale en sociologie politique*, Paris, Librairies techniques, 1980, pp. 168-171.
- \* Paugam S. et Van de Velde C., "Le raisonnement comparatiste", in Paugam S. (dir.), *L'enquête sociologique*, Paris, PUF, 2010, 357-375.