

PS0300: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Fall 2019

T/Th: 2:00-2:50

120 Lawrence Hall

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OVERVIEW

This course is an introduction to the subfield of political science known as comparative politics. It aims to expose you to the central questions, concepts, theories, and methods in the subfield. Part I of the course focuses on political regimes. We will investigate the differences between democracy and dictatorship, the cultural and economic explanations for regime type, and how transitions to democracy occur. The second part of the course considers questions of democratic design and associated challenges from the perspective of countries that have embarked on transitions to democracy since the 1990s. We will look at how different democratic institutions—presidentialism, parliamentarism, electoral and party systems, and federal institutions—work and the strengths and weaknesses of each for democratic consolidation. Part III of the course considers the threats to effective democracy that arise from endemic corruption and civil conflict.

At the heart of comparative politics is the scientific method. A central goal of comparative politics is to develop explanations for political phenomena that are general (i.e. apply to more than one country) and are causal (i.e. identify the causes of effects). Doing this requires not only suggesting explanations for how the political world works but also testing those explanations using empirical evidence. Throughout the course we will thus be discussing the different approaches that comparativists use to develop and test their theories, paying particular attention to what constitutes ‘good’ evidence. The goal is to help you become more critical consumers of information on politics wherever you encounter it, whether in class, in the media, or in your future jobs.

RECITATIONS

In addition to attending lecture each week, you must sign up for one of the four weekly recitations. Recitations begin the second week of class (after Labor Day), so **September 6, 2019**.

COURSE MATERIALS

All required readings for this course will be posted on CourseWeb. There is no textbook for this course. You are welcome to purchase a comparative politics textbook if you like, but this is not required. If you would like to purchase a textbook, I recommend the following:

- Samuels, David. *Comparative Politics*. Pearson, 2012 AND Samuels, David. *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*. Pearson, 2012.
- Clark, William, Matt Golder and Sona Golder. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Sage, 2018.

We will be reading substantial selections from these books in class so you might find them useful to own. The two books by Samuels are companion volumes—the first is a textbook and the second contains country case studies. They provide an accessible overview of several of the topics we will cover in class, with applications to specific countries. The book by Clark et al, is an advanced introduction and might be of particular interest to students seeking a more rigorous exposure to the state of academic research in the subfield, including more mathematical and quantitative approaches to comparative politics.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Just because this is an introductory class does not mean that it will not be challenging. You are expected to do the readings and to attend lectures and recitations, which are designed to be complements for one another, not substitutes. There are approximately 100 pages of reading per week (some more, some less) and some of the readings might be challenging as they come from actual comparative politics research. You should aim to read them all or at least read them smartly (i.e. for the main points)—this is a valuable life skill! You are expected to complete the relevant reading **before** recitation section each week.

While I will post slides from lectures on Courseweb, you should see these more as outlines than as comprehensive notes. If you have to miss a lecture or section, you should make arrangements to get notes from a classmate. I will not be able to provide lecture notes, nor is it the role of the TA's to provide you with notes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation in recitation (10%): You are required to sign up for a recitation section, which will meet once per week. At the end of the semester your Teaching Assistant will give you a letter grade (an A, B, C, or D) based on your participation in section. You are expected to attend regularly, meaning that you do not miss more than one or two sessions in a semester. Conditional on this, you will receive an A if you participate often (at least once/session); a B if you participate sometimes (at least once every 2 sessions); a C if you participate rarely (only a few times in the semester); and a D if you never participate.

Midterm exam (40%): Your midterm exam will have two components:

- **Country expert writing assignment (50% of your midterm, 20% of your overall grade):** Early in the semester, you will be asked to select a country from a list. You will complete two short writing assignments about that country, one will be part of your midterm exam and the other will be part of your final exam. Please note that you should aim to follow this country in the news and become an 'expert' on it during this semester. You can use your knowledge of this country to apply theories and concepts from class and also use your country knowledge to contribute to discussions in recitation. The first writing assignment will ask you to evaluate whether your country is a democracy or dictatorship. It should be 4-5 pages (double-spaced, 12-inch font, 1 inch margins) and is due on **CourseWeb by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, October 7. Make sure you also bring a hard copy to class on Tuesday, October 8.**
- **In-class midterm exam (50% of your midterm, 20% of your overall grade):** There will be an in-class midterm on **Thursday, October 10.** The midterm will consist primarily of multiple-choice questions, with a few short answer identifications or writing questions possible.

Final exam (50%): Your final exam will also have two components.

- **Country expert writing assignment 2 (50% of your final exam, 25% of your overall grade):** For your second country expert writing assignment, you will be asked to describe the democratic institutions of your country and assess their strengths and weaknesses. This should be a 6-7 page essay (double-spaced, 12-inch font, 1-inch margins) and is due **on CourseWeb on Wednesday, December 4 at 11:59 p.m. Remember to bring a hard copy to class on Thursday, December 5.**
- **Final exam (50% of your final exam, 25% of your overall grade):** The final exam is cumulative although it emphasizes material from the second half of the course. The date and time of the final exam will be announced by the registrar.

GRADING POLICIES

Grading scale:

97-100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	60-69	D
93-96	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	<60	F
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-		

Late papers: Late papers will be penalized 1/2 letter grade per day (e.g. from a B+ to B-) including weekends and holidays, except in the case of a verified emergency or documented medical excuse.

Re-grading policy: You have one week after your graded work is returned to request a re-grade. You should submit a written statement to your TA and to myself explaining why you think your work deserves to be re-graded. Remember that after re-evaluating your work, your grade may remain unchanged or could be adjusted higher *or* lower.

Academic Integrity: Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity

<http://www.pitt.edu/~provost/ai1.html>).

Special provisions: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890/(412) 383-7355(TTY), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

Session 1 [Aug 27]: Course Intro

Anderson, Lisa. 2011. "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya," *Foreign Affairs* 90(3).

[Aug 29]: No class – professor at the American Political Science Association conference

Session 2 [Sept 3]: What is comparative politics?

Samuels, David. 2013. *Comparative Politics*: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27).

II. POLITICAL REGIMES AND REGIME CHANGE

Sessions 3-4 [Sept 5, 10]: The State

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in *Bringing the State Back In* (eds. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol): pp. 169-185.

Jackson, Robert and Carl Rosberg. 1986. "Sovereignty and Underdevelopment: Juridical Statehood in the African Crisis." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 24(1), pp. 1-31.

Session 5 [Sept 12]: Democracy

Karl, Terry and Phillipe Schmitter. 1991. "What Democracy Is...and is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3), pp. 75-88.

Dahl, Robert. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-16).

Przeworski, Adam et al. 2000. *Democracy and Development*: Chapter 1 (pp. 13-36).

Session 6 [Sept 17]: Dictatorship

Asanloo, Arzoo. 2013. "Iran," in *Case Studies in Comparative Politics* (ed. by David Samuels): Chapter 11 (pp. 407-447).

Linz, Juan and Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*: Chapter 3 (pp. 38-54).

Gandhi, Jennifer and Ellen Lust-Okar. 2009. "Elections under Authoritarianism" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 403-422.

Sessions 7-8 [Sept 19, 24]: Economic explanations for democracy

Ishiyama, John. 2012. *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*: Chapter 2 (pp. 26-66).

Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*: Chapters 2-3 (pp. 15-87).

Ross, Michael. 2012. *The Oil Curse*: Chapters 1 (pp. 1-25) and 3 (pp. 63-109).

Sessions 9 [Sept 26]: Cultural explanations for democracy

Ishiyama, John. 2012. *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*: Chapter 4 (pp. 89-117).

Putnam, Robert, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti. 1994. *Making Democracy Work*: Chapters 1 (pp.3-14) and skim Chapter 4 (pp. 83-120).

Fish, Steven. 2002. "Islam and Authoritarianism." *World Politics* 55(1), p. 4-37.

Session 10 [Oct 1]: Regime transitions

Huntington, Samuel. 1996. "Democracy's Third Wave" in *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* (ed. by Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner): Chapter 1 (pp. 3-25).

Clark, William and Matt Golder and Sona Golder. 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics*: Chapter 8, pp. 265-289.

Diamond, Larry. 1999. *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*: Chapter 3 (pp. 64-96, skim 96-116).

Session 11 [Oct 3]: Democratization in China? The debate

Mertha, Andrew. 2013. "China" in *Case Studies in Comparative Politics* (ed. David Samuels): Chapter 10 (pp. 365-406).

Rowen, Henry. 2007. "When Will the Chinese People Be Free?" *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 38-52.

Pei, Minxin. 2007. "How Will China Democratize?" *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 53-57.

Yang, Dali. 2007. "China's Long March to Freedom," *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 58-64.

Session 12 [Oct 8]: Review for midterm. **IMPORTANT: Your paper is due on CourseWeb on **Monday, October 7 by 11:59 p.m.** Remember to bring a hard copy to class on 10/8.**

Session 13 [Oct 10]: In-class midterm

[October 15]: No class – Professor at conference

III. DESIGNING DEMOCRACY AND ITS CHALLENGES

Sessions 14-15 [Oct 17, 22]: Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems

Clark, William and Matt Golder and Sona Golder. 2013. "Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Democracies" in *Principles of Comparative Politics*: Chapter 12 (pp. 458-525).

Ishiyama, John. 2012. *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*: Chapter 8 (pp. 177-199).

Sessions 16-17 [Oct 24, 29]: Electoral Systems

Gallagher, Michael. 2014. "Electoral Institutions and Representation," in *Comparing Democracies 4* (ed. by LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris): Chapter 2 (pp. 11-31).

Clark, William and Matt Golder and Sona Golder. 2013. "Elections and Elections Systems" in *Principles of Comparative Politics*: Chapter 13 (pp. 535-602).

Horowitz, Donald. 1993. "Democracy in Divided Societies" *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18-38.

Sessions 18-19 [Oct 31, Nov 5]: Social Cleavages and Party Systems

Clark, William and Matt Golder and Sona Golder. 2013. "Social Cleavages and Party Systems" in *Principles of Comparative Politics*: Chapter 14 (pp. 603-672, focus on pages 603-653).

Kitschelt, Herbert. 2014. "Parties and Party Systems" in *Comparing Democracies 4*: Chapter 3 (pp. 32-57) (esp. parts of programmatic vs. clientelist parties).

Session 20 [Nov 7]: Federalism

Stepan, Alfred. 1999. "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. Model," *Journal of Democracy* 10(4): 19-34.

Ordeshook, Peter and Olga Shvetsova. 1997. "Federalism and Constitutional Design," *Journal of Democracy* 8(1): 27-42.

Brancati, Dawn. 2006. "Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict," *International Organization* 60: 651-685 (focus on pp. 651-663).

Session 21 [Nov 12]: Did institutional design in Iraq contribute to the weakening of democracy and the rise of ISIS?

Dawisha, Adeed and Karen Dawisha. 2003. "How to Build a Democratic Iraq" *Foreign Affairs* (May/June).

Brancati, Dawn. 2004. "Can Federalism Stabilize Iraq?" *The Washington Quarterly* 27(2): 7-21.

International Crisis Group. 2012. "Déjà vu All over Again: Iraq's Escalating Political Crisis," *Middle East Report* (30 July).

International Crisis Group. 2014. "Iraq's Jihadi Jack-in-the-Box," *Policy Briefing No. 38* (June 20).

PART III: THREATS TO EFFECTIVE DEMOCRACY

Sessions 22-23 [Nov 14, 19]: Civil War

Gourevitch, Philip. 1999. *We regret to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families*: pp. 5-10 and 46-144.

International Crisis Group. 2012. "Colombia: Peace at Last?" *Latin America Report No. 45*.

Collier, Paul. 2006. "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy," *unpublished manuscript*.

Session 24 [Nov 21]: In-class movie and extra-credit opportunity

[Nov 26, 28]: No class – Thanksgiving break

Sessions 25 [Dec 3]: Corruption and money politics

Vaishnav, Milan. 2017. *When Crime Pays*. Yale University Press. Chapters 1 and 5 (pp. 3-24 and 157-204).

Manzetti, Luigi and Carole Wilson. 2007. "Why Do Corrupt Governments Maintain Public Support?" *Comparative Political Studies* 40: 949-970.

Session 26 [December 5]: Review for Final. **IMPORTANT: Your paper is due on CourseWeb on Wednesday, December 4 by 11:59 p.m. Remember to bring a hard copy to class on 12/5.**