

GVPT280: The Study of Comparative Politics
University of Maryland

Fall 2023

Lecture: T/Th 11:00-11:50am in ESJ 2204

Discussion Sections: F 9:00-9:50am/10:00-10:50am/1:00-1:50pm

Instructor: Professor Allison Berland
Office: 1140F Tydings Hall
Phone: 301-405-1206

Email: aberland@umd.edu
Office Hours: T/Th 2:00-3:30pm
or by appointment

Teaching Assistants

Mendel Backman: mbackman@terpmail.umd.edu

Julia Cicero: jcicero@terpmail.umd.edu

Eli Deluca: edeluca1@terpmail.umd.edu

Pranav Ramesh: pramesh@terpmail.umd.edu

Aarushi Tyagi: atyagi17@terpmail.umd.edu

Jordan Gouws-Dewar (Graduate TA): jdewar@umd.edu

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the major themes and issues in Comparative Politics. Comparative Politics is one of the major subfields of political science. While International Relations traditionally focuses on the relations among and between actors in an international system, Comparative Politics looks inside to understand what makes these political actors tick. Comparative Politics is distinguished by its subject matter, domestic political institutions, processes and behaviors, and its comparative analytical approach. Although a distinct subfield, Comparative Politics and International Relations have many points of intersection in theory and in practice.

This course is designed to teach you concepts and approaches in comparative politics. Additionally, it should provide a good foundation in the methods of reasoning and analysis that are applicable for upper division political science courses. Since this is an introductory course, students are not expected to have a background in political science. A curiosity about the world around you, how things work, and a willingness to take the time to read, learn, write, analyze, and discuss the world of domestic politics will help to make this class a positive experience.

The course is taught through two lectures each week, on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00-11:50am in ESJ 2204 and a Friday discussion section. Attendance at lectures and discussion sessions is mandatory. All six discussion sections are held on Fridays in Tydings Hall.

Course Learning Objectives

- Gain a broad knowledge of the major components of domestic political systems
- Identify and describe the major topics in the comparative politics subfield
- Identify and discuss different concepts and theories used in examining these topics

- Apply the comparative approach to a research project

Summary of Assignments

- Class Participation (10%)
- Two Reflection Papers (approx. 650-700 words or 3 pages double spaced in length) (15% each for a total of 30%)
- One mid-semester Quiz (online during the semester) (10%)
- Final Quiz (online during finals week, (approx. 60-75 minutes) (20%)
- Final Research paper due Sunday, December 10 (approx. 1750-2000 words or 7-8 pages double spaced in length) (30%)

Class Participation

Participation includes coming to each lecture and discussion section prepared to discuss readings, pose questions, and make evaluative comments. Please let me or your TA know if you are going to miss class by sending an email to us *beforehand*. Missing three or more classes will impact your participation grade.

Short Reflection Papers and Final Paper

For the two short reflection papers and the final paper, you may use your notes, the book, course slides or outside materials for these essays. Please use citations and references for all the materials you use, including assigned texts or slides for the class. All papers can be submitted to the course page on the ELMS website: <https://myelms.umd.edu>

Quiz

There will include one online quiz mid-semester and one online quiz during finals week. The quizzes will include a short multiple-choice section and a short answer question.

Grading

Grades will be calculated according to a standard scale, in which 98 and above is an A+, 93-97 is an A, 90-92 is an A-, 87-89 is a B+, 83-86 is a B, 80-82 is a B-, 77-79 is a C+, 73-76 is a C, 70-72 is a C-, 67-69 is a D+, 63-66 is a D, 60-62 is a D-, and below 60 is a F. Grades are not curved.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a cornerstone of the values and practices in higher education and the conduct of research. As an academic community, responsibility for maintaining this atmosphere at the University of Maryland lies with the students, faculty, and administration. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating; plagiarism; providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the professor; doing unauthorized academic work for which another person will receive credit or be evaluated; attempting to influence one academic evaluation by means other than academic merit; submitting the same paper in two different courses; and assisting other students in misconduct.

Plagiarism involves failing to document one's sources. This can happen due to a motive of cheating, but it can also happen by accident. It does not have to be committed with a dishonest intention. Plagiarism can include quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or utilizing the published or unpublished work of others without proper acknowledgment. If there is any doubt about a

particular case, always cite, and if you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism and how to avoid it, please ask me. Please review the University of Maryland's Code of Academic Integrity and Honor Pledge available here:

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-integrity-student-conduct-codes/>

Policies and Resources for Undergraduate Courses

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Required Reading

J. Tylor Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases, Fourth Edition*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022). *Please note that the third edition of this textbook is perfectly acceptable to use for this course.

All other readings will be available on ELMS.

Course Lecture Schedule: Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:00-11:50am in ESJ 2204

Week 1: August 28-September 1

Topic: Overview of Syllabus and Introduction to Comparative Politics

Reading: Comparative Politics, Chapter 1, pp. 2-25

Week 2: September 4-8

Topic: Theories, Hypothesis, and Evidence

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 2, pp. 26-52

Jared Diamond, "Intra-Island and Inter-Island Comparisons," in Jared Diamond and James Robinson (eds.), *Natural Experiments of History* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 120-141

Week 3: September 11-15

Topic: The State

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 3, pp. 54-72, skim 73-79

Max Weber, "What is a State?" in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, Eighth Edition (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1996), pp. 84-87

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191

Week 4: September 18-22

Topic: Democracy and Democratization

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 6, pp. 135-164

Terry Lynn Karl and Phillippe C. Schmitter, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2(3), Summer 1991, pp. 75-88

Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Second Edition (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 3-25

Week 5: September 25-29

Topic: Democratic Backsliding and Populism

Readings: Bermeo, Nancy, "On democratic backsliding," *Journal of Democracy*, January 2016, pp. 5-19

Mounk, Yascha, "Pitchfork politics: The populist threat to liberal democracy." *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2014, pp. 27-36

Ethan B. Kapstein and Nathan Converse, "Why Democracies Fail," *Journal of Democracy* 19 (4), 2008, pp. 57-68

Week 6: October 2-6

Topic: Authoritarian Regimes

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 7, pp. 166-189

Polyakova, Alina, and Chris Meserole, "Exporting digital authoritarianism: The Russian and Chinese models," *Policy Brief, Democracy and Disorder Series* (2019), pp.1-22

Esen, Berk, and Sebnem Gumuscu. "Rising competitive authoritarianism in Turkey." *Third*

World Quarterly 37, no. 9 (2016): 1581-1606

→First Reflection Paper due Sunday, October 8

Week 7: October 9-13

Topic: Constitutions

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 8, pp. 196-222

Daniel Ziblatt, "Rethinking the Origins of Federalism: Puzzle, Theory and Evidence from Nineteenth Century Europe," *World Politics* 57 October 2004, pp. 70-98

Richard Blackburn, "Britain's unwritten Constitution," British Library website, March 13, 2015. Available at: <https://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/britains-unwritten-constitution>

Week 8: October 16-20

Topic: Legislatures and Executives

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 9, pp. 224-248

Comparative Politics, Chapter 10, pp. 255-275

→First Exam due Friday, October 20th (Exam will be available to take on ELMS)

Week 9: October 23-27

Topic: Culture and Social Capital

Readings: Lichbach and Zuckerman (eds.), Ch. 6: Marc Howard Ross, "Culture in Comparative Political Analysis," pp. 134-161.

Francis Fukuyama, "The Primacy of Culture," in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Second Edition (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 320-327.

Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), chapters 1 and 6 (skim).

Week 10: October 30-November 3

Topic: Political Parties, Party Systems, and Interest Groups

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 11, pp. 283-307

Herbert Kitschelt, Linkages Between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(6/7), August/September 2000, pp. 845-879

Recommended: Andrews-Lee, Caitlin, “The Power of Charisma: Investigating the Neglected Citizen-Politician Linkage in Hugo Chavez’s Venezuela,” *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 11(3), 2019, pp. 298-322

Week 11: November 6-10

Topic: Revolutions and Contention

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 12, pp. 310-338-303

Tufekci, Zeynep, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protests* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. xxi-xxxii and 1-27

Week 12: November 13-17

Topic: Nationalism, Identity, and Ideology

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 13, pp. 341-362

Wimmer, Andreas, “Why nationalism works,” *Foreign Affairs*, 98(2), 2019, pp. 27-34

Comparative Politics, Chapter 15, pp. 395-414

→ Second Reflection Paper due Sunday, November 19

Week 13: November 20-24 (No class Thursday, Thanksgiving Holiday)

Topic: Comparative Politics and Political Economy

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 4, pp. 80-103

Recommended: Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 1-34

Week 14: November 27-December 1

Topic: Comparative Politics and Development

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 5, pp. 109-128

Atul Kohli, *State-Directed Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp 1-24

Recommended: Daron Acemoglu et. al, “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development,” *American Economic Review*,” pp. 1369-1401

Week 15: December 4-8

Topic: Comparative Politics & International Relations, and Comparative Responses to Globalization

Readings: Comparative Politics, Chapter 16, pp. 417-446

Sara Hobolt, The Brexit vote: A Divided Nation, A divided Continent, *Journal of European Public Policy* 23(9), 2016, pp. 1259-1277

***Final Research paper due Sunday December 10**