

**PSC-123: Comparative Government and Politics**  
**Spring 2020**

M/W 11:40AM-12:35PM  
Hall of Languages 207

**Instructor:** Professor Hern

**Email:** echern@maxwell.syr.edu

**Office:** 400B Eggers Hall

**Office Hours:** Mondays 9:00-11:00 AM

**TAs:** Kari Waters ([krwaters@syr.edu](mailto:krwaters@syr.edu)) and Andre Anselmo ([alanselm@syr.edu](mailto:alanselm@syr.edu))

**Course Description:**

Why are some countries wealthier than others? Why do some countries become democratic? Do certain democratic institutions work better than others? Comparative politics is the study of variation in political outcomes across and within countries. This course provides a broad introduction to the various topics covered under comparative politics, including issues of economic development, regime type, and management of social and political conflict. As a discipline, comparative politics uses comparison across states to better understand variation in important outcomes. This course introduces theoretical explanations of variation in these outcomes (such as wealth, quality of democracy, or civil war) alongside case studies to evaluate these theories.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify variation in important outcomes in major comparative politics subject areas
- 2) Apply theory to explain variation in outcomes
- 3) Use comparative case analysis to evaluate theory

**Required Texts:**

All readings for this course are available on Blackboard and/or through the SU Library. All readings listed under the course schedule are required and should be completed **before** the date under which it is listed.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Percent of Grade</i>
Short paper	2/20 – 2/21 (in section)	10%
Section participation	NA	15%
Midterm exam	3/11	20%
Research paper	4/27	25%
Final exam	4/30	30%

The short paper (750 - 1000 words) requires students to answer one of two questions: (a) Why are some countries richer than others? OR (b) Why do some countries have more generous welfare states than others? Students will use methodology discussed in class and apply theory to two countries to answer one of these questions. More detailed instructions will be distributed no later than 1/31.

The research paper (1500-2000 words) requires students to (a) pose a question related to any one of the topics in the class, (b) evaluate theoretical explanations, and (c) use comparative political methodology to compare at least two countries to evaluate which theory is most explanatory. More detailed instructions will be distributed no later than 3/13.

The midterm exam will take place in class on 3/11, and the final exam will take place during the University-assigned exam slot (4/30, 3:00-5:00).

Section participation is evaluated at the discretion of your TA.

The exams and section participation require your physical presence. If you are absent due to illness, family emergency, or sanctioned university event, you must let your TA know by email in advance to be eligible to make up credit. **Please note that absence due to elective travel is unexcused. If you choose to travel away from campus while courses are in session, you will not be eligible to make up work that you miss.**

A: 93-100	B-: 80-82.9	D+: 68-69.9
A-: 90-92.9	C+: 78-79.9	D: 63-67.9
B+: 88-89.9	C: 73-77.9	D-: 60-62.9
B: 83-87.9	C-: 70-72.9	F: <60

## COURSE POLICIES

### Late Work:

Unless other arrangements have been made in advance, late work will be accepted at a penalty of 10% for each day the assignment is overdue. In the case of severe illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances, contact your TA as soon as possible. In most cases, written verification is necessary for an extension to be granted.

### Electronics in Class:

Students may not use electronics in my classroom, unless specifically instructed to do so. A mounting body of research indicates that students learn better when taking notes by hand. Laptops, tablets, phones, and other devices undermine your ability to concentrate and also distract those around you. There may be certain circumstances when it is appropriate to use such devices for research in section or class—students will be notified in advance if this is the case. Check out some of the evidence about the benefits of taking notes by hand [here](#).

### Grade Disputes:

If you believe your work has been graded unfairly by your TA, you are entitled to a second opinion from the professor. In this case, students should first meet to discuss the grade with the TA. If you still disagree with your grade, you may submit a written statement explaining your disagreement along with the original assignment to me. I will issue a final grade. **Please note that in this case, your grade may go up or down.**

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### Academic Integrity:

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university policy. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first offense by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of Academic Integrity Policy. The standard sanction for a first offense by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

**Disability Related Accommodations:**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498, TDD: (315) 443-1371 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

**Religious Observances:**

SU religious observances notification and policy, found at <http://hendricks.syr.edu/spiritual-life/index.html>, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they **notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes** and by the submission deadline for flexibly formatted classes. An online notification process is available for students in **My Slice / StudentServices / Enrollment / MyReligiousObservances / Add a Notification**.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

UNIT 1: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

**Week 1: Theoretical Underpinnings (1)**

M 1/13: Course Introduction

W 1/15: Theories and Methods in Comparative Politics

**Week 2: Theoretical Underpinnings (2)**

M 1/20: No Class – MLK Day

W 1/22: States and State Formation

a) Collier, Paul. 2009. *Wars, Guns, and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places*. Chapter 8 (pgs 169-187)

UNIT 2: COMPARATIVE POLITICAL ECONOMY

**Week 3: Economic Development**

M 1/27: Competing Theories of Underdevelopment

a) Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson. 2013. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* Chapter 1: pgs. 7-44.

W 1/29: Testing Theories of Underdevelopment: The Hard Case of Hispaniola

a) Frankema, Ewout and Aline Mase. 2014. “An Island Drifting Apart: Why Haiti is Mired in Poverty while the Dominican Republic Forges Ahead.” *Journal of International Development* 26:128-148.

**Week 4: Welfare States**

M 2/3: Forms of Welfare States

a) Esping-Anderson, Gosta. 1990. *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press: p. 9-33.

W 2/5: Assessing Welfare State Performance

a) Hemerjick, Anton. 2012. *Changing Welfare States*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 6 (152-163, remainder optional) and Chapter 7(221-262, remainder optional)

UNIT 3: DEMOCRACY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND DEMOCRATIC EROSION

**Week 5: Origins of Democracy**

M 2/10: Theories and Definitions of Democracy

- a) Dahl, Robert Alan. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press, 1973. Pgs 1-10.
- b) Schmitter, Philippe and Terry Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is...and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-88.

W 2/12: How Democracy Emerged: The Case of England's Glorious Revolution

- a) North, Douglass C. and Barry Weingast. 1989. "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth Century England." *Journal of Economic History* 49(4):803-832.

**Week 6: Variation in Democratic Institutions**

M 2/17: Institutional Choices and Constitutional Design in Theory

- a) Lijphart, Arendt. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy*, 15(2): 96-107.
- b) Linz, Juan. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51-69.

W 2/19: Challenges of Constitutional Design in Practice: Lessons from Lebanon and Nigeria

- a) Ejobowah, John Boye. 2008. "Integrationist and Accommodationist Measures in Nigeria's Constitutional Engineering: Successes and Failures," in Choudary, Sujit, Ed. *Constitutional Design for Divided Societies: Integration or Accommodation?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**short paper due in section**

**Week 7: Democratization and Regime Transition**

M 2/24: Class canceled

W 2/26: Regime Transition in Theory

- a) Huntington, Samuel. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Chapter 1.

**Week 8: Authoritarianism and Democratic Erosion**

M 3/2: Regime Transition in Practice in Post-Communist Europe

- a) McFaul, Michael. 2002. "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship." *World Politics* 54(2): 212-244.

W 3/4: Varieties of Authoritarianism

- a) Diamond, Larry. 2002. "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 21-35.
- b) Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65.

**Explaining Authoritarian Persistence**

- a) Bellin, Eva. 2004. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Politics* 36(2): 139-157.

**Week 9: Review and Exam 1**

M 3/9: Topic review and contemporary application of theories in CP

W 3/11: Midterm Exam (in class)

**SPRING BREAK – 3/15-3/22**

**Week 10: Methods Redux and Research in Comparative Politics**

M 3/23: Methods in Comparative Politics

W 3/25: Using Scholarly Sources

UNIT 4: MANAGING SOCIAL CONFLICT

**Week 11: Parties, Voters, and Elections**

M 3/30: Political Participation in Comparative Perspective

- a) Kitschelt, Herbert. 2000. "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 33(6/7):845-879.

W 4/1: Evaluating Participation in New Democracies

- a) Bustikova, Lenka and Elizabeth Zechmeister. 2017. "Voting in New(er) Democracies," Chapter Six in *The SAGE Handbook of Electoral Behaviour*, London: Sage Publications

**Week 12: Interest Groups, Civil Society, and Social Movements**

M 4/6: Group Formation, Collective Action, and Social Capital

- a) Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Pgs 5-22, 33-52.  
b) Robert Putnam. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6(1): 65-78.

W 4/8: Why Interest Groups Prevail

- a) Bates, Robert. 2014. *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*. Introduction and Chapter 1 (pgs 1-29).

**Week 13: Revolutions**

M 4/13: Revolutions as Social Movements

- a) Kuran, Timur. 1991. "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989." *World Politics* 44(1): 7-48.

W 4/15: The Arab Spring: Origins and Outcomes

- a) Bellin, Eva. "Reconsidering the robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring." *Comparative Politics* 44.2 (2012): 127-149.

**Week 14: Intrastate Violence and Civil War**

M 4/20: Predictors of Conflict

- a) Lake, David A. and Donald Rothchild. "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict." *International Security* 21(2): 1996:41-75.

W 4/22: Rwanda

- a) Strauss, Scott. 2006. *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*. Cornell University Press. Pgs 7-40; 224-227.

**Week 15**

M 4/27: Review + RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, 4/30 3:00-5:00 PM**