

**PSC-123: Comparative Government and Politics
Spring 2021**

M/W 11:40AM-12:35PM
Online, Synchronous

Instructor: Professor Hern

Email: ehern@maxwell.syr.edu

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00-3:00 PM, or by appointment

TAs: Andre Anselmo (alanselm@syr.edu) and Ugur Altundal (ualtunda@syr.edu)

Note: Syllabus subject to adjustment in case of unforeseen circumstances. Students will always be notified of changes via Blackboard.

Course Description:

Why are some countries wealthier than others? Why do some countries become democratic? Why is voter turnout higher in some places? 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 revolution) 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. All readings listed under the course schedule are required and should be completed **before class** on the date under which it is listed.

Course Requirements and Grading:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Weekly Assignments	15%
Participation	10%
Exams (3)	50% (lowest score dropped)
Final Paper	25%

Weekly assignments will be due by 3PM each Thursday. These assignments will facilitate your comprehension of the reading, and will be evaluated primarily based on completion and effort. You will submit these assignments via the main Blackboard site for the class.

Active **participation** in your discussion section is an important part of engaging with the class and the material. Your TA will evaluate your participation at their own discretion.

There will be three **exams** over the course of the semester that will evaluate your understanding of the readings and lectures. These exams will be timed and available through Blackboard. They are open-note, but are not collaborative. Your lowest score will be dropped.

The exam culminates with a **final project** in which you will perform a comparative analysis of at least two countries based on one of the topics we discussed in the course. We will talk about the final paper in more detail later in the semester.

At any point in the semester, you can earn one point of **extra credit** by making a meme of one of the readings. To count for credit, you must submit it by email to myself and your TA within one week of the reading being assigned. You can do this up to three times over the course of the semester. Be creative (but classroom appropriate)!

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 Format:

The lectures for this course are online and synchronous. You can access the class through the “virtual classroom” link on the left side menu in Blackboard. Recordings of the lectures will be posted under the corresponding week under the “coursework” link. Please treat these recordings as a back-up or study tool rather than as a replacement for joining the lecture in real time.

Format for discussion sections varies. Please check in with your TA prior to your first section if you are unsure of the format, or if you anticipate any complications (i.e., your section meets in person but you are not physically in Syracuse, or it meets online but you have a weak internet connection).

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 to discuss an extension.

Zoom Etiquette:

I prefer that you attend class with your camera on to create more of a classroom community and to save me from sadly talking to a sea of blank squares. Please keep your microphone muted unless you are speaking to minimize background noise, and treat our Zoom classroom the same way you would a physical classroom. If you have questions, you can raise your hand or put it in the chat, and one of the TAs will get my attention.

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

Covid-19 Stay Safe Pledge

Syracuse University’s Stay Safe Pledge reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on the well-being of our community members. This pledge defines norms for behavior that will promote community health and wellbeing. Classroom expectations include the following: wearing a mask that covers the nose and mouth at all times, maintaining a distance of six feet from others, and staying away from class if you feel unwell. Students who do not follow these norms will not be allowed to continue in face-to-face classes;

repeated violations will be treated as violations of the Code of Student Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

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

All readings are available on the course Blackboard site under the “Coursework” tab, in the folder for the corresponding week.

Note: Readings marked with a * are challenging. Don’t give up on them! Do the best you can with the reading questions. We will go through major concepts in lecture.

UNIT 1: STATES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Week 1: Theoretical Underpinnings (1)

M 2/8: Course Introduction

W 2/10: The Comparative Method

Assignment 1 due 2/11, 3pm

Week 2: Theoretical Underpinnings (2)

M 2/15: Theories in Comparative Politics

Reading: Green, Amelia Hoover. “How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps.”

W 2/17: States and State Formation

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

Assignment 2 (Reading Questions) due 2/18, 3PM

Week 3: Economic Development

M 2/22: Competing Theories of Underdevelopment

Reading: Rodrik, Dani. 2003. *In Search of Prosperity*. Chapter 1.

W 2/24: Testing Theories of Underdevelopment: The Nogaleses

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

Assignment 3 (Reading Questions) due 2/25, 3PM

Week 4: Welfare States

M 3/1: Forms of Welfare States

Reading: *Esping-Anderson, Gosta. 1990. *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press: p. 21-29.

W 3/3: Assessing Welfare State Performance

Reading: Hemerjick, Anton. 2012. *Changing Welfare States*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 6 (152-163)

Assignment 4 (Reading Questions) due 3/4, 3PM

Week 5: Review and Exam 1

3/8 M: Review

3/10 W: Exam 1

UNIT 2: DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

Week 6: Democracy

M 3/15: Theories and Definitions of Democracy

Reading: Schmitter, Philippe and Terry Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is...and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-88.

W 3/17: How Democracy Emerged: The Case of England's Glorious Revolution

Reading: *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. **You are only responsible for the material up to p.819**

Assignment 5 (Reading Questions) due 3/18, 3PM

Week 7: Democratic Transition

M 3/22: Transitions to Democracy in Theory

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

W 3/24: Post-Soviet Transitions

Reading: McFaul, Michael. 2005. "Transitions from Postcommunism," *Journal of Democracy* 16(3):5-19.

Assignment 6 (Reading Questions) due 3/25, 3PM

Week 8: Democratic Institutions: Trade-Offs and Outcomes

M 3/29: Constitutional Design in Theory: Issues and Institutions

Reading: Donald Horowitz. 2003. "Electoral Systems: A Primer for Decision Makers," *Journal of Democracy* 14(4):115-127

W 3/31: Constitutional Design in Practice: Lessons from the United States and Lebanon

Assignment 7 (Reading Questions + Exercise) due 4/1, 3PM

Week 9: Authoritarianism and Democratic Erosion

M 4/5: Varieties of Authoritarianism

Reading: Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65.

W 4/7: Explaining Authoritarian Persistence

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

Assignment 8 (Reading Questions) due 4/8, 3PM

Week 10: Review and Exam 2

M 4/12: Review + Final Project Instructions

W 4/14: Exam 2

UNIT 3: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Week 11: Formal Political Participation

M 4/19: Who Votes?

Reading: Neviite, Neil, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Richard Nadeau. 2009. "Socioeconomic Status and Nonvoting: A Cross-National Comparative Analysis," in Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Ed. *The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems*. Oxford University Press.

W 4/21: Gender and Political Participation in Asia NO CLASS – Wellness Day

Reading: Liu, Shan Jan Sarah. 2020. "Gender Gaps in Political Participation in Asia," *International Political Science Review*.

Assignment 9 (Reading Questions) due 4/22, 3PM

Week 12: Interest Groups and Social Movements

M 4/26: Collective Action and Contentious Politics in Theory

Watch these videos: (1) [Collective Action Problem](#) (2) [Interest Groups](#)

W 4/28: The Yellow Vests and the Umbrella Movement

Listen to these podcasts: (1) [The French Rebellion](#) (2) [Umbrellas Up](#)

Assignment 10 due 4/29, 3PM

Week 13: Revolutions

M 5/3: Revolutions as Social Movements

Listen to Timur Kuran describe "preference falsification" in the podcast [A Conspiracy of Silence](#) (this podcast will help you understand his article)

Reading: *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 5/5: The Arab Spring: Origins and Outcomes

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

Assignment 11 (Reading Questions) due 5/6, 3PM

Week 14: Exam 3 and Final Project

M 5/10: Review and Revisiting Final Project

W 5/12: Exam 3

Final Project Due May 20, 5PM