

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Fall 2021

INTL 3300

Department of International Affairs
University of Georgia

Professor Morgan Barney

Class Meeting: T/Th, 3:55-5:10pm, Room 147, MLC

Email: morgan.barney@uga.edu

Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Political science is the study of who gets what, where and how. Within the subfield of comparative politics, political scientists seek to understand the following questions: Why do some countries hold elections while others do not? Why are some states able to provide security and welfare to their citizens while others struggle to do so? Why are some countries plagued by violence while others enjoy internal peace? These questions have long animated the field of comparative politics and are among the several of which we will explore this semester. This course will provide students with a firm foundation in the subfield of comparative politics, preparing them for more specialized courses on the topics in the course schedule below. The course has two main objectives:

1. To familiarize students with the importance of theory and research design for describing, explaining, and understanding political processes. After taking this course, students should be able to distinguish between different theoretical explanations and evaluate the merit of evidence used to support them.
2. To provide students with an overview of key topics and debates in comparative politics. Students should be able to understand the basis of these debates as well as take and support positions on them.

READINGS & COURSE MATERIAL

All readings, lectures, and course materials will be accessible through eLearning Commons (eLC). There are no books or other materials that need to be purchased for this course. Some of the readings are dense and involve advanced statistics and formal modeling. You are not expected to fully grasp the mathematics and statistical models in the readings; indeed, we will spend little time on them in class. Rather, you should focus on absorbing the logic and steps of the argument, how different variables are operationalized and measured, and the evidence used to support the conclusions. You are strongly encouraged to bring any questions about jargon, concepts, argumentation, or anything else to class or office hours. This class will be taught in-person through face-to-face instruction. Please feel free to email me with any concerns or questions this semester.

The readings/topics for November 23 will be determined by the students.

REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Description	% of Final Grade	Due Date
Reading Memos	5 memos, each worth 5%	20	
Midterm #1	Midterm Exam	20	September 21
Democracy in the U.S.	Strategies for Depolarization	15	November 4
One-page Research Design	Your one-page proposal for the final research project	5	November 16
Research Design Group Project	Construct a research design in a group to answer a political science question	10	November 30 & December 2
Research Design Presentation	In-person Presentations	10	November 30 & December 2
Final Exam	Written	20	December 14

ATTENDANCE

There will be many opportunities to participate throughout the semester. Participation is required but each student is allowed three absences. After the third absence, your participation grade will be reduced by one letter grade. The attendance policy however is subject to change as we receive additional instruction from UGA as the semester progresses.

As all readings will be posted on eLC, we will use our class time for discussion and review.

Special Considerations for Covid-19:

Face coverings: Following guidance from the University System of Georgia, face coverings are recommended for all individuals while inside campus facilities.

How can I obtain the COVID-19 vaccine? University Health Center is scheduling appointments for students through the UHC Patient Portal (https://patientportal.uhs.uga.edu/login_dualauthentication.aspx). Learn more here – <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-vaccine>. The Georgia Department of Health, pharmacy chains and local providers also offer the COVID19 vaccine at no cost to you.

To find a COVID-19 vaccination location near you, please go to: <https://georgia.gov/covid-vaccine>. In addition, the University System of Georgia has made COVID-19 vaccines available at 15 campuses statewide and you can locate one here: <https://www.usg.edu/vaccination> What do I

do if I have COVID-19 symptoms? Students showing COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see, <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I test positive for COVID-19? If you test positive for COVID-19 at any time, you are required to report it through the DawgCheck Test Reporting Survey. We encourage you to stay at home if you become ill or until you have excluded COVID-19 as the cause of your symptoms. UGA adheres to current Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) quarantine and isolation guidance and requires that it be followed. Follow the instructions provided to you when you report your positive test result in DawgCheck. Guidelines for COVID-19 Quarantine Period (As of 8/1/21; follow DawgCheck or see DPH website for most up-to-date recommendations)

Students who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine upon exposure unless they have symptoms of COVID-19 themselves. All others should follow the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recommendations: Students who are not fully vaccinated and have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 10 days. Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period and continue self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms for a total of 14 days.

You should report the need to quarantine on DawgCheck (<https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>) and communicate directly with your faculty to coordinate your coursework while in quarantine. If you need additional help, reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance. Students, faculty and staff who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against the disease and show no symptoms.

Monitoring conditions: Note that the guidance referenced in this syllabus is subject to change based on recommendations from the Georgia Department of Public Health, the University System of Georgia, or the Governor’s Office or. For the latest on UGA policy, you can visit coronavirus.uga.edu.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

The following is taken verbatim from <https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus>:
“The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

DISABILITY SERVICES

The following is taken verbatim from https://drc.uga.edu/content_page/sample-access-statements:

“If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.”

The following is taken verbatim from <https://online.uga.edu/documents/ugasyllabusguidelines.pdf>:

“Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.”

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are the time that professors and teaching assistants specifically designate to meet with students for help with assignments, questions about the lecture or reading, answer questions, or just to chat. In other words, office hours are **your** time. You are encouraged to come to office hours with questions about the class, comparative politics, political science, or just to introduce yourself. I ask that you reach out however to schedule office hours ahead of time and we will find a time to meet. Professor Clare Brock provides a more thorough description of office hours if you would like more information: <http://www.clarebrock.com/blog/office-hours>

CRITICAL READING MEMOS & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

The purpose of the critical reading memos is threefold. They will (1) help you digest the main points of the readings, (2) strengthen your writing skills, and (3) sharpen your capacity for analytical thinking. **You will complete five critical reading memos during the semester.** Briefly, your memo should (1) summarize the main argument and evidence for the day’s reading(s) and (2) critically engage with the readings. Memos should cover all the readings assigned that day, and they should be 1-2 pages in length, double spaced. There will not be a sign-up sheet and you are free to write your memo for any five classes where a reading is assigned. **Memos are due by noon the day of class, uploaded to the specified assignment folder on elc** (for example, “September 9 Reading Memo). Please note that these will be circulated to the entire class and may inform our class discussion for the day.

GROUP RESEARCH DESIGN PROJECT

Your final research project is a group research design, which includes a research question, theory and literature review, hypotheses, variable operationalization, and measurement, dependent and independent variables, and what your expected findings would be if you were to actually conduct the research. You will present your design toward the end of the semester. The purpose of this

assignment is to give you practice in the process of asking research questions relevant to the political science literature and understanding the scientific process towards answering those questions. As much of the work in political science is co-authored, you are encouraged to work together in groups of 2-3 students. I will provide a sign-up for groups the second week of class. The research design and presentation will count for 20% of your grade. Note that a one-page summary of your research design is due in class midway through the semester. I will also provide a handout when we select our groups to help guide your research design and grading rubric as to how I will evaluate your projects.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Recent studies show self-assessment and self-grading enhance student learning and creativity. For critical reading memos and participation grades, students will assess and grade themselves, and I will provide written feedback and a grade as well. For assignments worth 10% of the final grade or less, the student's grade will stand as the final grade (conditional on students submitting the assignment; if the assignment is not submitted, then the grade is an automatic zero). For assignments worth more than 10% of the final grade, the student's grade will stand as the final grade except where there is more than a 5 point difference (out of 100) between their grade and the professor's. In such an event, the student and professor will meet with the goal of agreeing on a final grade. If an agreement cannot be reached, then the final assignment grade will be the average of the student's and the professor's grade.

USE OF LAPTOPS AND TABLETS IN CLASS

While some students find that personal laptops and tablets enhance their classroom experience, others find them to be a significant distraction. In an effort to accommodate all students, the classroom will be divided into "laptop" and "non-laptop" sections. You are welcome to sit in whichever section you feel best suits your learning needs for the day.

CLASS RECORDINGS

There may be instances where the lecture portion of this course is recorded under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA ACT. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Director of the Disability Resource Center at eeew@uga.edu.

Students are not allowed to share any class material, including recordings, with anyone outside of the class without the instructor's written permission.

UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE AND ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>.

Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services(<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>)If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Thursday, August 19th: Introduction

- We will meet to discuss the syllabus and the plan for the semester.

Tuesday, August 24th: Why do we compare?

- Read
 - Malici, Akan and Elizabeth S. Smith. 2019. "Chapter 2: How Do We Get a Science of Politics?" In *Political Science Research in Practice*, edited by Akan Malici and Elizabeth S. Smith. Second ed., 14-27. New York: Routledge.
- View Lecture 1
- Guiding questions
 - What makes political science a "science"? More broadly, what makes an academic discipline "scientific"?
 - Do you agree that the study of politics can be a scientific endeavor? Why or why not?

Thursday, August 26: Philosophical Underpinnings of Comparative Politics & The Comparative Method

- Reading
 - Eyadat, Zaid. 2019. "The Comparative Case Study Method: "Uncivil Society" in the Arab Uprisings." In *Political Science Research in Practice*, edited by Akan Malici and Elizabeth S. Smith. Second ed., 28-42. New York: Routledge.
- View Lecture 2
- Guiding questions

- What is the significance of the founders of comparative politics? How do their respective philosophies influence our understanding of comparative today?
- What is the method of agreement? Method of difference?
- What are the strengths of the comparative case study method? Weaknesses?

Tuesday, August 31: Theory, Hypotheses, and Evidence

- Readings
 - Dickovick, J. Tyler & Jonathan Eastwood. 2019. “Chapter 2: Theories, Hypotheses, and Evidence,” in *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases*. Third Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 25-46.
- View Lecture 3
- Guiding questions
 - What are the key terms in the chapter? Why are they useful for studying and thinking about politics?

Thursday, September 2: Research design wrap up

- Group activity

Tuesday, September 7: The State

- Readings
 - Bates, Robert H. 2001. “Chapter 4: State Formation in the Modern Era.” In *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*, 70-83. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- View Lecture 5
- Guiding Questions
 - What is the state? What makes it different from other organizations?
 - According to Bates, what is different about state formation in the developing world compared to early modern Europe?
 - What international factors shape state formation today?

Thursday, September 9: The breakdown of the state: Civil war

- Readings
 - Collier, Paul, and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 56: 563–95.
- View Lecture 6
- Guiding questions
 - What causes civil war? Why does it happen?
 - How do Collier and Hoeffler measure their variables? What might be some problems with their measurements and indicators? Can you think of better ways to measure the key concepts in their hypotheses?

Tuesday, September 14: Research and policy on civil war

- Readings

- Luttwak, Edward N. 1999. “Give War a Chance.” *Foreign Affairs* 78(4): 36–44. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/55210/edward-n-luttwak/give-war-a-chance>
- Guiding questions
 - Do you agree with Luttwak? Why or why not? Be sure to use evidence to support your position.

Thursday, September 16: Rebuilding political authority: post-conflict politics

- Readings
 - Blair, Robert, and Pablo Kalmanovitz. 2016. “On the Rights of Warlords: Legitimate Authority and Basic Protection in War-Torn Societies.” *American Political Science Review* 110 (3): 428–40.
 - Read Stakeholder Democracy Networks’ short briefing on The Tompolo Foundation
- View Lecture 7
- Guiding questions
 - Do warlords ever have a right to govern? If so, when?
 - Are “state rulers” any different from “warlords”? If so, how?
 - Does Tompolo qualify as a warlord who has a right to govern? If you were a policy advisor to the Nigerian government, what would you advise? Work with Tompolo? Try to weaken and undermine him? As you answer this question, keep in mind our recent discussions on states, political order, and civil war.

Tuesday, September 21: Mid-term #1

Thursday, September 23: Defining development

- Readings
 - Sen, Amartya. 1999. “Introduction: Development as Freedom,” and “The Ends and Means of Development.” In *Development as Freedom*. 3-11 and 35-53. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
 - Martin, Courtney. "The Reductive Seduction of Other People’s Problems." *BRIGHT Magazine*., last modified January 11, accessed Jan 27, 2019, <https://brightthemag.com/the-reductive-seduction-of-other-people-s-problems-3c07b307732d>.
- View Lecture 9
- Guiding questions
 - What does Sen mean by “development as freedom?” Do you agree with his argument?
 - Do all good things- democracy, freedom, economic growth- go together?
 - Have you studied, interned, or worked abroad? Are you thinking about it? How, if at all, does the piece from Bright Magazine resonate with your travel experiences?

Tuesday, September 28: Development

- Readings

- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2012. “Chapter 3: The Making of Prosperity and Poverty.” In *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, 70-95. New York: Crown Business.
- View Lecture 10
- Guiding questions
 - What role do institutions play in development? What are the different types of institutions that Acemoglu and Robinson describe?
 - What else might explain differences in wealth and political freedoms between countries and across time?

Thursday, September 30: Political regimes

- Reading
 - Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. “What Democracy Is...and Is Not,” *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3): 75-88.
- View Lecture 11
- Guiding Questions
 - What makes a country a democracy? An authoritarian regime?
 - How would you define democracy? How would you know it when you see it?

Tuesday, October 5: Measuring democracy

- Read Freedom House country report hand-outs in preparation for class activity

Thursday, October 7: Modernization Theory

- Readings
 - Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Papaterra Limongi Neto. 1997. “Modernization: Theories and Facts.” *World Politics*, 49(2): 155-183.
- View Lecture 12
- Guiding questions
 - What do you think the key take-aways or conclusions are of the reading?
 - Do you find the reading persuasive? Why or why not?

Tuesday, October 12: Democratization: Rational Actor Explanations

- Readings
 - Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 2.
- View Lecture 13
- Guiding questions
 - Who are the key actors in Acemoglu and Robinson’s argument? What are their economic interests? How does their economic position shape their preferences for (non)democracy?
 - In a nutshell, what is the argument? Can you explain it to a friend in your own words? Focus on the steps of the argument.

Thursday, October 14: Democratization as a Mistake

- Reading

- Treisman, Daniel. 2017. Democracy by Mistake: National Bureau of Economic Research. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w23944>.
- View Lecture 14
- Guiding Questions
 - How might democratic transitions be a mistake? Why do authoritarian rulers make these mistakes?
 - How does Treisman code mistakes? Put differently, how does he, and the reader, know a “mistake” when they see it?
 - What flaws do you see in the research design? Coding? How would you make it better?

Tuesday, October 19: Governments and electoral systems

- Reading
 - Lijphart, Arend. 1991. “Constitutional Choices for New Democracies.” *Journal of Democracy* 2(1): 72-84.
 - Norris, Pippa. 1997. “Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems.” *International Political Science Review* 18(3): 297-312.
- View Lecture 15
- Guiding questions
 - What are the different electoral systems described in the article? Forms of government?
 - Which electoral system does Lijphart advocate for and why? Do you agree?

Thursday, October 21: Polarization

- Readings
 - McCoy, Jennifer, Tahmina Rahman & Murat Somer. 2018. “Polarization and the Global Crisis of Democracy: Common Patterns, Dynamics, and Pernicious Consequences for Democratic Polities.” *The American Behavioral Scientist* 62 (1): 16-42.
- Recommended: Mason, Lilliana. 2018. [*Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*](#). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1 and 3.
- View Lecture 17
- Guiding Questions
 - What is polarization?
 - According to the authors, why does it undermine democracy?
 - Is polarization always bad for democracy?

Tuesday, October 26: Democratic erosion

- Readings
 - Chapter 5 from Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die: What History Reveals About Our Future*. New York: Random House.
 - Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. “On Democratic Backsliding.” *Journal of Democracy* 27(1): 5-19.
- View Lecture 18
- Guiding question

- What is Levitsky and Ziblatt's argument? How would you know if they were wrong? How would you know if they were right?

Thursday, October 28: Political economy of development

- Required: Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91 (5): 1369–1401.
- Recommended: Evans, Peter. 1988. "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State." *Sociological Forum* 4 (4): 561–87.

Tuesday, November 2: Guest lecture- Matthew Rains (Identity politics and White Nationalism)

Thursday, November 4: No class

- Democracy in the U.S.- Strategies for Depolarization Assignment Due

Tuesday, November 9: Identity politics

- Chandra, Kanchan. 2005. "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 235-252.

Thursday, November 11: Populism

- Berman, Sheri. 2017. "[The Pipe Dream of Undemocratic Liberalism.](#)" *Journal of Democracy* 28(3): 29-38.
- Kendall-Taylor, Andrea and Erica Frantz. "[How Democracies Fall Apart: Why Populism is a Pathway to Autocracy.](#)" *Foreign Affairs*. December 5, 2016.

Tuesday, November 16: Corruption

- Pavão, Nara. 2018. "[Corruption as the Only Option: The Limits to Electoral Accountability.](#)" *Journal of Politics* 80(3): pp. 996-1010.

Thursday, November 18: Student's Choice

- Potential options include a regional focus, corruption, social trust, and/or other topics in comparative politics. Students may also have the option to request a guest lecturer

Tuesday, November 23: Guest Lecture, Dr. Megan Turnbull (Election Violence)

Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, November 30: Group Research Design Project Presentations

Thursday, December 2: Group Research Design Project Presentations

Tuesday, December 7: Final Exam Review

Tuesday, December 14: 3:30-6:30pm: Final Exam