

Introduction to Comparative Politics INTL 3300
Fall 2021
The University of Georgia
Department of International Affairs
T and Th 11:10 a.m. to 12:25 p.m. Candler 115
W: 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and by appointment
Dr. Markus M. L. Crepaz (mcrepaz@uga.edu)

Comparative politics is the systematic comparison of differences and similarities across a set of selected countries. Explicit comparisons generate incisive questions and, hopefully, enlightening answers. For instance, why is it that in Sweden a speeding ticket could cost \$ 125,000 while this would be unthinkable in the US. Or why is that the United States favors liberty over equality while the opposite is true of many other modern, industrialized countries? Such structured comparison can thus be thought of as a method of gaining insights into different cultures, systems, institutions, structures, and other constraints that guide the politics of different countries. When appropriate, lectures will also take a comparative view as to how and why different countries deal differently with COVID-19.

Course outcomes:

- Appreciate HOW and WHY other countries, even though facing similar challenges as the United States, are finding quite different solutions
- You will understand that differences in institutions, cultures, political action, and structures yield very different outcomes.
- Be able to apply what you have learned in class to new topics from outside of class.
- Become a more discerning consumer of information of the political events around the world
- Appreciate the difficulties of why it is so hard to “learn” from other countries
- Finally, because of contrasting the US with other countries, you will develop, not only a better understanding of politics in other countries, but also, and perhaps paradoxically, a deeper knowledge of politics and society in the United States.

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

Teaching, learning, and staying safe in times of the coronavirus:

If you are unsure about this coronavirus thing, and need to find out more about it (such as the policy on face coverings, the dawg check, what to do if you have been exposed or have symptoms, how do you get a test, and what to do if you test positive) please visit this site:

<https://coronavirus.uga.edu/>

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>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).*
- *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.*

Some ground rules:

1. Each day's assignments and readings must be completed before class, and each student must be ready to conduct a quality discussion on the day's material.
2. Grade changes: if you feel that a test or assignment was graded incorrectly you must submit a type-written explanation of the problem along with the test or assignment in question **within one week** of my returning the paper/exam/quiz, etc. to you. I will re-evaluate your work and you will receive a "new" grade, whether that be the **same**, a **higher**, or **lower** grade. The only exception to this rule is for simple errors in calculation.
3. Plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated. *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". 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.*
4. Late papers are not acceptable. They are a burden for me and are unfair to your colleagues who do their work on time. Therefore, I will deduct a half a letter grade (5 points) for each day a paper is late. Extensions may be given but only if they are requested well in advance of the deadline, and if there is a compelling reason.
5. If you need to use outside reference works, please consult Joel Krieger, et. al., *Oxford Companion to Comparative Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2013. Do NOT use Webster's Dictionary for definitions of things such as "democracy"!
6. Disability arrangements: if you qualify for course adaptations or special accommodation under the Americans With Disabilities Act, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and provide the appropriate documentation well before exam accommodations are made. Once I have DRC's documentation all efforts will be made to accommodate any learning disabilities.
7. **Prohibition on Recording Lectures.** In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Course requirements:

- **Discussion** of readings/lectures: on elc discussion forum: 10 %. I will provide several questions for each theme of the class to get the discussion started.
- **In-class participation:** 10%
- There will be **4 pop quizzes** each counting for 4% for a total of 16% of the overall grade. These quizzes will consist of a mix of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blanks, and short answer questions and will cover recent lecture materials and the content of the readings.
- **“Applying what you have learned”** (see more detail in the reading assignments): 5 one-page reflections on a short reading which should combine the knowledge gained by absorbing the readings as well as the lectures each counting for 5% for a total of 25% of the overall grade. This will be graded pass/fail.
- **Mid-term paper:** a current event write-up: due any time before or on October 12. A single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, three page discussion of a current event, NOT from the USA. The first half of the response should describe the facts: What happened and when? Where? Who was involved? The second half of your response must relate the event to the lectures and readings from the course. How does the event demonstrate a theory we have discussed? Does it remind you of other cases or phenomena? This paper will count for 29% of your total grade.

- **Final exam:** it is open book and will consist of a number of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blanks, and short answer questions and will count for 10% of the overall grade. Date will be determined by the final exam schedule.

Grading structure:	≥93	A
	90-92	A-
	87-89	B+
	83-86	B
	80-82	B-
	77-79	C+
	73-76	C
	70-72	C-
	60-69	D
	<60	F

Reading assignments: This is a NO COST course in terms of expenses for buying books or other instructional materials. All readings are directly linked for your convenience. I made sure that all links are functional – however, if you run into problems, make sure that you log in via your institution. If all else fails, just google the title and author and you should be able to find the reading by logging in via your institution.

Reading assignments:

August 19: Introduction and outline of course

August 24: What is comparative politics?

Timothy Lim (2010) [Doing Comparative Politics: Introduction – What is Comparative Politics](#). (chapter one)
Lynne Rienner.

August 26: The “science” in Political Science and how to think straight.

A word about Social Science: how to make an argument?
Skim this entertaining read: [An Introduction to Speculation](#) by Lave and March (1975) (start reading from p. 10) An Oldie, but a Goodie!

August 31, to Sep 14: Nations, States and the crises of nation building.

8/31 August Renan “[What is a Nation](#)”?

9/2 Crises of Identity

[What's Next for Scotland's Independence Movement](#)
(Council of Foreign Relations), May 13, 2021.

9/7

Crisis of Legitimacy and Penetration

[The Legitimacy Crisis](#), Niskanen Center, October 2017

9/9

Crisis of Participation

[The spreading scourge of voter suppression](#), The Economist, October, 2020.

9/14

Crisis of Distribution

[Countries marked by Inequality less likely to Contain Coronavirus Pandemic](#), NYU news, April 13, 2021.

September 16, 21, 23 and 28:

Democracy, Authoritarianism and everything in between.

9/16

Phillippe Schmitter and Terry L. Karl. [What Democracy is and is not](#). *Journal of Democracy* (1991).

9/21

Marlies Glasius (2018) [What Authoritarianism is...and is Not. A Practice Perspective](#)". *International Affairs*. 94.

9/23

Pippa Norris (2017) [Is Western Democracy Backsliding?](#) *Journal of Democracy*.

9/28

[Liberal Democracy has now exceeded many people's capacity to tolerate it](#). Essay by Karen Stenner, Hope not Hate, January 2020.

Applying what you have learned: Do you have an authoritarian personality? See where you stand on the F-scale: <https://www.anesi.com/fscale.htm> and provide a brief (one page) analysis of your own results.

September 30, Oct. 5, and 7

Thinking broadly I: History without subject – explorations into structuralism

9/30

Jared Diamond. [Guns, Germs, and Steel](#). (Excerpts and chapter summaries) (1997).

10/5

Ricardo Hausman (2009) [Prisoners of Geography](#), *Foreign Policy*.

10/7 Frederick Jackson Turner (1893): [“The significance of the frontier in American history”](#)

Applying what you have learned: read this very short piece, [The Plow and the Now](#) (Economist, 2011) and place in the context of the central elements of a structuralist explanation (one page, due October 6)

MID TERM: CURRENT EVENT WRITE UP DUE: OCTOBER 12

October 12, 14 and 19: **Thinking broadly II:** The ties that bind: political culture

10/12 Sheri Berman (1997) [Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic](#). *World Politics* 49: 401-429.

10/14 Bo Rothstein and Eric Uslaner (2005) [All for All: Equality, Corruption and Social Trust](#). *World Politics*, 58.

10/19 Greif, Avner. 1994. [“Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: A Historical and Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies.”](#) *The Journal of Political Economy* 102(5):912-950.

Applying what you have learned: read this short piece [Revenge of the Tiger Mother](#) (Economist 2014) and place in the context of the central elements of a culturalist explanation (one page, due October 15).

October 21, 26, and 28: **Thinking broadly III:** The rules of the game: institutions and their effects

Oct. 21. Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James Robinson (2010) [The Role of Institutions in Growth and Development](#). *Review of Economics and Institutions*.

Oct. 26: Lijphart, Arend (1994) [Democracies: Forms, Performance and Constitutional Engineering](#). *European Journal of Political Research*, 25:1-17.

Oct. 28: Kumlin, Staffan and Bo Rothstein (2005): [Making or Breaking Social Capital: The Impact of Welfare State Institutions](#). *Comparative Politics*

Applying what you have learned: read this short piece [“Dairy Board to Launch Quality Mark for Milk Products”](#) (Times of India, 2017) and place it in the context of the central elements of an institutional explanation. (one page, due on Oct. 27).

November 2, and 4:	Thinking broadly IV: constructing the world around us – the power of ideas.
11/2-4:	Anthony Marx (1996) Race Making and the Nation State. <i>WorldPolitics</i> ,48:180-208) https://www.jstor.org/stable/25053960?seq=1#page_scan_t ab_contents
What is political development?	
Nov. 9, 11, and 16.	
11/9	Frances Hagopian (2000) Political Development Revisited . <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> .
11/11	Jeffrey Herbst (2002). States and Power in Africa . Review by James Robinson. <i>Journal of Economic Literature</i> . 60.
11/16	Stephen Marglin (2003) Development as Poison . <i>Harvard International Review</i>
November 18, 23 and 30:	Special topic: the environment
Nov. 18	Garrett Hardin (1968) “The Tragedy of the Commons” . <i>Science</i> . 162, (3859) 1243-1248.
Nov. 23	Bill McKibben “A Deeper Shade of Green” , National Geographic, August 2006.
Nov. 30:	The Climate Issue , (Economist) Sep. 19, 2019
Applying what you have learned: do The Environmental Footprint Quiz , explain what it is, report on your findings, and explain what your findings mean (populate the queries with the living conditions of your parents, not your current personal conditions [e.g. living in a dorm]).	
December 2 and 7:	Special topic: The power of circumstance: socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic (and luck) determinants of success
Dec. 2	let’s play a game!
Dec. 7:	Review of semester materials
FINAL EXAM:	TBD

