

INTL 3300 Introduction to Comparative Politics

MWF 12:40pm-1:30pm

Journalism 508

Lihi Ben Shitrit

Office: 329 IA Building¹

Office Hours: Mondays 10am-12pm

Course Description

This is an introductory course to the subfield of comparative politics. It is aimed at familiarizing students with some of the basic social scientific methods that underpin the subfield as well as some of the major themes and debates that animate the substantive preoccupation of comparative politics. The first part of the course (Part I) will provide an overview of the comparative approach, basic methodological concepts and tools, and an opportunity to practice the application of these tools. The following four parts of the course will cover thematic topics grouped under the following general areas: Part II - The State, Democracy, and Authoritarianism; Part III - Institutions of Government; Part IV - Politics, Society, and Culture; PART V - Democratic Backsliding. The different course components will explore some of the pressing questions that scholars of comparative politics ask and attempt to answer, such as: Why did modern states emerge and grow? Why are some countries rich and others poor? Why are some countries democracies and others not? What are the effects of different institutions? Why and how do revolutions happen? Why and how do identities and beliefs matter in public life? Why do ideology and religion affect modern politics? After completing the course, students will be well prepared to take more advanced and specialized courses in comparative politics to expand on the basic knowledge and tools offered here.

Required Texts

- J. Tyler Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood. *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases*, Third Edition, Oxford University Press (available for purchase at the

¹ The IA building is officially known as Candler Hall. “[Allen Candler](#) served Georgia in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1883 to 1891 and as Governor from 1898 to 1902. Candler also served in the Confederate Army, and as Governor, successfully lobbied for a Democratic whites-only primary based on the argument that the Democratic Party was not subject to the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibits states from disenfranchising voters based on race or skin color. In an 1899 editorial, Candler claimed that the “enfranchisement of the Negro was a crime against civilization.” His tenure coincided with the most violent lynchings in Georgia history, and he was noted for his response to the lynching of Sam Hose in 1899, in which he admonished the black victims of the violence as well as the entire black community.” USG created an advisory group on building names, which recommended to change the names of 75 university buildings across Georgia, including 33 at UGA, among them Candler Hall. However, the Board of Regents [decided](#) not to change any of the names.

UGA bookstore and on reserve at the library. Please note that on Amazon you can also rent a copy of the book or purchase an e-book for less than half of the price).

- Additional readings will be available on ELC and at the library.

Grading

Grading Scheme

| | |
|----|--------|
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| F | 00-59 |

Grade Composition

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|--------------------|
| Quizzes: 10% |
| Presentations: 15% |
| Participation: 20% |
| Midterm: 20% |
| Final paper: 35% |

Assignments

Quizzes

There will be 10 pop quizzes about the readings during the semester.

Presentation

There will be two formal groups presentations during the semester. There will be a class session devoted to preparing the presentations and additional information will be provided.

Discussion (participation)

Students should come to class having read all the required readings and prepared to both pose and answer questions and engage in discussion on the subject matter. Remember that this is not a lecture course. There will be some lectures, but most classes will be devoted to discussion.

Midterm Exam

Midterm exam covering the topics covered in the course so far.

Final Paper

The final assignment will be a literature review paper. Students should select at least 7-10 academic sources to draw on for their paper. The paper should be between 10-12 double-spaced pages. Further instructions about the final assignment will be provided in the second half of the semester.

Policies

Academic Integrity

Every student must agree to abide by UGA's academic honesty policy and procedures known as A Culture of Honesty and the University of Georgia Student Honor Code, which work together to define a climate of academic honesty and integrity at the university.

Special Needs

This course is guided by the assumption of dignity and respect for all persons in the classroom. My hope is to support diversity of learners and to provide a non-threatening environment. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of classes), and make sure that you have contacted the Disability Resource Center: <http://drc.uga.edu>

Electronic Devices

Laptops, iPads, and phones should not be used during class time, unless required for special needs in accordance with the Disability Resource Center. In addition, for some purposes, like pulling up readings, typing answers to questions and preparing for presentations, and to take quizzes, these devices will be permitted.

Class Schedule and Readings

*Please note that this is a tentative schedule and changes will be made during the semester

Week 1

Wed. Aug. 17: Introduction to the course

Fri. Aug. 19: Introductions (continued)

PART I: Comparative Political Analysis

Week 2

Mon. Aug. 22: The Comparative Approach

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 1

Wed. Aug 24: Discussion Session

Fri. Aug. 26: Discussion Outcomes

Week 3

Mon. Aug. 29: Theories, Hypotheses, and Evidence

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 2

Wed. Aug. 31: Discussion Session

Fri. Sep. 2: Discussion Outcomes

Week 4

Wed. Sep. 7: Class Exercise - Questions and Research Design

- Giraudy et al. "How political science explains countries' reactions to COVID-19"
- Taub, Amanda. "Why are women-led nations doing better with COVID-19?"
- Leonhardt, David and Lauren Leatherby. "Where the Virus Is Growing Most: Countries With 'Illiberal Populist' Leaders"
- Witz, Billy. "Why Morehouse and Clemson Made Different Football Choices"

Fri. Sep 9: Class presentations - Questions and Research Design

- At home: Continue to work on groups presentations in preparation for today's class
- Email your presentations to me by Wednesday, Sep 9.

PART II: The State, Democracy, and Authoritarianism

Week 5

Mon. Sep 12: The State

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 3
- Optional: Watch at home – “The art of not being governed”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNkkEU7EoOk>

Wed. Sep 14 & Fri. Sep 16: What is Democracy?

- **No Class meetings (due to APSA), watch at home: What is Democracy?**
- Sen, Amartya Kumar. "Democracy as a universal value." *Journal of democracy* 10, no. 3 (1999): 3-17.
- Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl. "What democracy is... and is not." *Journal of democracy* 2, no. 3 (1991): 75-88.
- Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky. "Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research." *World politics* 49, no. 03 (1997): 430-451.

Week 6

Mon. Sep 19: Democracy and Democratization

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 6

Wed. Sep. 21: Discussion Session

Fri. Sep. 23: Discussion Outcomes

Week 7

Mon. Sep 26: Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Breakdown

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 7

Wed. Sep. 28: Discussion Session

Fr. Sep. 30: Discussion Outcomes

Week 8

Mon. Oct. 3: Class Exercise – group presentations prep

- At home: Watch V-Dem Webinar “How to Defend Democracy against Illiberal Challengers?” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGuVx_6IQS4
- Read the relevant case study for your group:

- **Brazil:** Hunter, Wendy and Timothy J. Power (2019). “Bolsonaro and Brazil’s Illiberal Backlash”, *Journal of Democracy* 30(1): 68-82.
- **Hungary:** Buzogány, Aron (2017). “Illiberal Democracy in Hungary: Authoritarian Diffusion or Domestic Causation?”, *Democratization* 24(7): 1307-1325.
- **India:** Jaffrelot, Christophe (2017). “India’s Democracy at 70: Toward a Hindu State?”, *Journal of Democracy* 28(3): 52-63.
- **Turkey:** Esen, Berk and Sebnem Gumuscu (2016). “Rising Competitive Authoritarianism in Turkey”, *Third World Quarterly* 37(9): 1581-1606.

Wed. Oct. 5: Class presentations – case studies

Fr. Oct. 7: Class presentations – case studies

Week 9

Mon. Oct. 10: Study for midterm

Wed. Oct. 12: Take Home Midterm

Fri. Oct 13: Midterm debrief

Week 10

PART III: Institutions of Government

Mon. Oct. 17: Constitutions and Constitutional Design

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 8

Wed. Oct. 19: Discussion Session

Fri. Oct. 21: Discussion Outcomes

Week 11

Mon. Oct. 24: Legislatures and Legislative Elections

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 9

Wed. Oct. 26: Discussion Session

Fri. Oct. 28: Fall Break

Week 12

PART IV: Politics, Society, and Culture

Mon. Oct 31: Civil Society

- *Reading TBA*

Wed. Nov. 2: Revolutions and Contention – The Square

Fri. Nov. 4: Revolutions and Contention – The Square

Week 13

Mon. Nov 7: Revolutions and Contention

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 12

Wed. Nov 9: “The Arab Spring” – Comparing Egypt and Tunisia

Fri. Nov. 11: Discussion Session

Week 14

Mon. Nov 14: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

- Dickovick & Eastwood, chapter 14
- Mills, Charles W. (2014) *The Racial Contract*. Cornell University Press (selections)
- Screening: I Am Not Your Negro

Wed. Nov. 16: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

- Continued: I Am Not Your Negro

Fri. Nov 18: Discussion Session

Week 15

PART V: Democratic Backsliding

Mon. Nov 21: A New Wave of Authoritization?

- Lührmann, Ann and Staffan I. Lindberg (2019). “A Third Wave of Authoritization Is Here: What is New About It?” *Democratization* 26(7): 1095-1113.

Wed. & Fri. – Thanksgiving Break

Week 16

Mon. Nov 28: How Democracies Die

- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt (2018) *How Democracies Die: What History Reveals About Our Future*. New York: Random House (Intro and chapter 5)

Wed. Nov. 30: Library Session

Fri. Dec. 2: Discussing Final Papers

Final papers due on ELC Dropbox, December 12, 2022 by midnight