

Introduction to Comparative Politics INTL 3300
Fall 2023
The University of Georgia
Department of International Affairs
T and Th 11:10 a.m. to 12:25 p.m. Candler 214
Student drop-in hours: 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.

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. To ensure that the student's work is original and not plagiarized, if there's any suspicion that a paper may have been copied from other sources or has been generated by AI programs such as **Chatbot GPT**, various software programs will be employed to detect such fraud.
5. 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.
6. 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"!
7. 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.
8. **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:

1. **In-class participation:** Students are expected to have read and digested the reading material BEFORE each class and are participate actively in class discussions. Such discussions are assessed not just on the quantity, but also on the quality of the student's contributions. This portion counts for 10% of the course grade.
2. **Attendance:** You can miss 2 classes with no questions asked. For each additional class missed, **no matter what the reason** (unless **serious** emergencies supported with relevant documentation) I will deduct 3 points from your final grade tally. Attendance will be monitored via **Arkaive**, which is an attendance checker app. You will need to download the free app from the app store and is available both for i-phones and android phones. If you don't have a smart phone, or if you have privacy concerns, let me know and I'll check you in manually at the beginning of class. Arkaive works on the basis of geolocation. At the beginning of class I will "open" the class on my phone and I'll give you a 4 letter/digit code which you will have to enter into your app to be recorded as "present" in the class. **Attendance counts for 10% of the overall grade.**
3. There will be **4 quizzes** each counting for 5% for a total of 20% 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 lecture materials (slides) and the content of recent readings (2-3 weeks prior to the quiz).
4. **"Applying what you have learned"** (see more detail in the reading assignments): 6 two-page reflections on a short reading which should combine the knowledge gained by absorbing the readings as well as the lectures each counting for 3% for a total of

18% of the overall grade. The grading scale for this portion of the grade is Fail (0), Low Pass (60), and High Pass (100). When answering the questions in this section, answer them exactly as they are posed – i.e. repeat the question followed by your answer, then move on to the next question, and so on. Be as specific as you can in answering these questions. The following rubrics will be applied: 1. Does your answer correctly identify the central argument made by the author/piece? 2. Is your answer free of typos, and/or grammatical errors? 3. Does your response correctly identify the approach used by the author/piece? 4. Is your critique of the approach or substance of the argument consistent with other theories/approaches you have learned in this or other classes?

5. **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 of you other cases or phenomena?

This paper will count for 27% of your total grade. The rubrics for this portion of the grade consist of: 1. Did you answer the questions laid out above? 2. Have you clearly spelled out a theory or approach to explain your current event? Does the approach that you are using explain your event/case appropriately? 3. Is your answer free of typos and/or grammatical errors?

6. **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 15% 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 17: Introduction and outline of course
- August 22: **What is comparative politics?**
 Timothy Lim (2010) [Doing Comparative Politics: Introduction – What is Comparative Politics](#). (chapter one) Lynne Rienner.
- August 24: 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!
- 8/29 **Nations, States and the crises of nation building.**
- 8/31 Crises of Identity
[Scotland’s Independence Movement is Down, but Not Out, Analysts say](#). The New York Times, June 2023.
- 9/5 Crisis of Legitimacy and Penetration
[The Legitimacy Crisis](#), Niskanen Center, October 2017
- 9/7 Crisis of Participation
[The spreading scourge of voter suppression](#), The Economist, October, 2020.
- 9/12-14 Crisis of Distribution and equality of opportunity! Playing a game entitled “Learning empathy and the power of circumstance”.
[Why Finland is the happiest country in the world – an expert explains](#). The Conversation (2023).
[Opinion: Finland is the World’s Happiest Country: Here’s how we do it](#). Marja Heinonen (2023).

Applying what you have learned (Module 1). Spend some time with the [Opportunity Atlas](#) link. According to your findings, what drives inequality? What policies would you suggest to reduce income inequality? Be specific, i.e. what **must** be gained and at what cost would a reduction in income inequality be achieved? You **must** include some of the information contained in the

preceding readings on Finland. How do the readings on Finland connect to the information provided in the Opportunity Atlas? Applying what you have learned 1 is due on 9/19, 5:00 p.m. I'll provide a tab in elc under "Assignments".

Democracy, Authoritarianism and everything in between.

- 9/19 Phillippe Schmitter and Terry L. Karl. [What Democracy is and is not](#). *Journal of Democracy* (1991).
- 9/21 Pippa Norris (2017) [Is Western Democracy Backsliding?](#) *Journal of Democracy*.
- 9/26 [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 Module 2: Do you have an authoritarian personality? See where you stand on the F-scale: <https://www.anesi.com/fscale.htm> and provide a brief (two page) analysis of your own results. Applying what you have learned 2 in due on October 3, 5:00 p.m. via the "assignment" tab in elc.

Thinking broadly I: History without subject – explorations into structuralism

- 9/28 Jared Diamond. [Guns, Germs, and Steel](#). (Excerpts and chapter summaries) (1997).
- 10/3 Ricardo Hausman (2009) [Prisoners of Geography](#), *Foreign Policy*.
- 10/5 Frederick Jackson Turner (1893): ["The significance of the frontier in American history"](#)

Applying what you have learned Module 3: 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 (two pages). Applying what you have learned 3 is due October 10, 5:00 p.m. via tab in "Assignments" in elc.

MID TERM: CURRENT EVENT WRITE UP DUE: OCTOBER 12 (in "Assignments" via elc).

Thinking broadly II: The ties that bind: political culture

- 10/10 Sheri Berman (1997) [Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic](#). *World Politics* 49: 401-429.
- 10/12 Bo Rothstein and Eric Uslaner (2005) [All for All: Equality, Corruption and Social Trust](#). *World Politics*, 58.
- 10/17 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 4 Module 4: read this short piece [Revenge of the Tiger Mother](#) (Economist 2014) and place in the context of the central elements of a culturalist explanation (two pages). **Applying what you have learned Module 4 is due October 24, 5:00 p.m.**

Thinking broadly III: The rules of the game: institutions and their effects

- Oct. 19 Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James Robinson (2010) [The Role of Institutions in Growth and Development](#). *Review of Economics and Institutions*.
- Oct. 24: Lijphart, Arend (1994) [Democracies: Forms, Performance and Constitutional Engineering](#). *European Journal of Political Research*, 25:1-17.
- Oct. 26: Kumlin, Staffan and Bo Rothstein (2005): [Making or Breaking Social Capital: The Impact of Welfare State Institutions](#). *Comparative Politics*

Applying what you have learned Module 5: 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. (two pages). **Module 5 is due Oct. 31, at 5:00 p.m.**

Thinking broadly IV: constructing the world around us – the power of ideas.

- 10/31 Anthony Marx (1996) Race Making and the Nation State. *WorldPolitics*,48:180-208)
https://www.jstor.org/stable/25053960?seq=1#page_scan_t ab_contents
- 11/2 Ernest Renan “[What is a Nation](#)”? In: *Nationalism*, Hutchinson and Smith (eds.), p. 17-18, Oxford. Oxford University Press.

What is political development?

- 11/7 Frances Hagopian (2000) [Political Development Revisited](#). *Comparative Political Studies*.
- 11/9 Jeffrey Herbst (2002). [States and Power in Africa](#). Review by James Robinson. *Journal of Economic Literature*. 60.
- 11/14 Stephen Marglin (2003) [Development as Poison](#). *Harvard International Review*

Special topic: the environment

- 11/16 Garrett Hardin (1968) "[The Tragedy of the Commons](#)". *Science*. 162, (3859) 1243-1248.
- 11/21 Bill McKibben "[A Deeper Shade of Green](#)", National Geographic, August 2006.
- 11/28: [The Climate Issue](#), (Economist) Sep. 19, 2019
- 11/30: [Are Heatwaves Evidence that Climate Changes is Speeding Up?](#) Economist, July 20223.

Applying what you have learned Module 6: 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]).
Module 6 is due Dec. 5, at 5:00 p.m.

December 5: Review of lecture materials

FINAL EXAM: **TBD**