

INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Dr. Rongbin Han

(hanr@uga.edu)

(T/TR, 9:35 - 10:50; Candler Hall 214)

Office Hours: Thursdays 14:00-15:00 or by appointment (322 Candler Hall)

***** See the instructor if you have a disability and require classroom accommodations.*****

*The syllabus is a general plan; adjustments may be necessary. So be sure to check your UGA e-mail and/or announcements on eLC **regularly** for updates!*

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to the field of comparative politics through introducing comparative methods and examining the differences and similarities among political systems across the world. We will explore a variety of themes including, but not limited to, political institutions, democratization, development and political culture. In doing so, the course familiarizes students with theoretical tools such as structuralism, culturalism, rational choice, and institutionalism. There are three primary goals: (1) to introduce comparative politics as a methodological approach; (2) to present major themes, basic concepts and important theories in the field of comparative politics, and (3) to help students develop essential analytical skills to understand political phenomena in the world through applying what you've learned in this class.

Required readings (Additional Readings can be found on ELC):

- Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics (7th Edition)* (W. W. Norton and Company, 2020).

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

A 93-100	A- 90-92.99	B+ 87-89.99	B 83-86.99	B- 80-82.99	C+ 77-79.99
C 73-76.99	C- 70-72.99	D 60-69.99	F 0-59.99		

Participation (20) You are expected to attend classes regularly and actively participate in learning. Your participation will be measured in multiple forms, including attendance, doing the readings, engaging in discussions in the classroom or online, interacting with fellow students in group activities, and so forth. Participation grade is based on the quantity as well as the quality of your participation.

Pop Quizzes (20) We will have five pop quizzes throughout the semester. Your lowest score will be dropped and the remaining four will each be 5% of the total grade.

Movie Review (5) Write a review (800-1000 words) after watching one of the assigned movies. It shall provide a review of the stories (plot) and an academic analysis of how it is relevant to the class

Midterm Exam (20) The format of each exam will be announced ahead of time.

Research Project (35; 5 for the outline & presentation; 30 for the final paper) Identify a political phenomenon that interests, surprises, or puzzles you and write a research paper/design. Only two requirements for topic selection: (1) it must be empirical rather than normative; (1) it must be comparative in some way. Sample topics include: why some countries have developed economically faster than others; why some autocracies have succumbed to the digital impact but others have not; China under President Xi claims that it is practicing

the “whole-process people's democracy” In what ways it differs from and is similar to western democracy?

I am ready to help you with topic selection. Feel free to reach out to check if an idea works or not. **You shall submit an outline of your topic and question by November 1st** for my feedback. You will also **do a 3-minute presentation** to showcase your project and solicit comments and suggestions from fellow students. Failing to submit the outline or doing the presentation will result in lower grades for this assignment.

The end product shall be a 10-page paper (double-spaced). In the final paper, you are expected to **introduce your question, explain your comparative design, make an argument and convince readers with your analysis**. Should you choose to write a research design, you shall **introduce your question, explain your comparative design, and describe your data sources as well as likely findings**. You should pay special attention to **the organization and the coherence of the analysis**. Please **cite sources properly**.

******* Important Dates *******

<u>October 9</u>	<u>Midterm Exam</u>
<u>November 1</u>	<u>Submit your research project topic</u>
<u>December 9</u>	<u>Research Paper due at 11:59pm.</u>

Academic Honesty:

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: www.uga.edu/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. ***Plagiarism will not be tolerated!***

Grade Dispute:

If you have any questions about your exam grade, please report to me **within one week** from the time you receive the grade. You need to present a written appeal explaining why your grade should be adjusted. Please also bear in mind that disputing grades may end up with higher, lower or no change in your grade.

Resources

UGA has a vast array of resources to support students facing a variety of challenges. Please don't hesitate to come speak with me or contact these resources directly. Please be aware that UGA faculty and staff are obligated to report any knowledge of sexual assault/relationship violence to UGA's Equal Opportunity Office. The Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (info below) can speak to students confidentially.

- **Office of Student Care & Outreach** (coordinate assistance for students experiencing hardship/unforeseen circumstances) – 706-542-7774 or by email sco@uga.edu
- **Counseling and Psychiatric Services** (CAPS) - 706-542-2273 (during regular business hours) *After Hour Mental Health Crisis:* 706-542-2200 (UGA Police—ask to speak to the CAPS on-call clinician)
- **Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention** – 706-542-SAFE (The advocates at RSVP can provide student confidentiality).

Please note, communication is super important. Should you face difficulty in learning or have any other problems, concerns or needs (e.g., not getting the lecture, trying to secure a recommendation letter, or in need of some career advice), please get in touch with me, preferably ahead of time so that we can work on the issues.

Some Ground Rules

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

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.

Policy 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 AI Policy

You are allowed to explore the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools for your assignments when proper, but use of GAI tools should be limited to providing support as you develop your thinking and knowledge base. In addition, there are some general rules to follow:

- Please note that you may not represent output generated by a GAI tool as your own work. Any such use of GAI output must be appropriately cited or disclosed, including quotation marks and in-line citations for direct quotes. Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. Suspected unauthorized assistance, plagiarism, or other violations of UGA's "A Culture of Honesty," will be reported to the Office of Academic Honesty. For full details on how to properly cite AI-generated work, please see the APA Style article, [How to Cite ChatGPT](#), for instance
- If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with GAI and copying from GAI, I recommend that you do not have your assignment and the GAI tool open on your device at the same time. Instead, take notes in your own words while you interact with the GAI tool, then use your notes to remind you of what you've learned and to inform your work. Never copy output from GAI tools into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the tool as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your improved understanding. (Sidenote: This advice extends to AI assistants that are directly integrated into a composition environment or grammar modulation tool.)
- Finally, GAI is highly vulnerable to inaccuracy and bias. You should assume GAI output is wrong unless you either know the answer or can verify it with another source. It is your responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output used.

CLASS SCHEDULE

“Those who only know one country, know no country.” – Seymour Lipset

- WEEK 1** 8/14: Welcome! Course Introduction
 Syllabus
 * Horace Miner, “Body Ritual among the Nacirema,” *American Anthropologist*, 58: 3 (June 1956): 503-507.
- WEEK 2** 8/19: Introduction to Social Scientific Inquiry and Comparative Methods
 O’Neil, Chapter 1.
 8/21: The States
 O’Neil, Chapter 1, pp. 18-22; Chapter 2
- WEEK 3** 8/26: Nondemocratic Regimes
 O’Neil, Chapter 6
 8/28: Democracies and Democratization
 O’Neil, Chapter 5, 138-150.
 * Carles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), Intro.
- WEEK 4** 9/2: Communism and Communist Regimes
 O’Neil, Chapter 9
 The Communist Manifesto
 9/4: Movie: Good bye Lenin!
 Watch the movie before coming to class for discussion
- WEEK 5** 9/9: Authoritarian Resilience: The China Case
 * Andrew Nathan, “Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Democracy* 14: 1 (2003): 6–17.
 * Cheng Li, “The End of the CCP’s Resilient Authoritarianism? A Tripartite Assessment of Shifting Power in China,” *The China Quarterly* 211 (2012): 595–623
 9/11: Instructor out of town for APSA; watch movie on your own:
 Good Bye, Lenin! (2003, <https://youtu.be/0NaPk07eyAU?>) or **The Gate of Heavenly Peace** (1995, <https://youtu.be/1LAUkTtxoFs?>)
- WEEK 6** 9/16: Hybrid Regimes
 * Fareed Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* (Nov/Dec, 1997): 22-43.
 * Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* 13:2 (2002): 51–65.
 9/18: Instructor out of town for conference. Watch the video, do the readings & discuss:
 How Bad Is the Crisis in Democracy (<https://youtu.be/PWt7naYTtiik?>)
 Suggested readings: O’Neil, Chapter 8
 * Paul Howe, “Eroding Norms and Democratic Deconsolidation,” *Journal of Democracy* 28: 4 (2017): 15–29.
 * Cas Mudde, “How populism became the concept that defines our age,” *The Guardian*, November 22, 2018.

- WEEK 7** 9/23: Constitutions and Constitutional Design
 O’Neil, Chapter 5, 150-160.
 * J. Tyler Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), Chapter 8.
 * Donald Horowitz, Juan Linz, and Seymour Lipset, “Debate-Presidents vs. Parliaments,” *Journal of Democracy* 1:4 (1990), 73-91.
- 9/25: Electoral Systems
 * Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), Chapter 2.
 * Thomas Carl Lundberg, “Electoral System Reviews in New Zealand, Britain and Canada: A Critical Comparison.” *Government and Opposition* 42: 4 (2007): 471–90.
- WEEK 8** 9/30: Political Parties and Party Systems
 * S. C. Stokes, “Political Parties and Democracy,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 243–67.
 * Josep M. Colomer, “It’s Parties That Choose Electoral Systems (or, Duverger’s Laws Upside Down),” *Political Studies* 53: 1 (2005): 1–21.
- 10/2: Civil Society and Social Capital
 * Putnam Robert, Bowling alone: American’s Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy* 6, 1 (1995), pp. 65-78.
 * Sheri Berman, “Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic,” *World Politics* 49: 3 (1997): 401–29.
- WEEK 9** 10/7: Midterm Exam Review
 10/9: Midterm Exam
- WEEK 10** 10/14: Political Economy
 O’Neil, Chapter 4 & Chapter 8 (265-269).
 * Michael Bernhard, “The Leadership Secrets of Bismarck - Imperial Germany and Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Foreign Affairs*, 90 (2011), pp. 150-154.
- 10/16: The Politics of Development
 O’Neil, Chapter 10.
 * Masoud Movahed, “[The East Asian Miracle: Where Did Adam Smith Go Wrong?](#)” *Harvard International Review*, Fall 2014.
- WEEK 11** 10/21: Political Ideology and Political Culture
 O’Neil, Chapter 3, 75-91, 261-265.
 * Christian Welzel and Ronald F. Inglehart, “Political Culture, Mass Beliefs, and Value Change,” In Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Christian Welzel, and Ronald F. Inglehart eds., *Democratization (2nd Edition)* (Oxford University Press, 2018), 126–44.
- 10/23: Identity Politics: Nationalism, Race, Ethnicity and Gender
 O’Neil, Chapter 3, 60-75; 91-95.
 * Dickovick and Eastwood, *Comparative Politics*, Chapter 14.
 * Daniel N. Posner, “Regime Change and Ethnic Cleavages in Africa,” *Comparative Political Studies* 40: 11(2007):1302-1327.

- WEEK 12** 10/28: Policy Making and Implementation
 * George Tsebelis, "Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism," *British Journal of Political Science* 25:3 (1995), pp. 289-325.
 10/30: Policy Making and Implementation: The China Case
 * Andrew Mertha, "Fragmented Authoritarianism 2.0: Political Pluralization in the Chinese Policy Process," *The China Quarterly* 200 (2009), pp. 995-1012.
 * Sebastian Heilmann, "Policy Experimentation in China's Economic Rise," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43:1 (2008): 1-26.
- WEEK 13** 11/4: Political Violence, Revolutions and Social Movements
 O'Neil, Chapter 7.
 * Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), Introduction and Chapter 1.
 11/6: Contentious Politics & Authoritarian Regimes
 * Jay Ulfelder, "Contentious Collective Action and the Breakdown of Authoritarian Regimes," *International Political Science Review* 26: 3 (2016): 311-34.
 * Kevin O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance," *World Politics*, 49:1 (1996), pp. 31-55.
- WEEK 14** 11/11: Cyber Politics: Challenging Authoritarianism
 * Clay Shirky, "The Political Power of Social Media," *Foreign Affairs* (2011), 28-41.
 * Seva Gunitsky, "Corrupting the Cyber-Commons: Social Media as a Tool of Autocratic Stability," *Perspectives on Politics* 13: 1 (2015): 42-54.
 11/13: U.S.-China Tech Competition and Its Implications
 * Satoru Mori, "US Technological Competition with China: The Military, Industrial and Digital Network Dimensions," *Asia-Pacific Review* 26:1(2019), 77-120.
 * The Economist, "China has become a scientific superpower," *The Economist*, June 12, 2024.
- Week 15** 11/18 & 11/20: Final Research Project Presentations
- WEEK 16** 11/25: Watch Chip War, the Race for Semiconductor Supremacy
 (<https://youtu.be/8mvWbKEpO9Q?>)
 11/27: Thanksgiving Break, No Class

Final Research Paper due December 9, 11:59pm!