

## INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics

University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs

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### Course Instructor Information:

Dr. Erin Little

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Office hours by appointment in-person (217 Candler Hall) or Zoom (link available on eLC)

### Course Meeting Information:

MWF, 11:30am-12:20pm

Caldwell Hall 102

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## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Broadly, this course asks: What explains variation in institutional and economic development across countries? Scholars have proposed paths toward democracy and suggested that democracy facilitates economic development within states. The end of the Cold War seemed to affirm for some that Democracy would usher in order and peace, both within and across states. Yet, autocratic and mixed regimes have been surprisingly durable, with few new, stable democracies entering the international system.

We will use cross-national case studies and qualitative methods to evaluate these claims, deepening our understanding of the factors which motivate particular forms of state development. We will explore institutional and economic efforts to maintain order, while also examining challenges to this order and how resulting civil conflict, human rights violations, and repression alter lasting prospects for domestic and international peace.

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## EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### COUNTRY COMPARISON PROJECT

One key project of this course is a semester-long study of two countries. Students may select from one of the pairs below or coordinate with their instructor in selecting a pair of their choice. Pairs selected from the list will have the benefit of articles posted to eLC to jump-start students' research on these countries. This is a group project. Suggested Pairs [with materials on eLC]:

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Chile and Peru               | 5. Rwanda and Burundi      |
| 2. Haiti and Dominican Republic | 6. Egypt and Tunisia       |
| 3. India and Sri Lanka          | 7. Saudi Arabia and Jordan |
| 4. France and Italy             | 8. Pakistan and Bangladesh |

Students will select the States they would like to follow through the semester worth 5% just for the country pair selection. From that point, there will be four more assignments related to this project. Submit all assignments through eLC.

1. *A research question*: Students will be expected to propose a research question about the country pairs they have selected. By this point in the semester, students should have a broad understanding of some basic similarities/differences between your country pairs, or interesting historical continuities which help explain their respective developments. You will (a) propose a research question, and (b) explain why you chose that question (i.e., why is it important to you and/or the broader study of comparative politics). This assignment should be no more than **250 words** in length.
2. *Two “short country summaries”*: Students will introduce their two countries, providing key details that would allow a reader to identify why these two countries are being compared. Key details related to the research question should be included and cited with at least 2 reputable sources per country. Anywhere from 300-500 words per country is required. This section should have 2-3 cited materials per country.
3. *Methods description*: Students will write a summary of the empirical methods they would use to complete the paper. This assignment will include: (a) The summary itself, roughly 250 words; (b) key dependent and independent variables, excluding controls; (c) Conceptualization and measurement for these variables.
4. *An annotated bibliography*: Students will be expected to compile a list of 10 credible sources, with a brief 50-words-or-less description of key points to pull from the source for their projects, plus any quoted material with a referenced page # (no word limit). Credible sources may include any source with a reference in Google Scholar, with up to 4 sources being those for measurement of dependent and independent variables. Students may use news articles or other sources, but they will not count toward the total 10 required for full credit.

Due dates for these assignments are below:

- Research Question - October 20th
- Short Country Summaries - November 10th
- Methods Description - December 2nd
- Annotated Bibliography - December 2nd

## **EXAM AND QUIZZES**

Students will take one open-note midterm exam through eLC on **September 26th**. The midterm will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions and taken at-home, so we will not have class that day. More guidelines will be provided on eLC prior to the exam. Additionally, you will have 5 quizzes throughout the semester, worth 2% each, due by the dates marked below in the course schedule.

## **SIMULATION**

Throughout the semester on days noted in the course schedule below, we will have simulation days where groups of students will take on rotating roles within the Government, Military, and Civilian population. All details, goals, grading criteria, and group assignments will be made available on eLC prior to the first Simulation Day.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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Attendance will be taken randomly 5 times during the semester (worth 2% each) and on simulation days. Absences will only be excused for the following, discussed with me in advance: observance of a religious practice, documented (by a doctor or health clinic/hospital) sickness, or death of a relative or close friend. While attendance is not taken for each class session, the fast-paced nature of this course and the use of supplemental materials in class (which will also appear on exams) will make it more difficult for students to do well in this course without being present.

## **GENERATIVE AI POLICY**

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Generative AI tools, such as Chat GPT and Grammarly, are permitted for all assignments in this course to assist in spelling, grammar, and diction. For any final research papers or projects, students may be required to submit a generative AI version of the assignment populated from their research question and a prompt of their choice, noted on the submission. This version will be submitted separately alongside the final document. Only the final document will be graded.

## GRADING POLICY

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The breakdown of your grades and the scoring rubric for this course are below (P/F indicates a Pass/Fail grade):

10% - Attendance

10% - Module Quizzes

20% - Midterm Exam

**30% - Simulation**

30% - Country Comparisons Project

- 5% - Research question (P/F)
- 5% - Annotated bibliography
- 10% - Short responses (P/F)
- 10% - Final research proposal

94 to 100 – A

80 to 83 – B-

67 to 69 – D+

90 to 93 – A-

77 to 79 – C+

64 to 67 – D

87 to 89 – B+

74 to 77 – C

60 to 63 – D-

84 to 87 – B

70 to 73 – C-

59 and below – F

## OUTLINE OF TOPICS

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MODULE I: BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE STATE (WEEKS 1-2)	
	<b>Introduction to course and The State</b>
Topics	What is 'the State' and who are its agents? State sovereignty in a globalized world
Readings	Tilly (1985)

	<i>Nothing due this week</i>
	<b>Citizenship, Nation, and Rights</b>
Topics	Citizenship and civil rights Nationalism and human rights
Readings	McCrone and Kiely (2000)
<i>Due by 8/29</i>	<i>Module I Quiz</i>

<b>MODULE II: DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM (WEEKS 3-6)</b>	
	<b>Democracy</b> <i>9/1– NO CLASS; Labor Day</i>
Topics	Conceptualizing democratic governance Measuring democracy in comparative politics
Readings	Polity IV manual (pgs 1-17); Freedom House methodology
	<i>Nothing due this week</i>
	<b>Democratic Decline into Authoritarianism</b>
Topics	Patterns and markers of democratic decline Types of autocratic systems and governance under authoritarian regimes
Readings	Watch <i>The Edge of Democracy</i> documentary (link in eLC)
<i>Due by 9/12</i>	<i>Bonus Discussion Thread on documentary (assignment details TBA)</i>

	<b>Authoritarianism into Transitional Democracy</b>
Topics	How autocratic regimes break down Installing democratic structures and decentralizing power
Readings	TBA
<i>Due by 9/19</i>	<i>Module II Quiz</i>
	<b>Governance Structures and Political Economy</b>
Topics	Foreign aid and State development The role of police in enforcing governance in transitional democracies
Readings	Aluko and Arowolo (2010)
<i>Sept. 26th</i>	<i>NO CLASS – MIDTERM EXAM (Weeks 1-5)</i>

<b>MODULE III: METHODS WORKSHOP</b>	
	<b>Asking a research question</b>
Topics	Asking a research question, pt. 1 - Dependent and independent variables Asking a research question, pt. 2 - Causality
Readings	KKV p14-19, Pearl (2009)
	<b>Answering your research question</b>
Topics	Causal mechanisms vs. Correlative-conjunction Case studies vs. Process-tracing

Readings	Lim Ch. 2; Mahony on process-tracing
<i>Oct. 10th</i>	<i>Workshop Day (not optional) and Review of simulation dossier and rules</i>
<i>Due by 10/10</i>	<i>Module III Quiz</i>
<i>Due by 10/20 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>Submit your countries and research question for the comparison project</i>

<b>MODULE IV: POLITICAL VIOLENCE</b>	
	<b>Domestic conflict</b>
Topics	Defining coups and civil war Dynamics of civil conflict
Readings	TBD
<i>Oct. 17th</i>	<i>Simulation Day 1 (Era 1)</i>
	<b>Civilian victimization</b>
Topics	Forms of civilian victimization Civilian victimization during conflict
Readings	Humphreys and Weinstein (2006)
<i>Oct. 24th</i>	<i>Simulation Day 2 (Era 1)</i>
	<b>Week 11 – Forms of protest</b> <i>10/31 - NO CLASS; Fall Break</i>

Topics	Forms of protest, pt. 1 - Riots vs. Revolution Forms of protest, pt. 2 - Self-immolation vs. Suicide terrorism
Readings	TBD
<i>Due by 11/3</i>	<i>Module IV Quiz</i>

<b>MODULE V: REGIONAL DYNAMICS</b>	
	<b>Effects of colonization</b>
Topics	British colonization in Iran French colonization in Vietnam
Readings	TBD
<i>Nov. 7th</i>	<i>Simulation Day 3 (Era 1)</i>
	<b>Diffusion and security</b>
Topics	Policy diffusion Regional security complexes
Readings	Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll (2010); (Optional) Kampf (2013)
<i>Nov. 14th</i>	<i>Simulation Day 4 (Era 1)</i>
	<b>Globalization and Looking ahead</b>
Topics	Global threats and local effects Q&A for Dr. Little



<i>Due by 11/21</i>	<i>Module V Quiz</i>
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<b>Nov. 24th</b>	<b>Optional Workshop Day</b> <i>11/26-28 - NO CLASS; Thanksgiving Break</i>
Topics	Workshop to review or discuss questions concerning the final draft of your country comparison project; <i>Attendance not required</i>
<i>Due by 11/25 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>Both short responses for the country comparison project</i>

<b>Dec. 1-2</b>	<b>Simulation Finale (Era 2)</b>
Topics	Following from your decisions in Era 1, we will move toward a regional crisis simulation with a specific set of challenges for each group to complete. The rules, roles, and context will change.
Readings	You will have a new dossier of details provided the week prior to the simulation
<b>Dec. 5th at 11:59pm</b>	<b>Methods summary and Annotated bibliography for the country comparisons project is due</b>

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

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UGA Student Honor Code: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found the website of Office of Instruction. We expect that the Student Honor Code will guide your efforts in this course. A lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy does not explain a violation. Please direct any questions to the instructor.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the University Council: “The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

The following is taken verbatim from LINK: “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 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.”

## **FERPA STATEMENT**

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The following is taken verbatim from the Syllabus Checklist:

“The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar’s explanation. FERPA allows disclosure of directory information (name, address, telephone, email, date of birth, place of birth, major, activities, degrees, awards, prior schools), unless requested in a written letter to the registrar.”

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the Disability Resource Center:

“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 the Disability Resource Center”

The following is taken verbatim from the document of Syllabus Creation:

“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.”

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the University Council:

“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 the website of Student Care and Outreach. 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 or crisis support. If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit 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.”