

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Course Number: Poli 130.003

Meeting Time: Monday and Wednesday 2:30-3:45pm

Classroom: Phillips Hall Rm 247

Term: Spring 2022

Instructor: Isabel Laterzo (ilaterzo@live.unc.edu)

Office Hours: By calendly appointment only using this link: calendly.com/ilaterzo

Wednesday and Friday 12:30-2:00pm (or by separate appointment)

Hamilton/Pauli Murray Hall Rm 411 or Zoom

Course Description

This course is designed to be a broad overview of Comparative Politics, one of the subfields of Political Science. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss key concepts in political science, including the concept of the state, political systems, and challenges faced by state governments. By the end of the semester, you should be able to understand questions such as: What is a democracy? What are differences between non-democratic regimes? What are different ways to organize governments? How do different political institutions affect governance outcomes? To study these ideas, we'll use examples from a variety of different countries.

This is an introductory level course and no prior experience is required. This class is divided into three large units:

- 1) First, we will discuss important foundational concepts such as statehood and the nation state. We will then cover the concept of a democracy, including what it means to be a democracy, how countries become democracies, and different models of democratic states.
- 2) Second, we'll cover forms of non-democratic governance and democratic backsliding. We will examine different styles of non-democratic regimes and how they maintain power.
- 3) Finally, we will analyze some key topics in comparative politics. Many of these are relevant issues in the world today that you are likely to hear about in the news. These include political violence, colonial legacies, gender and ethnicity, and populism.

Materials

There is one required reading for this course: Patrick O'Neil (2018). *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 7th Edition, W.W. Norton and Company.

This is available for purchase at the UNC Student Stores or online. All other readings will be posted to Sakai or a link will be provided.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and a new syllabus will be posted on Sakai.

Course Layout & Requirements

Grades

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to individual grades based on overall performance in the course and/or extenuating circumstances.

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

Attendance

Attendance and participation are mandatory for this course. **I will take attendance during each course meeting via the [UNC-Check In App](#).** You are allowed 2 unexcused absences over the course of the semester. After 2 absences, your grade will reflect your failure to attend.

If you know you will be absent for an excused reason, email me before class and give me any documentation I need to excuse you (i.e., doctor's notes, University's notes, etc.). That being said, I ask any student who answers yes to any questions in their COVID-19 self-monitoring tests to stay out of the classroom until such time that returning would be appropriate. There will be no penalty for missing class due to COVID-19 illnesses and concerns.

Course Components & Structure

This class is comprised of lectures, in-class discussions, readings, and assignments. It is highly discussion-based and I will rarely lecture for a full class period. Readings will come both from the textbook and supplemental sources (which will always be uploaded on Sakai or a link will be provided to you).

Unless indicated, you are expected to have completed the readings and assignments by the date they are listed in the course schedule below.

Course assessment is broken down as follows:

1. Participation (10%): Class time will be divided between lecture and in-class discussions. In-class discussions will focus on material covered in lecture and the assigned readings. Active involvement in discussions is crucial to success in this class and will affect your participation grade.

2. Discussion Questions (15%): On our second day of class, you will select your own due dates for discussion questions. You will be submitting discussion questions twice throughout the semester based on the assigned readings for the corresponding class date. Each time you submit discussion questions, you should write *two* questions. These should be concise – one or two sentences each, not a whole paragraph. Complete discussion questions that meaningfully address the topic will be awarded full points. You will post discussion questions to the Sakai forum for your classmates to see by **11:59pm on the night before class**.

- Asking a “meaningful” question means not just asking for a definition of a glossary word or a basic fact, but rather engaging with a critical issue from the material covered. It could be a normative (“should”) question asking your classmates’ opinions on an issue or it could be a descriptive (“is”) question, but if it is the latter it should engage deeply, not superficially, with an issue.
- An example of a good normative question: “Do you think we should move away from using the term ‘developing world’?”
- An example of a good descriptive question: “How do the authors demonstrate federalism affects the legislative process?”

3. Response or Reflection Papers (30% or 10% per paper): By the end of the semester, **each student must submit 3 three-to-four page long (double spaced) response papers.** In their response papers, students are expected to summarize the required readings for the week and provide a brief reflection related to the topic of that week. They should also reflect on how that week’s readings relate to a 1) current or historical event that interests them or 2) past themes from the course. A good reflection paper should not only show an adequate level of understanding of the readings, but also that the student is capable of applying central concepts of the readings.

Response papers will be submitted in three phases. You can select any week within each phase to turn in a response paper, but each paper must give primary focus to only one week of readings (a connection to past readings is acceptable, but this should not be the focus). Further, you must turn in the response paper at the end of the week you selected. For example, if you choose to complete your Phase 1 paper regarding Week 4’s readings, you must turn it in by Friday at 11:59pm on Week 4.

Phase 1: Weeks 2-5

Phase 2: Weeks 6-10

Phase 3: Weeks 11-15

Points: In total, you can get up to 15 points for your reaction papers (see rubric below). However, your final grade for these papers will be taken out of 14 points. This gives you a “free point” on these papers. For example, if you score a total of 12 points throughout the semester, your grade would be a 85.7% (12/14) instead of an 80% (12/15).

Citations: Please cite the readings from the corresponding week in your paper using parenthetical citations (Author Year) and include a bibliography (APA or Chicago Style). You may cite external sources (such as newspaper articles) or readings from previous weeks as well using this format. Please [see this link](#) for information on citation style’s for more guidance.

Formatting: Papers should but 12 pt font Times New Roman or Calibri, double spaced, with one-inch margins. Submit Word documents only, no PDFs or Google Docs. Include a heading (this can be single-spaced) with your name, the title of the course, date, week number, and paper phase.

Rubric: Response papers will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 5. The rubric is included below:

Dimension	Criteria	Points
Organization	Lacks organization, the argument is difficult to follow.	0
	Mostly well-organized but could be improved.	0.5
	Well-organized and easy to follow, has a clear introduction, body and conclusion.	1
Summaries	Fails to summarize the main arguments, omission of key points, or inaccurate characterization of the main points. The summary is a copy of the abstract of the article.	0
	Provides a fairly accurate and descriptive summaries, or the summaries are not concise, or the arguments are not presented in a logical order.	1
	Provides an accurate, descriptive and concise summary of the articles' information in a logical order	2
Opinion	Fails to present an opinion, or the opinion is unrelated to the readings assigned for the week, or the opinion is not at all insightful or thorough.	0
	The opinion reflects some misunderstanding of the readings, or the opinion is only partially informed by the readings assigned for that week, or the opinion is not very insightful or thorough.	1
	Thoughtfully presents an opinion that is informed by the readings assigned for the week. The opinion reflects an adequate understanding of the readings and it is, at least to some extent, insightful or thorough.	2

4. Midterm (20%): There will be a short, take-home midterm due on Friday, March 11th. The exact format will be determined as the date approaches and it will be provided to you about one week before the due date. It will be designed to evaluate the extent to which students understand the main concepts and theoretical perspectives reviewed so far in the semester.

5. Final Exam (25%): The final will take place on Friday May 6th at 8:00am. It will consist of a series of short answer questions. It will be designed to evaluate the extent to which students understand the main concepts and theoretical perspectives reviewed during the entire semester.

6. Research Requirement (No percentage, but required): Students enrolled in Poli 130 are required to participate in the Department of Political Science research activities as part of their course requirement. A principal goal of the requirement is for students to gain an appreciation of how political science research works, while simultaneously acquiring new knowledge about areas of the discipline that they may not encounter in their Poli courses.

The research requirement is administered by the Political Science Subject Pool (PSSP) Administrators. To satisfy the research requirement, you must complete 8 credits of research by participating in actual political science research studies. Research studies are typically research experiments or surveys. Typically, each study's completion satisfies 1 credit towards the requirement; occasionally, a study will count for more than one credit. The research requirement is fulfilled when 8 credits are earned. Students can participate in research studies and track their requirement fulfillment status by logging into the PSSP

Portal (<https://tarheels.live/psspparticipants/>) using their UNC Onyen and password. (The Portal will become active in February.)

Students can also fulfill the research requirement by writing a 800-word research-oriented reaction paper. The specifications for completing the PSSP requirement in this way will be described on the website above.

The total time commitment to complete the research requirement should not exceed 3 hours. The research requirement does not substitute for other course requirements, nor does it generate extra credit. Failure to satisfy the research requirement will result in an incomplete grade (IN) that will be removed only upon satisfaction of the requirement. For additional information and contacts, please email pssp@unc.edu.

Class Policies

Community Standards and Mask Use

This semester, while we are in the midst of a global pandemic, all enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the Office of Student Conduct. At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception. For additional information, see Carolina Together.

Spring 2022 Course Delivery

As long as it is possible to do so safely, we will be meeting in person this semester. I understand the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may require changes to this plan and will be monitoring the situation closely. If I need to change the format of the course temporarily due to outbreaks of illness, I will announce this via email and the course Sakai site.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty—violating the standards of integrity all students pledge to adhere to as a condition of enrollment at UNC—results in being referred to the Honor Court. Students with questions about what qualifies as academic dishonesty should ask the instructor and can also consult the Honor Court Website at <http://honor.unc.edu>.

Late Work Policy/Deadlines

If you need an extension on any assignment, do not hesitate to reach out. Let me know as far ahead as possible, but I recognize that this will not always be possible. If you have not talked to me beforehand, I will deduct one letter grade (10 percentage points) per day that an assignment is late from the maximum grade you can receive. I will then grade your assignment as normal and weight it so that it could not exceed this maximum grade. As such if you turn in an assignment one day late, the highest grade you can receive is a 90. If you then receive an 85 on the assignment, your actual grade will be $.85 * 90 = 76.5$.

Contact Policy and Office Hours

Please come to my office hours to discuss concerns about the course, remediation with the material, or to engage further with the topic. You will be required to make an appointment to visit my office hours via the calendly link posted above. You may decide to visit my office hours in person or meet with me via Zoom. If you are unable to meet during my office hours please email me to set up a time to talk.

In general, email is the best way to reach me. I respond to emails as quickly and thoroughly as possible, but please expect a response within 24 hours on weekdays. Note that I will often not respond to emails over the weekend - expect emails received on Fridays may not be responded to until Monday. Plan accordingly. Further, email is only for brief communications. If you have long and complicated questions, come to my office hours.

Grade Grievances

Please note University Policy stipulates that no grades can be sent over email. Grades will either be returned in person or via Sakai.

Requests for regrades have a time window. They cannot be submitted until at least 48 hours have passed since the assignment was returned, and they will only be accepted within three weeks of an assignment being returned. To request a regrade, you must submit a written memo (two pages max) explaining what aspect of your original grade you think was in error.

Inclusivity, Class Discussions, & Classroom Civility

Every student in this class, regardless of any identity category, is a valued and equal member of the group. We all bring different experiences to this class and no one experience has more value than another. It is our different experiences that will enrich the course content. I strive to create an environment where you feel comfortable and excited about sharing your thoughts and applying what you have learned to issues you care about. With this in mind, all conversation during class must be civil, reasoned, and respectful of others' opinions. In- tolerant speech, disruptive or insulting remarks, and hateful language will not be tolerated in the classroom or associated spaces (e.g., office hours, Sakai, assignments)

In this classroom, you have the right to determine your own identity. You have the right to be called by whatever name you wish, and for that name to be pronounced correctly. You have the right to be referred to by whatever pronoun you identify. You have the right to adjust those things at any point. If there are aspects of the instruction of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or a sense of alienation from the course content, please contact me privately without fear of reprisal.

Student Accessibility

Any student with a documented condition who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact the instructor and Accessibility Resources (<https://accessibility.unc.edu/>). Accessibility Resources can be reached by phone at 919-962-8300 or by email at accessibility@unc.edu.

Technology Use

The use of cell phones or other mobile communication devices is strictly prohibited during this class, without exception. You may take notes on your laptops, but I will be monitoring the class and use of material unrelated to the course is prohibited.

Course Schedule

<i>Week 1: Introduction</i>	
January 10	Introduction to the Course
	No readings
January 12	What is Comparative Politics?
	O'Neil Chapter 1 "Introduction" pgs 1-18 Complete this introduction survey .
<i>Week 2: States & Nations</i>	
January 17	No Class – MLK Jr. Day
January 19	What is a State?
	O'Neil Chapter 2 "States" Fukuyama, Francis. "The imperative of state-building." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 15, no. 2 (2004): 17-31.
<i>Week 3: Nation State & Democracy</i>	
January 24	Nation, Modernization, and Development
	O'Neil Chapter 3 "Nations and Society" Huntington, Samuel P. "The change to change: Modernization, development, and politics." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 3, no. 3 (1971). Read pp. 283-293
January 26	What is a Democracy?
	O'Neil Chapter 5 "Democratic Regimes" pg 139-145 (stop at "Contemporary Democratization") Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy is... and is Not." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> . 2(3): 75-88.
<i>Week 4: Democratization 1</i>	
January 31	A Review: Competing Hypotheses
	O'Neil Chapter 5 "Democratic Regimes" pg 145-150 (begin with "Contemporary Democratization" and stop at "Institutions of the Democratic State")

	Geddes, Barbara. 2011. "What Causes Democratization". Oxford Handbook of Political Science.
February 2	In Focus: Economic Development and Democracy
	Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. "Modernization: Theories and facts." <i>World Politics</i> 49, no. 2 (1997): 155-183.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Week 5: Democratization II</i> Phase 1: Reflection Final Week</p>	
February 7	In Focus: Inequality
	<p>Ansell, Ben, and David Samuels. "Inequality and democratization: A contractarian approach." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 43, no. 12 (2010): 1543-1574</p> <p><i>Recommended:</i> Haggard, Stephan, and Robert R. Kaufman. "Inequality and regime change: Democratic transitions and the stability of democratic rule." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 106, no. 3 (2012): 495-516.</p>
February 9	In Focus: Diffusion
	Gleditsch, Kristian, and Michael Ward. "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization." <i>International Organization</i> 60.4 (2006): 911–933.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Week 6: Varieties of Democracy I</i></p>	
February 14	Parliamentary vs. Presidential Systems
	<p>Chapter 5 "Democratic Regimes" pg 150-160 (begin at "Institutions of the Democratic State" and stop at "Political Parties")</p> <p>Linz, Juan. "The Perils of Presidentialism." <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, vol. 1, no. 1, 1990, pp. 51-70.</p>
February 16	Federalism
	<p>Beramendi, Pablo. "Federalism" The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics, 2009. Sections 1 & 2.</p> <p>Dunn, Claire, and Isabel Laterzo. "State-level Citizen Response to COVID-19 Containment Measures in Brazil and Mexico." <i>Journal of Politics in Latin America</i> 13, no. 3 (2021): 328-357.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Week 7: Varieties of Democracy II</i></p>	
February 21	Majoritarian vs. Consensus Systems
	Arend Lijphart, Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, Chapter 1 (Introduction)
February 23	Electoral Systems
	O'Neil Chapter 5 "Democratic Regimes" pg 161-174 (Begin at "Electoral Systems" and stop at the end)

	Arend Lijphart, Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, Chapter 8 (Electoral Systems)
Week 8: Non-Democratic Regimes I	
February 28	Varieties of Authoritarianism
	O'Neil Chapter 6 "Non-Democratic Regimes"
March 2	Authoritarian Persistence: Case Studies
	Read one of the following based on what is most interesting to you: <u>China:</u> King, G., Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2013). How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression. <i>American Political Science Review</i> , 107(2), 326-343. <u>Russia:</u> Robertson, Graeme and Samuel Greene, "The Kremlin Emboldened: How Putin Wins Support." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , vol. 28, no. 4, 2017, pp. 86-100
Week 9: Non-Democratic Regimes II & Democratic Backsliding <i>Take Home Midterm Due Friday March 11th</i>	
March 7	Communism and its Fall
	O'Neil Chapter 9 "Communism"
March 9	Democratic Backsliding
	Lührmann, Anna and Matthew Wilson. 2018. "One-third of the world's population lives in a declining democracy. That includes the United States". The Washington Post. July 4 2018. Bermeo, Nancy. "On Democratic Backsliding", <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , vol. 27, no.1, 2016, pp. 5-19.
Spring Break: Week of March 14 <i>No Class</i>	
Week 10: Political Parties and Competition Phase 2: Reflection Final Week	
March 21	Programmatic Competition
	O'Neil Chapter 5 "Democratic Regimes" pgs 160-161 (Political Parties section) Stokes, Susan C. "Political parties and democracy." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 2, no. 1 (1999): 243-267. *Don't worry about the math in this! Just try to get the general idea.

March 23	Clientelism
	<p>Susan Stokes. "Perverse Accountability A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina." <i>American Political Science Review</i>, vol. 99, no. 3, 2005, pp. 315-32</p> <p>Herrera, Vernoica. "It's Not Just Lead That's Poisoning the Water. It's also Politics." <i>The Washington Post</i>. Feb 28, 2017.</p>
Week 11: Violence	
March 28	Political and Electoral Violence
	<p>O'Neil Chapter 7 "Political Violence"</p> <p>Fjelde, Hanne. "Political party strength and electoral violence." <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> 57, no. 1 (2020): 140-155.</p>
March 30	Effects of Violence on Politics
	Trejo, Guillermo, and Sandra Ley. "High-profile Criminal Violence: Why Drug Cartels Murder Government Officials and Party Candidates in Mexico." <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 51, no. 1 (2021): 203-229.
Week 13: Variations in "Development" and the Legacy of Imperialism	
April 4	What is "Development"?
	<p>O'Neil Chapter 10 "Developing Countries"</p> <p>"Memo to People of Earth: `Third World` is an Offensive Term!" NPR. 2021</p>
April 6	Colonial Legacies
	Montgomery, Max. "Colonial legacy of gender inequality: Christian missionaries in German East Africa." <i>Politics & Society</i> 45, no. 2 (2017): 225-268.
Week 14: Ethnic Politics	
April 11	Political Divisions
	Daniel Posner, "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." <i>American Political Science Review</i> , vol. 98, no. 4, 2004, pp. 529-545.
April 13	Discrimination and Service Delivery
	<p>Mollie J. Cohen, Elizabeth J. Zechmeister and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Those with darker skin report slower police response throughout the Americas," February 9, 2015.</p> <p>Navine Murshid, "Why is Burma driving out the Rohingya — and not its other despised minorities?," November 9, 2017.</p>
Week 15: Populism Phase 3: Reflection Final Week	
April 18	Populism Basics

	<p>Mounk, Yascha & Jordan Kyle. “What Populists Do to Democracies.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. December 26, 2018. (Also on Sakai)</p> <p>Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. "Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: Comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America." <i>Government and opposition</i> 48, no. 2 (2013): 147-174.</p>
April 20	Populism: Case Studies
	<p>Read one of the following based on what is most interesting to you:</p> <p><u>Bolivia:</u> Anria, Santiago. "Social movements, party organization, and populism: insights from the Bolivian MAS." <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> 55, no. 3 (2013): 19-46.</p> <p><u>Poland</u> Fomina, Joanna, and Jacek Kucharczyk. "The Specter Haunting Europe: Populism and Protest in Poland." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 27, no. 4 (2016): 58-68.</p>
<i>Week 16: Gender in Politics and Review</i>	
April 25	Gender in Comparative Politics
	<p>Htun, Mala. "Is gender like ethnicity? The political representation of identity groups." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 2, no. 3 (2004): 439-458</p> <p>“Slump, not bump” – coverage of APSR piece by Mirya Holman, Jennifer Merolla, and Elizabeth Zechmeister (2021).</p>
April 27	Review Day