

**CPO 4072: Comparative Elections**  
**Fall Semester 2023**  
**T: 8:30 – 10:25**  
**TR: 9:35- 10:25**  
**Anderson 032**

Instructor: Nicholas Kerr, Ph.D.

Office: 319 Anderson

Virtual Office Hours: 2-4:30 Tuesday; 2-3 Thursday

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Schedule Virtual Office Hours: <https://calendly.com/nicholaskerr/15min>

Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/95412277667?pwd=ZGEvUi8zVGZ2YU5UdmQ0REpvVIMvUT09>

*Course Description:*

Multiparty elections have become a truly universal phenomenon as more than 90% of countries worldwide hold periodic elections for top-office holders. However, there is substantial cross-national and cross-time variation in the institutional rules that influence who runs for office, who votes, when elections are held, how votes are counted, and who is responsible for counting votes. The global proliferation of elections has also raised concerns about the democratic quality of elections and what shapes mass perceptions of electoral legitimacy. Political elites, especially incumbents, have utilized several manipulative techniques such as ballot fraud, violence against opponents, manipulation of electoral authorities, and the abuse of government resources during campaigns all in the name of electoral expediency. Meanwhile, there have been several international and domestic efforts such as the use of international observers and the creation of independent electoral commissions that have been championed as a way to safeguard electoral integrity. Finally, while most scholars agree that free and fair elections are a necessary condition for countries to be considered democratic, there is less consensus about the value of elections for regime processes and norms such as democratic consolidation and democratic legitimacy.

This course introduces students to the comparative study of multiparty elections and electoral processes in multiple world regions. The course is divided into four main sections. *Section 1* explores institutional rules that influence electoral competition and electoral governance and how these rules shape some of the things we care about including accountability and representation. *Section 2* examines key stages in the electoral process and the factors that shape political behavior during these stages. *Section 3* focuses on the quality and legitimacy of elections by highlighting different forms of manipulation and efforts by domestic and international actors to promote electoral integrity. *Section 4* considers the value of elections for democratic norms and process. The course incorporates a variety of learning materials and collaborative-learning methods that expose students to dominant theoretical and methodological approaches in comparative politics and political science.

*Student Learning Objectives*

At the end of the course, students should be able to

- identify different types of rules which influence electoral competition and governance
- describe different stages of the electoral process and identify factors shaping elite and mass behavior

- describe different approaches for evaluating the quality and legitimacy of elections.
- identify dominant theoretical approaches for explaining the impact of elections on regime processes and norms.

*Required Texts:*

- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell, P (2005). *The politics of electoral systems*. Oxford University Press.
- Cheeseman, N., & Klaas, B. (2018). *How to rig an election*. Yale University Press.
- Flores, T. E., & Nooruddin, I. (2016). *Elections in hard times: Building stronger democracies in the 21st century*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schedler, A. (2006). *Electoral authoritarianism: The dynamics of unfree competition*. Lynne Rienner.

*Canvas Course Website:*

Canvas will serve as a repository for course materials, this includes

- Updated copies of the syllabus
- Assigned readings not contained in required texts
- Additional reading list
- Internet and electronic resources on Democratization
- Midterm and final exam study guides and group presentation guidelines.

*Course Requirements and Assignments:*

- Class Participation & Attendance (10%)
- Midterm Exam (25%): The midterm will be held in class on **Tuesday, October 17**. A review for the Midterm will be held in class on **Thursday, October 12**.
- Final Exam (25%): The final will be held during Final Exam Period on **Friday, December 15: 10A-12** and a review for the Final on **Tuesday, December 5**.
- Policy Response Papers (15% each (30% total)): At the end of Section 1 (Electoral Institutions: **Due October 7 @ 11:59P**) and Section 3 (Electoral Integrity: **Due November 17 @ 11:59P**) students will write a 5-7 page double-spaced paper addresses themes discussed in the lectures and readings and incorporates information from at least one country-case. Further and detailed instructions on the Policy Response Papers will be provided during the semester.
- Pop Quizzes/in-class assignments (10%): At least one pop quiz/in-class assignment will be given each week. To prepare students simply have to complete all the assigned readings for the day.

*Grading Scale:*

Each grade that you earn for assignments will be based on the weightings indicated above. Your final grade will be converted based on the following scale:

A: 93-100

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89  
C+: 77-79  
D+: 67-69  
F: 59 and below

B: 83-86  
C: 73-76  
D: 63-66

B-: 80-82  
C-: 70-72  
D-: 60-62

### *Policies on Cheating and Plagiarism*

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

### *Policies on Late Assignments, Make-up Exams, & Contact*

- Assignment extensions will only be offered under extenuating circumstances. Late assignments submitted without a valid extension will be penalized as per my discretion.
- Make-up exams will only be arranged for *university-accepted excuses*.
- When contacting me by email please utilize standard grammar and punctuation. In most instances, I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours.

### *Policies for Persons with Disabilities*

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

A student with an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, as determined by the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/), can register with the Disability Resource Center to request a temporary course modification and/or academic accommodation. The student will need to provide medical documentation that identifies their diagnosis and their medical provider’s concerns related to possible COVID-19 exposure. Students should be mindful that remote course access is not always a feasible modification for every course. The DRC will work in partnership with the student’s instructor to determine a reasonable modification that meets the course requirements while considering the student’s concerns for exposure. Students can begin the process to register with the DRC by completing the form located on the [DRC website](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). For questions, please contact the DRC at 352-392-8565 or [drc@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:drc@ufsa.ufl.edu)

### *Course Evaluations*

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### *Policies on In-Class Recordings*

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040.

### *Campus Resources*

#### **Health and Wellness**

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 -392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161. University Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

#### **Academic Resources**

E-learning technical support: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center: Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.  
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.  
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints Campus: [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf)

## SECTION 1: ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

### WEEK 1

#### Thursday, Aug 24: Class Introduction

- No Reading
- Make sure to purchase course texts

### WEEK 2

#### Tuesday, Aug 29: Electoral Systems: Types I

- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell (Ch. 1-2)
- Bormann, N.-C., & Golder, M. (2013). Democratic electoral systems around the world, 1946–2011. *Electoral Studies*, 32(2), 360–369.
- Reynolds, A., Reilly, B., & Ellis, A. (2008). *Electoral system design: The new international IDEA handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. (Ch. 1-2)

#### Thursday, August 31: Electoral Systems: Types II

- No Class: Attending American Political Science Association Conference
- Take Home Assignment Due Monday, Sept 4 @ 11:59p on Canvas

### WEEK 3

#### Tuesday, Sept 5: Electoral Systems & Party Systems

- Singer, M. M. (2013). Was Duverger correct? Single-member district election outcomes in fifty-three countries. *British Journal of Political Science*, 43(1), 201–220.
- Ferree, K. E., Powell, G. B., & Scheiner, E. (2014). Context, electoral rules, and party systems. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 17, 421–439.

#### Thursday, Sept 7: Electoral Systems & Representation

- Krook, M. L., & O'Brien, D. Z. (2010). The politics of group representation: Quotas for women and minorities worldwide. *Comparative Politics*, 42(3), 253–272.
- Golder, M., & Lloyd, G. (2014). Re-evaluating the relationship between electoral rules and ideological congruence. *European Journal of Political Research*, 53(1), 200–212.

### WEEK 4

#### Tuesday, Sept 12: Do Electoral System Reforms Matter?

- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell (Ch. 3)
- Scheiner, E. (2008). Does electoral system reform work? Electoral system lessons from reforms of the 1990s. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11, 161.
- Barkan, J. D., Densham, P. J., & Rushton, G. (2006). Space matters: Designing better electoral systems for emerging democracies. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4), 926–939.

Thursday, Sept 14: Electoral Governance Design & Performance I

- Wall, A., & Ellis, A. (2014). *Electoral Management Design: Revised Edition*. International IDEA (Ch. 1)
- Kimball, D. C., & Kropf, M. (2006). The Street-Level Bureaucrats of Elections: Selection Methods for Local Election Officials. *Review of Policy Research*, 23(6), 1257–1268.

WEEK 5

Tuesday, Sept 19: Electoral Governance Design & Performance II

- Van Ham, C., & Garnett, H. A. (2019). Building impartial electoral management? Institutional design, independence and electoral integrity. *International Political Science Review*, 40(3), 313–334.
- King, B. A. (2017). Policy and precinct: Citizen evaluations and electoral confidence. *Social Science Quarterly*, 98(2), 672–689.
- Hajnal, Z., Lajevardi, N., & Nielson, L. (2017). Voter identification laws and the suppression of minority votes. *The Journal of Politics*, 79(2), 363–379.

**SECTION 2: ELECTORAL PROCESSES**

Thursday, Sep 21: Campaigns I

- Jacobson, G. C. (2015). How do campaigns matter? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 18, 31–47.

WEEK 6

Tuesday, Sep 26: Campaigns II

- Brierley, S., Kramon, E., & Ofosu, G. K. (2020). The moderating effect of debates on political attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 64(1), 19–37.
- Conroy-Krutz, J. (2016). Electoral campaigns as learning opportunities: Lessons from Uganda. *African Affairs*, 115(460), 516–540.

Thursday, Sep 28: Turnout I

- Blais, A. (2006). What affects voter turnout? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9, 111.
- De Miguel, C., Jamal, A. A., & Tessler, M. (2015). Elections in the Arab world: Why do citizens turn out? *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(11), 1355–1388.

WEEK 7

Tuesday, Oct 3: Turnout II

- Singh, S. (2011). How compelling is compulsory voting? A multilevel analysis of turnout. *Political Behavior*, 33(1), 95–111.

- Boulding, C., & Brown, D. S. (2015). Do political parties matter for turnout? Number of parties, electoral rules and local elections in Brazil and Bolivia. *Party Politics*, 21(3), 404–416.

Thursday, Oct 5: No Class Attending Invited Talk

- **Policy Response Paper I: Due on Friday Oct 6 @ 11:59p on Canvas**

WEEK 8

Tuesday, Oct 10: Vote Choice II

- Ferree, K. E. (2006). Explaining South Africa's racial census. *The Journal of Politics*, 68(4), 803-815.
- Sides, J., Tesler, M. and Vavreck, L., (2016). The electoral landscape of 2016. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 667(1), pp.50-71
- **\*\*Midterm Study Guide Distributed**

Thursday, Oct 12: MIDTERM REVIEW

- **In-class midterm review**

WEEK 9

Tuesday, Oct 12: MIDTERM (8:30-10:25)

- **In-class midterm**

### SECTION 3: ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

Thursday, Oct 19: Monetary Inducements & Mis(dis)information

- Norris, P., Frank, R. W., & i Coma, F. M. (2014). Measuring electoral integrity around the world: A new dataset. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 47(4), 789–798.
- Cheeseman & Klaas: Introduction, Ch. 1 & 2

WEEK 10

Tuesday, Oct 24: Violence and Ballot Rigging

- Cheeseman & Klaas Ch. 3 & 5
- Case, W (2006) Manipulative Skills: How do Rulers Control the Electoral Arena? (Chapter 6 in Schedler, ed.)
- Thompson, M. & Kuntz, P. (2006) After Defeat When Do Rulers Steal Elections? (Chapter 7 in Schedler, ed.)

Thursday, Oct 26: Mass Responses



- Tucker, J. A. (2007). Enough! Electoral fraud, collective action problems, and post-communist colored revolutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3), 535–551.
- Kerr, N. (2013). Popular evaluations of election quality in Africa: Evidence from Nigeria. *Electoral Studies*, 32(4), 819–837.

## WEEK 11

### Tuesday, Oct 31: Elite Responses

- Lindberg, S (2006) Why Do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections? (Chapter 9 in Schedler, ed.)

### Thursday, Nov 2: Role of International Actors

- Beaulieu, E., & Hyde, S. D. (2009). In the shadow of democracy promotion: Strategic manipulation, international observers, and election boycotts. *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(3), 392–415.
- Hartlyn, J & McCoy, J. (2006). How to assess electoral manipulation? (Chapter 3 in Schedler, ed.)

## WEEK 12

### Tuesday, Nov 7: Role of Domestic Actors

- Clark, J (2006). When does the military step into the electoral arena? (Chapter 9 in Schedler, ed.)

## **SECTION 4: DO ELECTIONS MATTER FOR DEMOCRATIZATION?**

### Thursday, Nov 9: Do Elections Matter?

- Flores & Nooruddin Ch. 1-2

## WEEK 13

### Tuesday, Nov 14: Role of Institutional Legacies

- Flores & Nooruddin Ch. 4 & 5

### Thursday, Nov 16: Role of Economic Development

- Flores & Nooruddin Ch. 6
- **Policy Response Paper II: Due on Friday, November 17 @ 11:59p on Canvas**

## WEEK 14

### Tuesday, Nov 21: Role of Political Conflict I

- Flores & Nooruddin Ch. 7

Wednesday, Nov 22 -- Friday, Nov 24: THANKSGIVING!!!

WEEK 15

Tuesday, Nov 28: Role of Political Conflict II

- Flores & Nooruddin Ch. 6
- **\*\*\*Final Study Guide Distributed**

Thursday, Dec 1:

- No Class: African Studies Association Conference

WEEK 16

**Tuesday, December 5: Final Review**

**Friday, Dec 15: \*\*\* FINAL EXAM (10A-12)**

- **In-class final exam**

**GOOD LUCK ON YOUR EXAMS, FINAL PAPERS AND ENJOY THE HOLIDAY!!!**