

CPO 2001 – Introduction to Comparative Politics

Course instructor: Dr. Sebastian Elischer;
Contact: selischer@ufl.edu
Class Meeting Time: M and W 3.00 PM – 3.50 PM. Classes are led by Dr. Elischer
All students must sign up for **one** section. Sections are led by TAs

Teaching Assistants (TAs):

Vu Luong: luongvu@ufl.edu

Débora Korndorfer: dkorndorfer@ufl.edu

Walleign Hassen: whassen@ufl.edu

Anna Verma: annaverma@ufl.edu

Baba Adou: adou.baba@ufl.edu

Section Meeting Times:

R 10:40-11:30 AM with Walleign Hassen
R 11:45-12:35 PM with Anna Verma
R 12:50-01:40 PM with Anna Verma
R 01:55-02:45 PM with Débora Korndorfer
R 03:00-03:50 PM with Baba Adou
F 09:35-10:25 AM with Baba Adou
F 10:40-11:30 AM with Débora Korndorfer
F 12:50-01:40 PM with Walleign Hassen
F 01:55-02:45 PM with Vu Luong
F 03:00-03:50 PM with Vu Luong

Class Venue: On Mondays: MCCCC 0100
On Wednesdays: MCCCC 0100
Sections: Check canvas/oneufl or get in touch with your TA

Office Hours

Your TA should always be your first point of contact. The TAs will inform you when their office hours are.

Office Hours Dr. Elischer: W: 1:00PM – 2:30 PM

Course Outline

In this course, we explore questions in contemporary comparative politics. We focus on themes that have long been central to research in comparative politics, including the challenges for democratization and democratic stability in certain social and economic contexts, how countries vary in their political institutions (constitutional, electoral, administrative, and party systems) and

why these variations matter, and what explains the persistence of ethnicity and causes of civil conflict. Country cases are drawn from different regions of the world to ground students in the set of tools of comparative analysis.

In general, Mondays and Wednesday will be dedicated to the basic concepts of the week's readings (ECP). The Wednesday classes also feature comprehensive scholarly articles about the topic we are discussing that week. The course instructor will upload these reading onto the canvass platform one week prior to class. The sections on Thursday/Friday will focus on the comparative cases (CCP) as a platform for applying what was learned in the other readings.

General Education Objectives

Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Prerequisites

None – this is an introductory course

Requirements, Assignments and Grading

Note that class attendance is required for this course. This includes attendance at lectures and weekly discussion sections. Attendance will be monitored as necessary during lectures (roll) and through participation in in-section assignments/quizzes. During lectures the professor may also occasionally provide inside information for exams and otherwise incentivize regular attendance. Attendance and participation grades in sections will be determined by the section instructor and may vary between sections.

Repeated absences will unquestionably affect your performance on exams since they will be based on class lectures, section discussions, as well as readings. Lecture notes and other related course materials discussed or distributed during class **will NOT be posted online** or otherwise distributed.

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> .

Online Evaluation

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 semesters, 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 Persons with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> . It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Policy 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 honesty 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-honor-code/>) 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.

Grading & Assessment

Students are responsible for completing all readings for the topic in question prior to attending the class.

Two Midterms (2x20% = 40%)

Final Exam (40%)

Section grade (20%)

Grading Scale

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/> .

91% – 100% = A

88% – 90% = A-

85% – 87% = B+

82% – 84% = B

79% – 81% = B-

76% – 78% = C+

73% – 75% = C

70% – 72% = C-

67% – 69% = D+

64% – 66% = D

60% – 63% = D-

< 60% = F

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Required Textbooks

O'Neill, P., Essentials of Comparative Politics (7th Edition) ECP

O'Neill, P., K. Fields, and D. Share, Cases in Comparative Politics (6th Edition) CCP

Online Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/> Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Class Calendar

Any session may be subject to change

Dates for sections are not included. Make sure you know which section you signed up for and make sure you attend your section every week.

Week 1, January 8 and 10: Introduction

Organizational meeting, introduction of instructor and student assistants; discussion of syllabus; expectations and assignments. *Please* pay close attention as we will discuss the modalities and the manifold challenges of this class.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 1 (Wednesday)

Week 2, January 17: The Origin and Role of States I

There is no class on MLK. The state is the oldest form of political organization. Although many claim that in a globalized era the state is obsolete, in fact, states prove to be remarkably resistant. We discuss the origins and the key characteristics of what makes a state.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 2 (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 2 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 3, January 22 and 24: The Origin and Role of States II

Readings:

ERCP Chapter 2 – ALL (Monday and Wednesday)

Journal of Democracy - Fukuyama (Monday and Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 3 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 4, January 29 and 31: Nations, Nationality and Identity

We discuss the differences between ethnic identity and national identity and why historically the two often clashed. We also discuss the concept of citizenship.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 3 (Monday)

CCP Chapter 10 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 5, February 5 and 7: Political Economy

We analyze how politics and markets interact, how states provide public goods and how political-economic systems evolve over time.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 4 (Monday)

CCP Chapter 6 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 6, February 12 and 14: Democracy and Democratic Regimes

We discuss the emergence and consolidation of democratic regimes. This topic is traditionally centerstage in comparative politics.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 5 (Monday)

Journal of Democracy – Schmitter and Karl (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 4 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 7: Review on February 19 and Midterm I on February 21

We review the topics we discussed so far in order to make sure everyone is prepared for the midterm. There are no required readings for this week. Details about the content and the modalities of the midterm will be provided in class. No sections this week.

Week 8, February 26 and 28: Non-Democratic Regimes

Non-democratic regimes come in many forms and shapes. We discuss the various manifestations of non-democratic rule and their origins.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 6 (Monday)

Diamond – Elections Without Democracy (Wednesday)

CCP Chapters 13 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 9, March 4 and 6: Political Violence

What is political violence and why does political violence occur? We discuss answers to these timely and important questions.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 7 (Monday)

Valentino – Why We Kill (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 14 (Thursday/ Friday)

Spring Break

Week 10, March 18 and 20: Developed Democracies

The literature frequently distinguishes between advanced or consolidated democracies on the one hand and young or unconsolidated or young democracies on the other. This week is dedicated to advanced democracies. We also discuss new modes of sovereignty

Readings:

ECP Chapter 8 (Monday and Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 5 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 11, Review on March 25 and Midterm II on March 27

We review the topics we discussed so far in order to make sure everyone is prepared for the midterm. Details about the content and the modalities of the midterm will be provided in class. No sections this week.

Week 12, April 1 and 3: Communism and Post-Communism

Contrary to what many pundits think, communism is very difficult to define. We review the basic tenants of communist ideology and examine how and why the communist experiment failed.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 9 (Monday)

McFaul – Transitions from Postcommunism (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 7 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 13, April 8 and 10: Less developed and newly industrializing countries

We contrast less developed countries with developed one and discuss the particular economic and political problems newly industrializing countries are facing.

Readings

ECP Chapter 10 (Monday)

Dirlik, Arif - Global South: Predicament and Promise (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 8 (Thursday/Friday)

Week 14, April 15 and 17: Globalization

Everyone uses the term ‘globalization’ indiscriminately. We define the term and evaluate the consequences of a globalized world.

Readings:

ECP Chapter 11 (Monday)

Walter, Stefanie - The backlash against globalization (Wednesday)

CCP Chapter 11 (Thursday/ Friday)

Week 16: Review on April 22 and Final Exam on May 2 (3-5PM)

Your opportunity to ask any questions. Details about the content and the modalities of the final exam will be provided in class during the semester.