

CPO 2001 – Introduction to Comparative Politics

Course instructor : Ayu Diasti Rahmawati
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Office hours : Monday, 4.00 PM – 6.00 PM
Thursday, 09.00 AM – 11.00 AM,
please make an appointment via my [Calendly](#)
Class venue and time : online on Canvas page, asynchronous and self-paced

Course overview

This course introduces major concepts and theories in comparative politics, such as the state, democracy, party system, etc. Using case studies, this course explores questions in comparative politics, such as why transitions to democracy and democratic stability were present in some countries but not in others, how countries vary in their political institutions, what explains the emergence of ethnic conflicts in some societies, etc. Cases are drawn from different regions of the world to ground students in the practice of comparative analysis.

Course objectives

This course is part of Social and Behavioral Sciences (S). In the social and behavioral sciences, students investigate human behavior in its social context. Students analyze the characteristics and structure of individuals, families, groups, and institutions to develop an understanding of the human species. Often using scientific and quantitative methods, students examine the processes and means by which participants in society make personal and group decisions.

By specifically learning about major concepts and theories in comparative politics and applying them to analyze various cases from different regions of the world, students taking this course would be able to:

- Develop a better understanding of foundational concepts and theories in the discipline of comparative politics and political science in general.
- Apply those concepts and theories to critically examine various socio-political institutions, structures, and processes.
- Gain comparative socio-political knowledge of various countries from different regions of the world.
- Improve their skills in comparative research and analysis.

Prerequisites

None – this is an introductory course.

Course organization and requirements

This course is taught online and asynchronous via Canvas. That being said, the students are responsible for checking the class's Canvas page regularly, completing the assigned readings and lectures, being prepared for the weekly quizzes, contributing to the weekly class discussions, and submitting the country report presentation on time. Since the course is **self-paced**, students are advised to keep up with the readings and assignments daily to avoid being overwhelmed by coursework.

The class is organized into **modules**. Each module covers lectures, readings, and assignments for the whole week. The lectures are in a voice-over PowerPoint format. They generally focus on the concepts and themes of the week, with examples from the case studies of the week. Students are required to complete the readings for the module before watching lectures. At the end of each module, students must complete a quiz on the concepts and themes of the week as well as contribute to a class discussion on the case studies of the week. Only after completing a module can students unlock the next one.

At the end of the semester, students will submit a country report presentation to Canvas. The presentation consists of a comparative analysis of two countries on a particular chosen topic. Students may choose both countries from the CCP reading, but those who are keen to develop their research skills may choose one country from the CCP book and another representing their research interests. Students must consult their country and topic selection with the instructor by Week 3. Once the students already selected their countries and issues, they must create a voice-over presentation about their comparative analysis. The presentation will be uploaded to Canvas and must be between 10-12 minutes.

Students can meet the Instructor during office hours or send a Canvas message if they have any questions about the course organization, materials, and assignments. The instructor will also provide a **discussion board** on Canvas on lectures-related questions (which is different from the weekly case discussion boards) where students can post their questions on the readings and lectures of the week to be responded to by the instructor. Students are advised to use the discussion board to ask questions about the lectures or the reading materials so that the answers can be accessed by the whole class.

Required textbooks

This class will use the following textbooks:

- O’Neil, Patrick H. 2021. *Essentials of Comparative Politics, 7th Edition*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (ECP)
- O’Neil, Patrick H., Karl Fields, and Don Share. 2021. *Cases in Comparative Politics, 7th Edition*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (CCP)

Course assignments and grading

Students are required to complete all readings for the module before watching lectures. Students will be asked to work on a weekly conceptual quiz and contribute to case discussions to complete a module and unlock the next one. At the end of the semester, students will submit a country report presentation. The grading rubric for each assignment can be found below.

Conceptual quizzes	50%	Weekly, Week 1-5, the questions are based on the ECP readings. The quizzes are open-book. Each quiz consists of 10 multiple-choice questions, which must be answered in 15 minutes.
Case discussions	25%,	Weekly, Week 1-6 the discussion will be based mainly on the CCP readings. Students must contribute to five weekly case discussions. Students who contribute to all six weekly case discussions will get extra points.
Country report presentation	25%	Students will make 10-12 minutes of a voice-over presentation comparing a particular aspect of two countries. At least one country must be selected from the CCP book. Students must discuss their country selection and comparative topic with the instructor by Week 3. Due August 12, at noon.

Grading rubric

The above assignments will be graded based on the following rubric:

Conceptual quizzes	Each question is worth 1 point. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Students who get maximum points for each quiz will get 50 points.
Case discussions	Each weekly case discussion is worth 5 points. Students who get a maximum point for each five weekly case discussions will get 25 points. Extra points will be given to students who contribute to all weekly case discussions. The points will be given based on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 points will be given to students who make at least 3 (three)

	<p>contributions – either comments or questions to the weekly case discussions on the Canvas page. At least two of the comments or questions must be given in response to other student’s comments or questions. The comments or questions must be based on the reading materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 points will be given to students who make 2 (two) contributions – either comments or questions to the weekly case discussions on the Canvas page. At least one of the comments or questions must be given in response to other student’s comments or questions. The comments or questions must be based on the reading materials. • 3 points will be given to students who make 2 (two) contributions – either comments or questions to the weekly case discussions on the Canvas page without responding to other student’s comments or questions. The comments or questions must be based on the reading materials. • 2 points will be given to students who make 1 (one) contribution – either comment or question to the weekly case discussions on the Canvas page without responding to other student’s comments or questions. The comment or question must be based on the reading materials. • 1 point will be given to students who make 1 (one) contribution – either comment or question to the weekly case discussions on the Canvas page without responding to other student’s comments or questions AND without basis on the reading materials. • 0 point will be given to students who do not contribute to the weekly case discussions.
Country report presentation	<p>Students will choose two countries and an issue as a basis for comparison. For example, comparing transitions to democracy in Brazil and Egypt. Students may select both countries from the CCP book, but those who are keen to develop their research skills are free to choose only one country from the CCP book and another one representing their research interests. The country selection must be “apple to apple” – students cannot compare the US and Timor-Leste, for example! They can, but students are expected to consult their country and issue selection with the instructor by Week 3 and they better have good reasons for</p>

	<p>“out-of-the-box” country selections. Once the students already picked their countries and issues, they must create a voice-over presentation on their comparative analysis. The presentation will be uploaded to Canvas and must be between 10-12 minutes. Detailed information on the assignment will be posted in Canvas. The maximum grade for this assignment is 25 points. Maximum points will be given to presentations that have the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A brief, but clear explanation about what countries and issues are selected for the comparative analysis, and why.• A clearly stated research question that drives the comparison.• A brief, but clear explanation about how the data used in the analysis is collected.• Relevant country contexts that help the audience to understand the comparative analysis.• A comparative analysis that utilizes resources from both the reading materials used in class and outside sources, such as other books, journal articles, news reports, videos, etc.• A brief, but clearly stated conclusion.• A reference, consistently written in a particular citation format.
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Grading scale

- 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

Further information on current UF grading policies can be accessed at:

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

Policies on Attendance

This course is online and asynchronous, in which the students may complete the course at their own pace. However, since the summer semester tends to be very fast, students are advised to do the readings and assignments daily to avoid being overwhelmed by coursework.

Students who cannot complete the modules on time due to what the Office of the University Registrar counts as **acceptable reasons** from class, such as “illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)” must contact the Instructor. For all **planned absences**, a student in a situation that allows an excused absence from a class, or any required class activity must inform the instructor as early as possible before the class. For all **unplanned absences** because of accidents or emergencies, students should contact the instructor as soon as conditions permit.

Requirements for attendance, make-up assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the University of Florida’s policies, which can be found at:

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

Policies on Students Requiring Learning Accommodation

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

Students, who need counseling or urgent help, are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Wellness Center at UF at 352-392-1575 or <https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/>.

Policies on Cheating and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. All 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](#) specifies a number of behaviors that violate this Code, thus any student engaging in such violation will be dealt with in accordance with the University's policies. Furthermore, the students are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to the appropriate personnel.

Course evaluation

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

Class Calendar

The class will be organized into modules. Each module consists of readings and activities for five working days. Completing a module will allow students to progress to the next one. Although the course is self-paced, students are advised to carefully plan their learning pace to avoid becoming overwhelmed with coursework.

Module 1, Week 1 – What and why do comparative politics compare?

This module introduces the scope and definition of comparative politics as a field within political science, including a general look at how comparative political scientists compare political systems. It also discusses the state, the oldest form of political organization.

- July 1: introduction and review of syllabus video, ECP 1 - Introduction
- July 2: CCP 1 - Introduction, ECP 2 - States
- July 3: CCP 2 – United Kingdom
- July 4: CCP 3 – United States
- July 5: Quiz 1 and discussion day!

Module 2, Week 2 – Regimes of the world

The world is increasingly becoming non-democratic, what does it mean? This module contrasts democratic and non-democratic regimes. It also discusses the various forms and origins of non-democratic rules and the emergence and consolidation of democratic regimes.

- July 8: ECP 5 – Democratic Regimes
- July 9: ECP 6 – Non-democratic Regimes
- July 10: CCP 4 – France
- July 11: CCP 10 – Iran

- July 12: Quiz 2 and discussion day!

Module 3, Week 3 – Political economic systems

This module discusses how politics and the market interact, including how political-economic systems evolve. It also reviews the global experiment with communism, why it failed, and how communist countries transitioned to post-communism.

- July 15: ECP 4 – Political Economy
- July 16: ECP 9 – Communism and Post-Communism
- July 17: CCP 7 - Russia
- July 18: CCP 8 - China
- July 19: Quiz 3 and discussion day!
- Consult the country

Module 4, Week 4 – Developed vs. developing countries

Developed or developing, what's in a name? This module contrasts countries labeled as developed and developing, including the particular political and economic problems that the latter are facing.

- July 22: ECP 8 – Developed Democracies
- July 23: ECP 10 – Developing Countries
- July 24: CCP 5 – Germany
- July 25: CCP 11 - Mexico
- July 26: Quiz 4 and discussion day!

Module 5, Week 5 – Society, nations, and violence

This module discusses the concept of identity and citizenship, as well as how identities can contribute to the emergence of political violence.

- July 29: ECP 3 – Nations and Society
- July 30: ECP 7 – Political Violence
- July 31: CCP 9 – India
- August 1: CCP 14 – Nigeria
- August 2: Quiz 5 and discussion day!

Module 6, Week 6 – Comparative politics, going forward

This module discusses the consequences of globalization on politics and political science.

- August 5: ECP 11 – Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics
- August 6: CCP 6 – Japan
- August 7: CCP 12 – Brazil
- August 8: CCP 13 – South Africa
- August 9: Discussion and catch-up day!
- August 12: Country report presentation's due!