

COMPARATIVE ELECTIONS AND PARTY SYSTEMS (CPO 6756)
FALL 2025
PROFESSOR MORASKI

This document is a pre-semester (August 13, 2025) draft of the course syllabus. It is subject to changes. Students should rely on the syllabus available via Canvas.

I. General Information

3 credits

Meeting days and times: Thursdays, Periods 5-7

Class location: Although the class was assigned to room 251 Matherly Hall, I have reserved the department's library. **We will meet in the department's library** unless the department needs it for a different meeting, such as a dissertation defense.

Instructor(s):

Name: Professor Bryon Moraski

Office: 313 Anderson Hall

Phone: 352-273-2631

Email: bmoraski@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30-Noon, 1-2:30 pm, or by appointment

Teaching Assistant(s):

Name: N/A

Office Building/Number:

Phone:

Email:

Office Hours:

Course Description

The seminar exposes graduate students to major issues related to the comparative study of elections and political parties. Major topics in the course include the functions and operation of elections in authoritarian and democratic regimes, the features and effects of electoral systems, the roles that electoral institutions and elite behavior play in producing a proliferation or scarcity of parties, and the development and evolution of parties and party systems.

Prerequisites: None.

General Education Designation: None.

Course Materials

Required Reading

We will read a variety of works including books and articles. You should plan to borrow, download, or purchase the following books:

1. Chernykh, Svitlana. 2024. *The Dilemma of Compliance: Political Parties and Post-Election Disputes*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. **[Electronic version available for free via the UF library]**
2. Flores, Thomas Edward and Irfan Nooruddin. 2016. *Elections in Hard Times: Building Stronger Democracies in the 21st Century*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. **[Electronic version available for free via the UF library]**
3. Mares, Isabela. 2022. *Protecting the Ballot: How First-Wave Democracies Ended Electoral Corruption*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. **[On two-hour reserve in Library West]**
4. Sartori, Giovanni. 2005 [1976]. *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. ECPR Press. **[On two-hour reserve in Library West]**
5. Simpser, Alberto. 2013. *Why Governments and Parties Manipulate Elections: Theory, Practice, and Implications*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. **[Electronic version available for free via the UF library]**

In addition to the list of books, we will read many scholarly articles. The articles are available electronically through the University of Florida's library, which eases acquisition and reduces costs.

Required Technology

Students may need to use Zoom to attend office hours, Adobe Reader to access much of the assigned reading, and Turnitin.com to submit paper assignments.

Materials Fee: N/A

II. Course Goals

Course Objectives

Students will learn about the relationships between political parties and electoral institutions in authoritarian, democratic, and transitioning political systems. The major topics in the course include the many features that comprise an electoral system, different types of parties and party systems, the societal roots of political parties, and the roles that electoral institutions and elite behavior play in producing a proliferation or scarcity of parties. Students will also learn about how the operation of elections and the behavior of political parties relate to transitions from authoritarian rule, shape whether such transitions lead to democracy, and influence the quality of democracy in cases where democracy is already seen as consolidated.

Student Learning Outcomes

A student who successfully completes this course will be able to knowledgeably discuss:

- differences among parties and party systems,
- different electoral systems and their effects on representation and party development,
- the societal origins of political parties,
- the relationships between elections, political parties, and regime types.

III. Graded Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the [Catalog](#).

Graded Components

Students will be assessed on attendance and participation in the seminars, written analyses of the assigned readings, and the preparation and final submission of an empirical research paper that, with revision, might be presented at a professional conference.

Reaction papers must be submitted via [Turnitin.com](#).

- The class ID is [TBA].
- The enrollment key is [TBA].

You should register with Turnitin.com as soon as possible to avoid any last-minute difficulties.

Assignments related to the final paper must be submitted via Canvas using the external tool for **Google Assignments**.

Final course grades will reflect the following distribution:

1. Weekly participation, worth 30%

- Attendance
 - Any absence requires an explanation.
 - ***Every unexcused*** absence will result in a **30% deduction** for this portion of the student's grade, regardless of whether discussion questions (see below) are submitted. Remember, with one absence you will have missed one week of class.
 - All students who miss a seminar, for any reason, should meet with me during office hours to discuss the material.
- Weekly discussion questions
 - **A third of the weekly participation grade** (10% of the total grade) will be based on the weekly submission of discussion questions.
 - Each student must submit two written questions that demonstrate an ability to thoughtfully, if not critically, engage the main ideas raised in the assigned reading.
 - Discussion questions are due **before 10:30 am on Thursdays**--that is, one hour and fifteen minutes before class. This will allow me an opportunity to reflect on how to organize our discussion for the day.

- Questions submitted after 10:30 am but before 11:30 am will be **penalized 50%**.
- **No questions will be accepted after 11:30 am** on the due date. Students who fail to submit discussion questions by 11:30 am will receive a **zero** for this portion of that day's participation grade.
- Class Participation
 - **Two-thirds of the participation grade** (20% of the final grade) will be based on students' ability to orally develop the issues or concerns raised in their questions **and** their ability to address or build upon the issues or concerns raised by other students.
 - **Points will be deducted** for arriving late or leaving class early as well as for instances of inattentiveness (e.g., cell phone or computer use for purposes not related to class).
 - Should Zoom classes be necessary, students must not only join the Zoom meeting but also must enable video of themselves paying attention throughout the class session.

2. Three reaction papers on the assigned readings, 15% (5% each)

- The syllabus lists many reaction paper *options*. Students must write **three**.
 - Students may write and submit four papers, in which case the lowest grade of the four papers will be dropped.
- Papers must be submitted before the start of class.
 - I will not accept a late paper if the student retains the option of submitting a paper for a subsequent week of readings.
 - If a student must turn in a late paper (i.e., she is out of paper options to meet the three required), the student will be assigned to write on an additional work of my choosing and the average grade across the two papers will receive a 10% penalty.
- Reaction papers should be **no more than 750 words** in length. They should be double-spaced and have standard margins.
 - Failure to observe the word limitation and double spacing will result in a lower grade.
 - There will be many instances in your career where you will be confined to a limited amount of space and expected to follow specific formatting directions.
- Papers should not simply summarize the assigned readings. Papers should be either a constructive critique of a substantial component of the reading or an elaboration of ideas from the reading. For the former, papers should be both well-argued and mindful of how the author(s) might respond. For the latter, papers should demonstrate original thinking and offer potentially novel theoretical or methodological insights for the topic under consideration for the week. Summaries should be just enough to set up your argument or contribution. I am interested in promising ideas that you may be able to develop.
 - Students should avoid submitting multiple papers on a “pet” country or theme.

3. A paper abstract, 2.5%

- Students will be required to submit an abstract of approximately 300 words summarizing what they hope to accomplish in their final paper.

4. An annotated bibliography for the paper, 5%
 - Students will also submit an annotated bibliography for at least **twelve sources**. For each of the sources, you should include the bibliographic information (formatted using the *APSA Style Manual*) and a paragraph or two that summarizes the source and how it will likely speak to your final paper.
5. A draft of the paper's introduction, literature review, and theoretical expectations, 7.5%
 - More details on this assignment and the final paper assignment will be provided closer to their due dates.
6. The final paper, 40%
 - Students may submit either a complete empirical paper that, with revision, could be presented at a professional conference or a paper that, with revision, could serve as a dissertation prospectus (i.e., one that outlines the research design for multiple empirical chapters).

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade
A	100-92.5
A-	92.4-89.5
B+	89.4-86.5
B	86.4-82.5
B-	82.4-79.5
C+	79.4-76.5
C	76.4-72.5
C-	72.4-69.5
D+	69.4-66.5
D	66.4-62.5
D-	62.4-59.5
E	59.4-0

See the UF Catalog's "[Grades and Grading Policies](#)" for information on how UF assigns grade points.

Note: A minimum grade of C is required to earn General Education credit.

IV. Calendar

****Subject to Changes****

Week 1 (Aug 21) – Course Introduction

Week 2 (Aug 28) – Separating Elections from Democracy

- Flores and Nooruddin, *Elections in Hard Times*

Week 3 (September 4) – Political Parties across Regime Types

- Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, **Part I (Chapters 1-4)**
- Gunther, Richard and Larry Diamond. 2003. “Species of Political Parties: A New Typology.” *Party Politics* 9(2): 167-199.
- Li, Jia and Joseph Wright. 2023. “How Personalist Parties Undermine State Capacity in Democracies.” *Comparative Political Studies* 56(13): 2030-65.

Week 4 (Sept 11) – Types of Party Systems

Paper Abstract Due

- Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, **Part II (Chapters 5-10)**
- Zielinski, Jakub, Kazimierz M. Slomczynski and Goldie Shabad. 2005. “Electoral Control in New Democracies: The Perverse Incentives of Fluid Party Systems.” *World Politics* 57(3): 365-395.
- Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. 2007. “Are African Party Systems Different?” *Electoral Studies* 26(2): 315-23.
- Trantidis, Aris. 2013. “Clientelism and the Classification of Dominant Party Systems.” *Democratization* 22(1): 113–33.

Week 5 (Sept 18) – The Effects of Electoral Rules

Reaction Paper Option 1

- Samuels, David and Richard Snyder. 2001. “The Value of a Vote: Malapportionment in Comparative Perspective.” *British Journal of Political Science* 31(4): 651–71.
- Birch, Sarah. 2007. “Electoral Systems and Electoral Misconduct.” *Comparative Political Studies* 40(12): 1533-1556.
- Bochslers, Daniel. 2009. “Are Mixed Electoral Systems the Best Choice for Central and Eastern Europe or the Reason for Defective Party Systems?” *Politics & Policy* 37(4): 735-67.
- Carey, John M. and Simon Hix. 2011. “The Electoral Sweet Spot: Low-magnitude Proportional Electoral Systems.” *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2): 383-97.
- Klein, Aidan and Bryon J. Moraski. 2020. “Incentive to Deliver: Authoritarian Rule, Proportional Representation, and Support for Russia’s Ruling Party.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 30(4): 524-41.
- Karekurve-Ramachandra, Varun and Alexander Lee. 2024. “Can Gender Quotas Improve Public Service Provision? Evidence from Indian Local Government.” *Comparative Political Studies* 58(5): 924-62.

Week 6 (Sept 25) – The Politics of Electoral System Choice

Reaction Paper Option 2

- Andrews, Josephine T. and Robert W. Jackman. 2005. "Strategic Fools: Electoral Rule Choice under Extreme Uncertainty." *Electoral Studies* 24(1): 65–84.
- Ahmed, Amel. 2010. "Reading History Forward: The Origins of Electoral Systems in European Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 43(8/9): 1059-88.
- Tan, Netina. 2013. "Manipulating Electoral Laws in Singapore." *Electoral Studies* 32(4): 632-43.
- Leemann, Lucas and Isabela Mares. 2014. "The Adoption of Proportional Representation." *The Journal of Politics* 76(2): 461-78.
- Negretto, Gabriel L. and Giancarlo Visconti. 2018. "Electoral Reform under Limited Party Competition: The Adoption of Proportional Representation in Latin America." *Latin American Politics and Society* 60(1): 27-51.
- Figueroa, Valentin. 2025. "Does Proportionality Increase Turnout? A Study of Adaptation to Oscillating Electoral Systems." *Comparative Political Studies* OnlineFirst at <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140241290209>

Week 7 (Oct 2) – Party and Party System Institutionalization

Reaction Paper Option 3

- Levitsky, Steven. 1998. "Institutionalization and Peronism: The Concept, the Case and the Case for Unpacking the Concept." *Party Politics* 4(1): 77-92.
- Randall, Vicky and Lars Svåsand. 2002. "Party Institutionalization in New Democracies." *Party Politics* 8(1): 5-29.
- Gehlbach, Scott and Philip Keefer. 2011. "Investment without Democracy: Ruling-party Institutionalization and Credible Commitment in Autocracies." *Journal of Comparative Economics* 39(2): 123-39.
- Bétoa, Fernando Casal. 2014. "Party Systems and Cleavage Structures Revisited: A Sociological Explanation of Party System Institutionalization in East Central Europe." *Party Politics*, 20(1): 16-36.
- Bétoa, Fernando Casal and Zsolt Enyedi. 2016. "Party System Closure and Openness: Conceptualization, Operationalization and Validation." *Party Politics* 22(3): 265-77.

Week 8 (Oct 9) – Party and Party System Change

Revised Abstract & Annotated Bibliography Due

- Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair. 1995. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party." *Party Politics* 1(1): 5-28.
- Janda, Kenneth, Robert Harmel, Christine Edens, and Patricia Goff. 1995. "Changes in Party Identity: Evidence from Party Manifestos." *Party Politics* 1(2): 171-96.
- Mudde, Cas. 2014. "Fighting the System? Populist Radical Right Parties and Party System Change." *Party Politics* 20(2): 217-26.
- Mainwaring, Scott, Carlos Gervasoni, and Annabella España-Najera. 2017. "Extra- and Within-System Electoral Volatility." *Party Politics* 23(6): 623-35.
- Resmini, Fabio and Jared Abbott. 2023. "What is to be Done? How Radical Leftists Help to Solve the Problem of Personalist Party-Building in Latin America." *Comparative Political Studies* 57(10): 1634-67.

Week 9 (Oct 16) – Elections and Representation

Reaction Paper Option 4

- Bleck, Jaimie and Nicolas van de Walle. 2013. “Valence Issues in African Elections: Navigating Uncertainty and the Weight of the Past.” *Comparative Political Studies* 46: 1394-421.
- Stadelmann, David, Marco Portmann, and Reiner Eichenberger. 2014. “The Law of Large Districts: How District Magnitude Affects the Quality of Political Representation.” *European Journal of Political Economy* 35: 128-40.
- Hughes, Melanie M. 2011. “Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women’s Political Representation Worldwide.” *American Political Science Review* 105(3): 604-20.
- Mayne, Quinton and Armen Hakhverdian. 2017. “Ideological Congruence and Citizen Satisfaction: Evidence from 25 Advanced Democracies.” *Comparative Political Studies* 50(6): 822-49.
- Haider, Erum A. and Niloufer A. Siddiqui. 2025. “Votes for Water: Ethnic Service Delivery and Criminality in Karachi, Pakistan.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 60: 1–42.

Week 10 (Oct 23) – Electoral Malfeasance

- Simpson, *Why Governments and Parties Manipulate Elections*
- Fazekas, Mihály and Olli Hellmann. 2025. “Elections and Corruption: Incentives to Steal or Incentives to Invest?” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 60: 168–91.

Week 11 (Oct 30) – Elections and Accountability

Reaction Paper Option 5

- Alcañiz, Isabella, and Timothy Hellwig. 2010. “Who’s to Blame? The Distribution of Responsibility in Developing Democracies.” *British Journal of Political Science* 41(2):389-411.
- Hyde, Susan D. 2011. “Catch Us If You Can: Election Monitoring and International Norm Diffusion.” *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2): 356-69.
- Beaulieu, Emily and Tiffany D. Barnes. 2014. “Gender Stereotypes and Corruption: How Candidates Affect Perceptions of Election Fraud.” *Politics & Gender* 10(3): 365-91.
- Smith, Ian O. 2014. “Election Boycotts and Hybrid Regime Survival.” *Comparative Political Studies* 47: 743-65
- Stiers, Dieter, Ruth Dassonneville, and Michael S. Lewis-Beck. 2020. “The Abiding Voter: The Lengthy Horizon of Retrospective Voting.” *European Journal of Political Research* 59(3): 646-68
- Ventura, Tiago, Sandra Ley and Francisco Cantú. 2023. “Voting for Law and Order: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Mexico.” *Comparative Political Studies* 57(4), 551-583.

Week 12 (Nov 6) – The Politics of Election Reform

Paper Draft Due (Introduction through Theory)

- Mares, *Protecting the Ballot*

Week 13 (Nov 13) – Elections and Violence

Reaction Paper Option 6

- Emilie M. Hafner-Burton, Susan D. Hyde and Ryan S. Jablonski. 2013. “When Do Governments Resort to Election Violence?” *British Journal of Political Science* 44: 149-79.
- Bhasin, Tavishi and Jennifer Gandhi. 2013. “Timing and Targeting of State Repression in Authoritarian Elections.” *Electoral Studies* 32(4): 620-31.
- Birch, Sarah and David Muchlinski. 2018. “Electoral Violence Prevention: What Works?” *Democratization* 25(3): 385-403.
- Fjelde, Hanne. 2020. “Political Party Strength and Electoral Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 57(1): 140–55.
- Krause, Jana. 2020. “Restrained or Constrained? Elections, Communal Conflicts, and Variation in Sexual Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 57(1): 185–98.
- Krause, Werner and Miku Matsunaga. 2023. “Does Right-Wing Violence Affect Public Support for Radical Right Parties? Evidence from Germany.” *Comparative Political Studies* 56(14), 2269-305.

Week 14 (Nov 20) – Disputing Election Results

- Chernykh, *The Dilemma of Compliance*

Week 15 (Nov 27) – No class (Thanksgiving)

Week 16 (Dec 4) – No class (Reading Day)

Research Papers Due by 8 am on Tuesday, 9 December 2025 via Turnitin.com.

V. University Policies and Resources

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).” (The direct link is <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>.)

VI. Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>."

Note: Starting in Spring 2025, the central portal will change to <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>. The previous GatorEvals link (<https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>) will redirect to the updated portal for one year.