

COMPARATIVE ELECTIONS (CPO 4072) – SPRING 2025

Professor Moraski

Abbreviated Syllabus

(Last updated January 2, 2025)

****See Canvas for the Final Syllabus****

Table of Contents

Contact Information	1
Course Description & Objectives	1
Student Responsibilities	1
Required Reading	1
Final Course Grades	2
Course Policies	3
Cheating & Plagiarism	3
Persons with Disabilities	4
Course Evaluations	4
Counseling	4
Course Outline	4
Friday, February 14 - Exam 1	5
Friday, March 14 – Exam 2	7
Wednesday, April 23 – Exam 3	8
Monday, April 28 at 9 am - Final Paper Due	8

Contact Information

Comparative Elections (CPO 4072)
101 Anderson Hall

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, Period 3 (9:35-10:25)

Professor Moraski
313 Anderson Hall
352-273-2361

Email: bmoraski@ufl.edu

Website: <https://people.clas.ufl.edu/bmoraski/>

Office Hours

Mondays & Wednesdays:
1-2:30 pm or by appointment

[Return to top](#)

Course Description & Objectives

Elections can be critical junctures in political history. They are opportunities for voters to express their level of satisfaction with government, and even authoritarian regimes may use elections as safety valves to release pent-up social discontent. In all contexts, elections can function as a rallying point for the opposition and test the government's mettle. Ultimately, electoral outcomes determine which societal interests gain voice in the corridors of political power and whether the current direction of politics continues. Yet how elections operate differs significantly, even among democracies, and such differences grant those in power a variety of rules to manipulate. Thus, existing rules that govern elections may not only make the difference between winning and losing, but parties in power also may be tempted to alter the rules to solidify their electoral control.

This course introduces students to the different ways popular votes are converted into political representation and explores how political parties across the globe navigate their electoral waters. By the end of the course, students will better understand: 1) how electoral rules shape the behavior of voters, politicians, and parties; 2) scholarly recommendations about which electoral options may best advance the cause of democracy; 3) why and how elites manipulate electoral rules; and 4) how different contexts lead to different electoral outcomes.

[Return to top](#)

Student Responsibilities

Required Reading

Much of the reading for the course will come from electronic reading that I will make available on a course project site accessible via Canvas. To log in, go to <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. In addition, we will read several chapters from the following book, which students should purchase as indicated on the textbook adoption site for this course:

- Schedler, Andreas, ed. 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

A significant portion of the material that will be covered in class cannot be found in the assigned readings. I regularly use lectures to “fill in the blanks” so that I can assign more interesting texts than what would otherwise be required. Likewise, I will not cover many aspects of the assigned readings because I do not want to use the lectures to reiterate what students can read on their own. Note, however, that all of the material in the assigned readings is fair game for the quizzes.

In sum, students should plan to attend class consistently and do all of the assigned readings if they wish to perform well in the course.

Please note that **I reserve the right to change the course schedule—readings, exam dates, and paper deadlines**—as I see fit throughout the semester. I will use Canvas to announce, ahead of time, any necessary changes to the quiz dates. I will also regularly remind students of the assigned readings at the start of each class session.

Final Course Grades

The following components will determine final course grades:

- **Three** in-class exams, each worth 25% of the final course grade (i.e., 75% of the final course grade),
- **One** paper, worth 15% of the final course grade,
- Attendance and participation during *regular* class periods (i.e., not exam days), worth 10% of the final course grade.

Exams

Make-up exams will be arranged only for *university-accepted excuses*. In the event of an absence, students should provide proper documentation.

If a student misses an exam and cannot contact me beforehand, the student should contact me within 48 hours of the absence to receive full consideration. In almost any situation, you should be able to pass along a message via email or voicemail even if it is from a roommate or family member.

If you foresee a problem with the exam dates, this may not be the right course for you. If a makeup exam is required (due to illness, for example), the makeup will be available during the first hour of the final exam period. To preserve the integrity of the exams, the format of any make-up may differ from the original.

Attendance and Participation

Higher attendance rates and more frequent, high quality participation will yield better attendance and participation grades. Full credit indicates perfect attendance as well as frequent participation reflecting knowledge of the assigned readings. For students who attend less than 70% of class sessions, participation can help but not enough to merit more than a 70% for this portion of the

course grade. In addition, I reserve the right to assign **zeros** for attendance and participation to students who are habitually tardy, consistently absent, or engage in disruptive behavior.

Note as well that I do not give full attendance credit if you come in late. ***If you arrive after the class starts***, it is incumbent upon you to check with me after class to make sure that I have recorded your attendance. The size of a “tardy penalty” depends on how late you are. If you arrive shortly after the lecture has begun, I usually apply a 10% penalty (i.e., 0.9 rather than 1.0 for the period).

For information on UF grading policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>. Note that a grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit.

[Return to top](#)

Course Policies

Cheating & 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-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. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

In the event a student is found cheating, s/he will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

In the event a student is found cheating or plagiarizing, s/he will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

Acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or assignment written by someone else (i.e., papers by another student, a research service, or downloaded off the Internet).
- Copying, *verbatim*, a paragraph or significant portion of text (approximately eight words or more) from the work of another author without using quotation marks and properly acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted citation style, which includes ***providing a page number(s)***.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., restating in your own words) text written by another author without citing that author and ***providing the page number(s)***.
- Using a unique idea or concept, which you discovered in a specific reading, without citing the author.

Persons with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Anyone with a disability should feel free to see me during office hours to make the necessary arrangements.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online 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>.

Counseling

Phone numbers and contact sites for university counseling services and mental health Services can be found at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or you may call 392-1575. To contact the University Police Department call 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Additional policies will be available on the full course syllabus, which students will be able to access on Canvas in January 2024.

[Return to top](#)

Course Outline

****Subject to Changes****

Week 1 (Jan 13-17) – Course OverviewMonday (No reading)

Wednesday

- Flores, Thomas and Irfan Nooruddin. 2016. *Elections in Hard Times*, pp. 3-23

Friday

- 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

Week 2 (Jan 20-24) – Party Systems and Electoral Systems

Monday – No class (MLK Day)

Wednesday

- Ware, Alan. 1995. *Political Parties and Party Systems*, pp. 147-175

Friday

- Norris, Pippa. 2004. *Electoral Engineering*, Chapters 2 & 3

Week 3 (Jan 27-31) – Party Systems and Electoral Systems (continued)

Monday

- Barkan, Joel D. 1995. “Elections in Agrarian Societies.” *Journal of Democracy* 6(4): 106–116.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 1995. “The Case for Proportionality.” *Journal of Democracy* 6(4): 117–124.

Wednesday

- Mainwaring, Scott. 1993. “Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination.” *Comparative Political Studies* 26(2): 198–228.

Friday

- Moser, Robert. 2001. *Unexpected Outcomes*, Chapter 3

Week 4 (Feb 3-7) – Participation and Representation

Monday

- Franklin, Mark. 2004. *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies Since 1945*, Chapter 1

Wednesday

- Franklin, *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies Since 1945*, Chapter 8

Friday

- Caul, Miki. 1999. “Women’s Representation in Parliament: The Role of Political Parties.” *Party Politics* 5(1): 79–98.

Week 5 (Feb 10-14) – Representation (continued)

Monday

- Bjarnegard, Elin. 2013. *Gender, Informal Institutions, and Political Recruitment: Explaining Male Dominance in Parliamentary Representation*. Chapter 7: "Concluding Remarks"

Wednesday

- Stratmann, Thomas and Martin Baur. 2002. “Plurality Rule, Proportional Representation, and the German Bundestag: How Incentives to Pork-Barrel Differ across Electoral Systems.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 506–514.

Friday, February 14 - Exam 1

[Return to Top](#)

Week 6 (Feb 17-21) – The Politics of Electoral Reform

Monday

- Donovan and Bowler. 2004. *Reforming the Republic: Democratic Institutions for the New America*, Chapter 4

Wednesday, February

- Snyder, Richard and David Samuels. 2001. “Devaluing the Vote in Latin America.” *Journal of Democracy* 12(1): 146–159.

Friday

- Andrews, Josephine T. and Robert W. Jackman. 2005. “Strategic Fools: Electoral Rule Choice under Extreme Uncertainty.” *Electoral Studies* 24(1): 65–84.

Week 7 (Feb 24-28) – Electoral Integrity and Authoritarian Rule

Monday

- Schedler, “The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism” (Chapter 1 in Schedler, ed.)

Wednesday

- Howard, Marc Morje, and Philip G. Roessler. 2006. “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 365–381

Friday

- Birch, Sarah. 2007. “Electoral Systems and Electoral Misconduct.” *Comparative Political Studies* 40(12): 1533–1556.

Week 8 (March 3-7) – State Control and Incumbent Strategies

Monday

- Way, “Authoritarian Failure: How Does State Weakness Strengthen Electoral Competition?” (Chapter 10 in Schedler, ed.)

Wednesday

- Case, “Manipulative Skills: How do Rulers Control the Electoral Arena?” (Chapter 6 in Schedler, ed.)

Friday

- Klein, Aidan and Bryon Moraski. 2020. “Incentives to Deliver: Authoritarian Rule, Proportional Representation, and Support for Russia’s Ruling Party.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 30(4): 524-541.

[Return to Top](#)

Week 9 (Mar 10-14) – Incumbent Tactics

Monday

- Golosov, Grigorii. 2015. “Do Spoilers Make a Difference? Instrumental Manipulation of Political Parties in an Electoral Authoritarian Regime, the Case of Russia.” *East European Politics* 31(2): 170-186.

Wednesday

- Thompson and Kuntz, "After Defeat: When Do Rulers Steal Elections?" (Chapter 7 in Schedler, ed.)

Friday, March 14 – Exam 2

Week 10 (Mar 17-21): No Class (Spring Break)

Week 11 (Mar 24-28) – Options for the Opposition

Monday

- Watch "Bringing Down a Dictator"

Wednesday

- Langston, "Why Ruling Parties Split" (Chapter 4 in Schedler, ed.)

Friday

- Lindberg, "Tragic Protest: Why Do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?" (Chapter 9 in Schedler, ed.)

Week 12 (Mar 31-Apr 4) – Options for the Opposition (continued)

Monday

- Tucker, Joshua. 2007. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(3): 535-551.

Wednesday

- Turchenko, Mikhail, and Grigorii V. Golosov. 2021. "Smart Enough to Make a Difference? An Empirical Test of the Efficacy of Strategic Voting in Russia's Authoritarian Elections." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 37(1): 65–79

Friday

- Flores, Thomas and Irfan Nooruddin. 2016. *Elections in Hard Times*, Chapter 7 "Violent Votes: Conflict and Elections"

Week 13 (Apr 7-11) – International Influences

Monday

- Levitsky and Way, "Linkage and Leverage: How Do International Factors Change Domestic Balances of Power?" (Chapter 12 in Schedler, ed.)

Wednesday

- Kelley, *Monitoring Democracy*, Chapter 2 "The Rise of a New Norm"

Friday

- Kelley, *Monitoring Democracy*, Chapter 7 "Are Monitored Elections Better?"

[Return to Top](#)

Week 14 (Apr 14-18) – International Influences (continued)

Monday

- Birch, Sarah and David Muchlinski. 2018. “Electoral Violence Prevention: What Works?” *Democratization* 25(3): 385-403.

Wednesday

- Levin, Dov H. 2019. "A Vote for Freedom? The Effects of Partisan Electoral Interventions on Regime Type." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(4), 839-868.

Friday

- Templeman, Kharis. 2020. "How Taiwan Stands Up to China." *Journal of Democracy* 31(3): 85-99.

Week 15 (Apr 21-23) -- Lingering Concerns

Monday

- Flores, Thomas and Irfan Nooruddin. 2016. *Elections in Hard Times*, Chapter 8 "Democracy Promotion for the Twenty-first Century"

Wednesday, April 23 – Exam 3

Finals Week (April 28 - May 2)

Monday, April 28 at 9 am - Final Paper Due

10:00 am - 11:00 am on Tuesday, April 30 – Makeup Exams (if necessary)

[Return to Top](#)