

# Comparative Political Regimes

POSC 120 – Spring 2014  
(M & W 8:30-9:40 am)  
(F 8:30-9:30 am) Leighton 304

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**Office Hours:** Mon. 10am to 12 Noon & Thurs. 2pm-4pm and by appt.

## Course Description

Is Russia a democracy? How do politics differ in Western Europe compared to the United States? Why did the Arab Spring occur in 2011 and not 1990? This course will explore these and other questions examining politics within different countries. The comparison of political institutions and behavior *within* different countries is referred to as Comparative Politics, a subfield of political science distinct from International Relations, which examines politics *between* countries.

In this course, we will explore the varieties of political institutions around the world, including both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Our examination of these institutions will always be theory driven – we will be looking to explain both the origins and implications of political institutions. Over the course of the term, you will learn to apply and investigate theories concerning the origins of democracy, how different political institutions (both formal and informal) influence factors such as ethnic conflict, economic development, political stability, and the provision of public goods such as environmental protection and education.

## Course Requirements and Expectations

Classroom discussion and participation will be a critical component of our classes. To facilitate insightful and interesting discussions, you are required to complete the assigned readings *before* each class and contribute to class discussions. The reading load will be up to 150 to 200 pages per week. There is no required text for the course – all readings will be made available electronically on Moodle. I also encourage you to pay attention to current events around the world in the news, which we will discuss in class. I will occasionally email news articles analyzing current events which you will be responsible to read for class discussion.

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date indicated in the syllabus. Please email an electronic copy to me at kfreezecarleton.edu. In addition to the electronic copy, please turn in a paper copy to myself by 12 noon the following day –

you can always turn in paper in my mailbox outside my office at 413 Willis. The paper copy needs to be an exact copy of the electronic paper – failure to do so will be considered a case of academic dishonesty and referred to the Dean’s Office.

## Grading

Your grade will be based on the following:

Class Preparation and Attendance	10%
2 Quantitative Analysis Projects (13% & 17% Each)	30%
Quizzes	15%
Constitutional Convention Project	15%
Final Exam	30%

### **Class Preparation, Attendance and Participation - 10%**

Attendance and active participation is required. Participation grades will be determined by the *quality* not quantity of comments/questions in class discussion.

Prior to the start of each class, you will submit at least one comment/thought/question on the readings for the day on a 3 by 5 note card (please purchase this from the Carleton bookstore). This comment or question need not be longer than one sentence (although you are certainly welcome to use more space if you need). Please attempt to write legibly and always remember to put your name on the card. I will collect these note cards at the start of class, and will look through them to see if there are any questions or comments that we did not cover in class that day and will begin the following class addressing these points. These will be graded in a pass/fail manner – if your question shows that you have not carefully done the reading for the day, you will receive no credit. If you know that you will not be in attendance for class for a day, you may turn the question in in advance, or have a classmate turn it in on your behalf. I will not accept late note cards, without exception.

Half of this grade (5%) will be determined by your participation in in class activities and attendance. The other half (5%) will be determined by the note cards.

### **Two Quantitative Analysis Projects - 30% (13% & 17% each)**

In these short quantitative projects, you will prepare a quantitative test of a theory that you have developed from the course readings. For this project, you will turn in a 4–5 page summary of the theory you have developed, as well as graphical output and quantitative output in which you test that theory. To simplify this process, I have prepared a large cross-national data set that you can use to test your theory, although you are certainly welcome to collect and analyze your own data if you wish. For the first paper, you will investigate the factors that make a country more likely to be a democracy. The first paper will be due April 23. The second paper will be due May 21, and you will investigate how different

political institutions (democratic or authoritarian) influence some outcome (economic, social or otherwise).

In addition, you will also present your results for ONE of the projects above to the entire class. Your presentation will be worth an additional 4%. These presentations will be at the start of class, and will be no more than 10 minutes in length. I will randomly assign you to present on one of the dates (Apr. 25-May 7 or May 23-June 4).

## **Quizzes - 15%**

Over the course of the term, you will have a series of short online quizzes based on the readings and in-class discussion/information I have shared with you. These will be factual, multiple-choice quizzes that are graded automatically. While these are open book quizzes, they will have a time limit associated with them (usually 5 minutes or less). Typically if you need to look up multiple answers, you will be unable to complete the quiz on time.

## **Constitutional Convention Project - 15%**

On May 9 and May 12, we will hold a mock constitutional convention for a newly independent but ethnically divided country (I've dubbed it "Freezeland", but I reserve the right to give this fictional country a less lame name if I can think of one). As part of this convention, each of you will have an assigned role, and will attempt to achieve an end result in the convention which you view as being the most favorable to yourself. In preparation for the convention, you will prepare a short memo (2-3 pages) outlining your strategy and expectations for the convention. This memo will be due electronically by May 8, 11:59pm.

Following the conclusion of the convention you will turn in a short memo (2-3 pages) detailing what you learned from the convention and whether or not your expectations were borne out. This memo will be electronically by May 14, 11:50pm.

## **Final Exam - 30%**

This will be a comprehensive final exam, self-scheduled during exam week. It will cover both factual and theoretical knowledge from the course.

## **Course Policies**

### **Grading Policies**

I will assign grades using the following scale : A (93.33), A- (90), B+ (86.67), B (83.33), B- (80), C+ (76.67), C (73.33), C- (70), D+ (66.67), D(63.33) D- (60) F (Below 60). I do not round your final grade up or down (so if you receive a 93.327, you will receive an A- for a final grade).

Here are several important details regarding my policy on course grades

1. I will not receive grade complaints if more than two weeks have passed after the assignment has been returned. Before I review your grade you must first:
  - Wait 24 hours.
  - Schedule a time to meet with me to discuss your grade.
  - Submit a formal appeal in writing (email is sufficient—but be clear that it is the appeal in the subject heading) that clearly identifies content in the assignment and the reasons why you think your grade should be changed. These appeals should refer to specific things in the assignment, and not to vague reasons like “I worked really hard.”

The second grade, whether higher or lower, will become your grade on the assignment.

2. Late assignments are not tolerated. Your grade will be lowered 5 points for each day it is late (the exception is for the reading questions/comments, which will not be accepted if late). That is if the assignment is due on Wednesday and you complete it on Thursday, the highest grade you can make is 95. If you complete it on Friday, the highest grade possible will be a 90. And so forth.
3. The **ONLY** acceptable (not penalized) excuses for not completing an assignment on time are family emergencies or illnesses. However, in these cases, I will arrange to give you extra time **ONLY** if you communicate with me **BEFORE** the assignment is due and you provide **DOCUMENTATION** of the circumstance.

## Electronics in Class Policy

You are welcome to bring digital equipment (laptop, ebook reader, etc.) to class. However, I expect you to be responsible in your use of electronic equipment: please avoid visiting social networking sites, or otherwise browsing the internet on sites unrelated to the course. I would also recommend you read through the discussion (including comments), *Computers in the Classroom*, to think about the possible pros and cons of using computers in a classroom setting. Individuals who abuse this privilege will be asked to turn off their computer. Please turn off all cell phones during class. If I observe that your use of electronic equipment is distracting you in class, your in-class participation grade will suffer.

## Academic Honesty

You are expected to abide by fundamental standards of academic honesty. A discussion of plagiarism can be found at: <https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/>. All work is expected to be your own. Cheating, plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without properly citing them), and all forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be strictly handled according to university policy. If you are uncertain, cite your sources!

## **Disability-Related Accomodations**

It is the policy of Carleton College to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible (during the 1st week of the semester), so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at <http://apps.carleton.edu/disabilityservices/>.

# Course Schedule

Readings should be completed prior to class. I reserve the right to make changes to the course schedule. I will alert you to any changes made in class, via email, and I will post the updated syllabus on Moodle.

## PART I: Concepts and Definitions

### March 31: What is Comparative Politics?

- Introduction to the course.

### April 2: The Logic of Comparison

- A. Przeworski and H. Teune. *The logic of comparative social inquiry*. Wiley-Interscience, 1970: Chapters 1-2, pgs. 17–46.
- Economist Magazine, “What’s gone wrong with democracy”, Feb. 28, 2014

### April 4: Developing and Testing Theories

- Memo on Methods in Comparative Politics

### April 7: Origins and Nature of the State

- Tilly, War Making and State Making as Organized Crime.
- Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter 13.

### April 9: Definitions of Democracy

- R. Dahl. *On Democracy*. Yale University Press, 1998: Chapters 2-4 (pgs. 7-43).

## PART II: Origins of Democracy

### April 11: The Modernization Hypothesis

- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi Neto. Modernization: Theories and facts. *World politics*, 49(2):155–183, 1997
- Carles Boix and Susan Carol Stokes. Endogenous democratization. *World Politics*, 55(4):517–549, 2003

### April 14: Economic Inequality and Democracy

- D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2006: Chapters 1-2 (pages 1-47).

### **April 16: Natural Resources and Democracy**

- Michael L Ross. Does oil hinder democracy? *World politics*, 53(3):325–361, 2001.
- Robert H Bates. The economics of transitions to democracy. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 24(01):24–27, 1991.

### **April 18: Cultural Accounts of Democracy**

- Ronald Inglehart. Trust, well-being and democracy. In Mark E. Warren, editor, *Democracy and Trust*. Cambridge University Press, 1999
- M Steven Fish. Islam and authoritarianism. *World politics*, 55(1):4–37, 2002

### **April 21: Democratic Transitions**

- Timur Kuran. Now out of never. *World politics*, 44(1):7–48, 1991
- Adam Przeworski. *Democracy and the market: Political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge University Press, 1991. Chapter 2, pgs. 51–95

### **April 23: The Arab Spring**

- E. Bellin. Reconsidering the robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring. *Comparative Politics*, 44(2):127–149, 2012
- Alfred Stepan and Juan J Linz. Democratization theory and the Arab Spring. *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2):15–30, 2013

## **PART III: Varieties of Democracy**

### **April 25: Presidential vs. Parliamentary Regimes**

- José Antonio Cheibub, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. Democracy and dictatorship revisited. *Public Choice*, 143(1-2):67–101, 2010 – Focus on pages 79–83.
- Kaare Strøm and Benjamin Nyblade. Coalition theory and government formation. In Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pages 783–802. Oxford University Press, 2007

### **April 28: Electoral Systems**

- Arend Lijphart. *Patterns of democracy: Government forms and performance in thirty-six countries*. Yale University Press, 2nd edition, 2012: Chapter 8, pgs. 130–157
- Rein Taagepera. Electoral systems. In Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pages 678–702. Oxford University Press, 2007

### **April 30: Social Cleavages and Party Systems**

- Daniel Posner. The political salience of cultural difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are allies in Zambia and adversaries in Malawi. *American Political Science Review*, 98(04):529–545, 2004
- Carles Boix. The emergence of parties and party systems. In Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pages 499–521. Oxford University Press, 2007

### **May 2: Veto Players**

- Bednar Jenna. *The Robust Federation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009: Chapter 2, pages 18–25.
- George Tsebelis and Jeanette Money. *Bicameralism*. Cambridge University Press, 1997: Chapter 2, pages 44–70.

### **May 7: Democratic Accountability**

- H. Kitschelt. Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(6-7):845, 2000

### **May 9: Constitutional Convention**

- No Readings

### **May 12: Constitutional Convention**

- No Readings

## **PART IV: Outcomes of Varieties of Democracy**

### **May 14: VoD and Fiscal Policy**

- Jonathan Rodden. The geographic distribution of political preferences. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13:321–340, 2010

### **May 16: VoD and Ethnic Conflict**

- Joel Selway and Kharis Templeman. The myth of consociationalism? Conflict reduction in divided societies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 45(12):1542–1571, 2012

### May 19: VoD and Democratic Survival

- Juan J Linz. The perils of presidentialism. *Journal of democracy*, 1(1):51–69, 1990
- Scott Mainwaring and MJ Shugart. Juan Linz, presidentialism, and democracy: A critical appraisal. *Comparative Politics*, 29:449–472, 1997

### May 21: VoD and Political Participation

- Robert W Jackman and Ross A Miller. Voter turnout in the industrial democracies during the 1980s. *Comparative Political Studies*, 27(4):467–492, 1995
- Anibal Pérez-Liñán. Neoinstitutional accounts of voter turnout: moving beyond industrial democracies. *Electoral Studies*, 20(2):281–297, 2001

## PART V: Varieties of Dictatorship

### May 23: Monarchies and Personalistic Dictatorships

- Lisa Wedeen. Acting as if: symbolic politics and social control in Syria. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 40(03):503–523, 1998
- This comic:  
<http://www.smbc-comics.com/?id=3310#comic>

### May 26: Military Dictatorships

- Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer. Toward a structural understanding of coup risk. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 47(5):594–620, 2003

### May 28: Party Dictatorships and Electoral Authoritarianism

- Jennifer Gandhi and Ellen Lust-Okar. Elections under authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12:403–422, 2009

### May 30: VoDict and Outcomes

- Jennifer Gandhi and Adam Przeworski. Authoritarian institutions and the survival of autocrats. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(11):1279–1301, 2007

## PART VI: Outcomes of Democracy and Dictatorship

### June 2: Democracy and Dictatorship and Economic Growth

- Robert J Barro. Rule of law, democracy, and economic performance. *2000 Index of Economic Freedom*, pages 31–51, 2000

#### June 4: Democracy and Dictatorship and Social Outcomes

- C. Boix. *Democracy and redistribution*. Cambridge Univ Pr, 2003: Chapter 5: Democracy and the Public Sector 171–203.