

POLSCI 140: Introduction to Comparative Political Science

Monday and Wednesday 1-2:30 PM (Angell Hall Auditorium D)

(SYLLABUS version 1.4: 21 March 2016)

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 to 12:00 Haven 6658

Graduate Student Instructors:
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Sect.: Klaver: 002: Wed 3-4 G144 AH 004: Thu 4-5 3411 MH 005: Thu 12-1 2816 SSWB
Zhirkov: 003: Wed 4-5 2024 Tisch 006: Wed 5-6 G144 AH

GSI Office Hours: Klaver (7701), Day(s) & Hours TBD;
Zhirkov (7750 Haven), M 12-1, W 3-4, Th 3:30-4:30, and by appointment.

This class offers an introduction to the social-scientific study of Comparative Politics. It will introduce students to both the central empirical findings of comparative politics and the distinctive method of comparative political analysis: cross-national comparison. We will accomplish both of these tasks by examining several questions crucial to the study of comparative politics. First, we will explore why some countries become and stay democracies, and others do not. Second, we will ask whether democracies produce systematically different socio-economic outcomes than non-democracies. For examples: Does democracy increase economic growth? Does it encourage better health and education outcomes? Third, we will examine variation in outcomes *within* the set of democratic countries and ask whether the *type* of democracy matters. For instance: Are some sets of institutional arrangements better at holding politicians accountable to voters? Are some forms of representative government more representative? Are some democratic institutions associated with better economic performance? Finally, do some sets of institutional arrangements mitigate ethnic conflict and/or encourage the survival of democracies?

Requirements: Every student in the class is required to enroll in, attend, and participate in a weekly discussion section. Your section grade will depend on discussion-section attendance and participation as well as performance on the homework assignments. Your attendance at, attention to, and engagement with lecture is also extremely strongly encouraged. For one thing, lecture & section attendance & effort are very good predictors of performance on exams. Plus, section attendance and participation also weigh directly in your grade. There are three exams, two in-term exams and one final exam, and periodic (approximately weekly, excepting weeks before exams or break) homework assignments (generally posted and due on Tuesday mornings).

Grading:	First in-term exam: 22.5%	Section:	Attendance: 5%
	Second in-term exam: 22.5%		Participation: 5%
	Final exam: 30%		Homework 15%

Ground Rules: (extremely important for you to read!!!!)

1. Your GSI has primary responsibility for all grading. If you have questions about any of your grades, you should see your GSI first. If you have unresolved issues after this pursuit, I will handle secondary appeals, which you initiate with a written explanation requesting review by me. Please note that, if I agree to review the work, I will consider its entirety, which means you could receive a lower grade overall upon review.
2. We take academic dishonesty seriously and will pursue all apparent instances thereof strenuously. As a general guide: if you take an action that you would not be comfortable revealing to your peers, GSI's, or Professor, you are likely crossing the line between acceptable and unacceptable academic contact. If you have questions about where that line is you can consult your GSI or Professor and/or consult the following webpage: (<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/saa/publications/bulletin/archive/00-01/chapter4/conduct.html>)
3. All exams and assignments are mandatory. If you have a documented emergency that we judge to be beyond your control, we will make efforts to schedule a make-up exam. Otherwise, be there and be prepared. (Times and dates listed below, all exams take place in the same room as our lectures).

Required Text: Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona Golder. 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics* (Washington, D.C. CQ Press). 2nd Edition.

Any further readings will be made available via the course CANVAS site.

University, College, Department, and Course Statements

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; <http://ssd.umich.edu>) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Religious and Academic Conflicts

Although the University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, its policy is that every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent. Such notice must be given by the drop/add deadline of the given term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments shall be offered an opportunity to make up the work, without penalty, unless it can be demonstrated that a make-up opportunity would interfere unreasonably with delivery of the course. Should disagreement arise over any aspect of this policy, the parties involved should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Final appeals will be resolved by the Provost.

Students Representing the University of Michigan

There may be instances when students must miss class due to their commitment to officially represent the University. These students may be involved in the performing arts, scientific or artistic endeavors, or intercollegiate athletics. Absence from classes while representing the University does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course missed during the period of absence. Students should provide reasonable notice for dates of anticipated absences and submit an individualized class excuse form.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth>.

Class Schedule

0. Introduction (Wednesday, January 6)
Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona Golder. 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics* (Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, D.C.) (hereafter: CGG) Chapter 1

What is Comparative Politics?

1. What is Science? (Monday, January 11 and Wednesday, January 13): CGG Chapter 2
 - a. Further Reading: Lakatos, Imre. Lakatos, I., 1976. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in (pp. 205-259). Amsterdam: Springer.

Monday, January 18: MLK Day, no classes.

2. What is Politics? (Wednesday, January 20): CGG Chapter 3
3. What is the State? (Monday, January 25): CGG Chapter 4
4. What is Democracy? (Wednesday, January 27): CGG Chapter 5

Democracy: Cause and Effect

5. Why are some countries democracies and some countries not?
 - a. Wealth (Monday, February 1): CGG Chapter 6, pp. 171-184.
 - b. Production Profile (Wednesday, February 3): CGG Chapter 6, pp. 184-208.
 - c. Culture and Religion (Monday, February 8): CGG Chapter 7.
6. Democratic Transitions (Wednesday, February 10): CGG Chapter 8

Monday, February 15: First In-term Exam!

Non-Democracy

7. Democracy or Dictatorship: Does it Make a Difference? (Wednesday, February 17): CGG Chapter 9
8. Varieties of Dictatorship:
 - a. Classifying Dictatorship (Monday, February 22): CGG Chapter 10 pp. 349-384;
 - b. Does it make a difference? (Wednesday, February 24) CGG Chapter 10 pp. 384-403.

Monday, March 1 - Wednesday, March 3: Winter Break – no classes!

Varieties of Democracy

9. The Problems with Majority Rule
 - a. Voting Paradoxes and Agenda Power (Monday, March 7): CGG Chapter 11 pp. 413-427
 - b. Theorem Day: Median Voter, Chaos, & Arrow (Wed., March 9): CGG Chapter 11 pp. 427-446.
10. Institutional Variants
 - a. Parliamentary v. Presidential Systems – Parliamentary Systems (Mon.-Wed., March 14-16): CGG Chapter 12, pp. 457-498.

Monday, March 21: Second In-term Exam!

- a. Parl.v. Pres. Sys. – Presidential Systems (Wed., March 23): CGG Ch. 12, pp. 499-534.
- b. Electoral Laws (Monday, March 28; Wed., March 30): CGG Chapter 13
- c. Social Cleavages, Parties & Party Systems (Monday, Apr. 4 & Wednesday, Apr. 6): CGG Chpt. 14
- d. Veto Players (Monday, April 11): CGG Chapter 15
11. Consequences of the Varieties of Democracy (Wed., April 13 and Mon., April 18): CGG Ch. 16

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, April 20: 4–6pm !!!