

THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

POLSCI 740

Term 2, Winter 2021

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Lecture: Via Zoom (available on Avenue)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1- 2pm or via appointment (sign up via Google docs)

Contents

Course Description.....	2
Course Objectives.....	2
Recommended Materials and Texts	3
Class Format.....	3
Course Evaluation – Details	3
2 x Reading Leadership (15% each, total = 30%) [see Sign-up sheet].....	3
Research Design, Total (40%).....	4
a) Research question, (5%) due 9 Feb 2021.....	4
b) Comparative Method Assignment (15%), due 2 Mar 2021.....	4
c) Research Proposal (20%), due 23 Mar 2021	4
Take Home Final Exam (30%), due 16 Apr 2021	5
Course Schedule.....	5
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings	5
Week 1: Jan 12 / Introduction	5
Week 2: Jan 19 / What is Comparative Politics?	5
Week 3: Jan 26 / Comparative Methodology 1	6
Week 4: Feb 2/ Comparative Methodology 2.....	6
Week 5: Feb 9 / Structural-Historical Analysis.....	7
Feb 16 / Mid-term recess, <i>NO CLASS</i>	8
Week 6: Feb 23 / Culture & Constructivism.....	8
Week 7: Mar 2 / Rational Choice	8
Week 8: Mar 9 / State and Regimes and Democratization	9
Week 9: Mar 16 / Reflection Week <i>NO CLASS</i>	10
Week 10: Mar 23 / Elections, Electoral System and Malpractices	10
Week 11: Mar 30 / Ethnicity, Gender and Political Representation	11
Week 12: Apr 6 / Digital Democracy	12

Week 13: Apr 13 /Course Overview.....	13
Course Policies.....	13
Submission and Grading of Assignments	13
Grades.....	13
Late Assignments	13
Absences, Missed Work, Illness	14
Avenue to Learn	14
Turnitin.com.....	14
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)	14
University Policies	14
Academic Integrity Statement.....	14
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	15
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy	15
Course Modification	15

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the main theoretical and conceptual issues in the field of Comparative Politics. It offers students a broad view of the selected themes, concepts and approaches that characterize the field, as well as an appreciation of how the field has evolved over time. The scope of the material will range from comparative paradigms, dominant methodologies, theoretical approaches, key issues and debates in the understanding of politics and government in Western and non-Western, developed and developing areas.

You will also learn how to develop a research design that will be useful for framing your grant applications or thesis proposal. Additionally, this course is also intended for PhD political science students planning to write comprehensive exams and/or a thesis in comparative politics. Each week we will discuss a subset of the key scholarly literature, focusing on a major theme or theoretical debate. Key methodological issues are addressed in context of the substantive and theoretical works, as well as in the written assignments for the class. Students who plan to take the comprehensive exams are strongly encouraged to read the recommended readings.

**PhD students planning to take the comprehensive exam in Comparative Politics should note that this course does not contain the complete readings and need to consult the detailed Comparative Politics exam reading list.*

Course Objectives

By the end of the course graduate students should be able to:

- be equipped with the necessary skills to formulate a meaningful research question, learn to draft a two-page research or grant proposal on a comparative politics topic
- be prepared to write a comprehensive field examination in Comparative Politics

- have a better sense of the breadth of the field, its intellectual history, the theoretical and methodological approaches and debates and

Recommended Materials and Texts

- Lichbach, Mark Irving, and Alan S. Zuckerman. 2009. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*. Cambridge University Press. Available online from [McMaster's library](#)
- Dickovick, J. Tyler, and Jonathan Eastwood. 2013. *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases*. New York: Oxford University Press. (*Recommended for MA students*).
- Caramani, Daniele. 2011. *Comparative Politics*. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. (*Recommended for MA students*). Available in Print at McMaster's library ([curbside pickup available](#) during Covid-19)

*Most assigned book chapters are available on course reserves. Assigned journal articles can be downloaded via [ProQuest](#).

Class Format

This is a reading intensive and discussion-based seminar. Each week, you will need to attend a course via Zoom for about 30 minutes lecture on the week's topic. Each seminar will typically begin with 10 mins overview of the key ideas or concepts presented in each week's readings by the instructor, followed by student's weekly leadership and deep discussions of the readings. Given our discussion intensive format, it will be best for you to download in advance, learn and familiarize yourself with the following free apps and tools that we will use in this class:

- 1) [Avenue to learn](#) – to access course readings, ppt slides, videos and assignments
- 2) [Zoom](#) – for our weekly online classes
- 3) [Zotero](#) – free citation software (strongly encouraged for your annotated bibliography and research essay)

Office Hours. I will hold office hours every Tuesday (1-2pm or by appointment). I will be available to meet virtually with you one-on-one at this time for at least 15 mins time slot with you. Please sign up on the Google Docs sign-up sheet (link available on Avenue to Learn).

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. 2 x Reading Leadership – 15% each, total = **30%**
2. Research Design – total = **40%**
 - i. Research question – 5%, due 9 Feb
 - ii. Comparative Method Assignment – 15%, due 2 Mar
 - iii. 3-page Research Proposal - 20%, due 23 Mar
3. Take Home Final Exam - **30%**, due 16 Apr

Course Evaluation – Details

2 x Reading Leadership (15% each, total = 30%) [see Sign-up sheet]

You will serve as a discussion leader for 2 sessions from Week 2-11 (except Week 8). You will sign up for your presentations on the first day of class. Each presentation and discussion should not be more than 10 minutes (excluding 5 mins of Q and A). You are welcome to use power point slides or any other presentation tools that facilitate class discussion. If you use slides, I

allow you to share your screen with the class. As a guide, the presentation ought to include the following:

- Key thesis/argument/theoretical approach of the article;
- Strengths and weaknesses of the piece;
- New insights/contributions/gaps in comparative politics;
- Links between readings, as well as provide a critical assessment of those readings;
- 1-2 questions for discussion.

Treat the class presentations as opportunities for you to act as an instructor to lead discussions. As an instructor, you would want to review and highlight issues/concepts from the readings that they may not have noticed on their own and raise pertinent questions that lay the ground for further discussion. Being a presenter offers you an opportunity to practice your presentation skills and demonstrate your ability to use technology to present your work. You will be assessed based on the content, quality, clarity and delivery of the presentation. Plan ahead. Any last-minute change or absence on the day of your scheduled presentation will receive a zero grade.

Research Design, Total (40%)

Research method is key to comparative politics. As the great philosopher of science, Henry Poincare once said: "The natural sciences talk about their results. The social sciences talk about their methods"! In this course, you will learn to develop a small research design with a clear question, comparative method, theoretical approach and data sources for your investigation. To do well in this research design assignment, you will need to think of your topic early in the term. Please sign up for office hours and develop your question and the body of literature that you will engage with, in consultation with me.

a) Research question, (5%) due 9 Feb 2021

Drawing from your own research interests and the themes outlined in this class, you will develop a research question (explanatory, descriptive or policy oriented) for your research proposal. Submit your question on "Assignment" folder before our class on 9 Feb. You will also share your question with the class on 9 Feb and get some feedback.

b) Comparative Method Assignment (15%), due 2 Mar 2021

Based on the readings (required and recommended) in Week 3 and 4, you will submit a one-page essay explaining the logic of case selection to answer your proposed question and a comparative method/strategy (e.g. case/variable oriented; within-case; single-case; controlled paired comparison; small or large-N analysis etc) for your proposal. The aim of this is to get you thinking of your question and logic of inquiry in your research design.

c) Research Proposal (20%), due 23 Mar 2021

You will submit a 3-page proposal (12 point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margin) that includes broadly the following: a) a refined research question based on your earlier assignment; b) 1-2 thesis/hypotheses from a body of literature (ethnic conflict, gender, electoral system etc.); c) a theoretical comparative approach; d) a comparative method that you have earlier identified or refined; e) unit of analysis (e.g. individuals, groups, artifacts, towns, social interactions etc); f) time period of analysis (e.g. 1997 to 2020 or Jan-Mar); and g) sources of data that you will draw on or type of evidence that you will use to answer the question (e.g. national archives, party newsletters, national statistics).

You ought to be able to develop your research proposal based on our course's weekly themes and readings. A bibliography is required for all works cited. I prefer Chicago Manual

of Style (in-text citation). Submit your proposal by uploading it electronically on Avenue's "Assignment" folder.

Take Home Final Exam (30%), due 16 Apr 2021

The final exam will cover all the materials introduced through the term. You will choose two out of four questions provided. The exam questions will be circulated electronically on 16 Apr 2021. The exam questions will be drawn from current political events and resemble questions ask in the comparative politics comprehensive field examinations. Your answer for each question should be around 3-4 pages long, single-spaced (around 2000 words each). A bibliography is required for all works cited.

Course Schedule

	Date	Topics	Assignment Due Dates
1	12 Jan	Introduction	<i>Sign up for presentations</i>
2	19 Jan	What is Comparative Politics?	
3	26 Jan	Comparative Method 1	
4	2 Feb	Comparative Method 2	
5	9 Feb	Structural-Historical Analysis and Institutionalism	<i>Research question due 9 Feb</i>
Mid-Term Recess, NO CLASS			
6	23 Feb	Culture and Constructivism	
7	2 Mar	Rational Choice	<i>Method assignment due 2 Mar</i>
8	9 Mar	States, Regimes, Democratization	
Reflection Week, NO CLASS			
9	16 Mar		
10	23 Mar	Elections and Electoral Systems	<i>Research proposal due 23 Mar</i>
11	30 Mar	Ethnicity, Gender and Representation	
12	6 Apr	Digital Democracy	<i>Circulate Take-Home Exam</i>
13	13 Apr	Course Overview	<i>Submit Take-Home Exam on Avenue on 16 Apr</i>

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1: Jan 12 / Introduction

Required Reading

1. Lichbach, Mark Irving, and Alan S. Zuckerman. 1997. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*. Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1.

Week 2: Jan 19 / What is Comparative Politics?

Required Reading

1. Kohli, Atul, Peter Evans, Peter J. Katzenstein, Adam Przeworski, Susanne Hoerber Rudolph, James C. Scott, and Theda Skocpol. 1995. "[The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium](#)." *World Politics* 48 (1) (October 1): 1–49.
2. Munck, Gerardo, and Richard Snyder. 2007. "[Debating the Direction of Comparative Politics An Analysis of Leading Journals](#)." *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (1):5–31.
3. Laitin, David. 2002. "Comparative Politics: The State of the Subdiscipline." In *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, 630–659. W.W. Norton & Co.

4. Wilson, Matthew Charles. 2017. "[Trends in Political Science Research and the Progress of Comparative Politics.](#)" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50 (4):979–84.

Recommended Reading

1. Almond, Gabriel A. 1956. "[Comparative Political Systems.](#)" *The Journal of Politics* 18 (3) (August 1): 391–409.
2. Wiarda, Howard J. 1998. "[Is Comparative Politics Dead? Rethinking the Field in the Post-Cold War Era.](#)" *Third World Quarterly* 19 (5): 935–949.

Questions

- Is the comparative method an effective means of drawing inferences in social science?
- What is the role of comparative politics in empirical research? Use at least one of the readings to answer the question.

Week 3: Jan 26 / Comparative Methodology 1

Required Reading

1. Ragin, Charles. 1989. "The Distinctiveness of Comparative Social Science." In *The Comparative Method*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1–18.
2. Lijphart, A. 1975. "[The Comparable-Cases Strategy in Comparative Research.](#)" *Comparative Political Studies* 8 (2): 158–177.
3. Mahoney, James. 2007. "[Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics.](#)" *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (2) (February 1): 122–144.
4. Tarrow, Sidney. 2010. "[The Strategy of Paired Comparison: Toward a Theory of Practice.](#)" *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (2) (February 1): 230–259.

Recommended Readings

1. Dion, Douglas. 1998. "[Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study.](#)" *Comparative Politics* 30 (2) (January 1): 127–145.
2. Gerring, John. 2004. "[What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?](#)" *American Political Science Review* 98 (02): 341–354.
3. Rueschemeyer, Dietrich. 2003. "Can One or Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?" In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, 305–336. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. QMMR. 2020. "[Symposium: Comparative Area Studies.](#)" *The Maxwell School of Syracuse University* 17–18 (1).

Questions

- What is comparative method?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of comparative method?
- What is a single-case study?
- What is an area study?

Week 4: Feb 2/ Comparative Methodology 2

Required Reading

1. Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman. 2006. "[Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods.](#)" *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (1): 455–476.
2. Gerring, John. 2004. "[What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?](#)" *American Political Science Review* 98 (02): 341–354.
3. Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "[How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics.](#)" *Political Analysis* 2 (1) (January 1): 131–150.

4. Collier, David, and James Mahoney. 1996. "[Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research](#)." *World Politics* 49 (1) (October 1): 56–91.

Recommended Reading

1. QMMR. 2018. "[Symposium: Rethinking Comparisons](#)." *The Maxwell School of Syracuse University*, QMMR Newsletter, 16 (1).
2. [Qualitative and Multi Method Research Book Scan](#)

Questions

- How should comparativists select their cases for comparison?
- Comparativists are often accused of selection bias or selecting cases based on the dependent variable. Is this a problem? If so, what can be done about it?
- What is "many variables-small n" problem? What are the ways to overcome this problem in comparative analysis?
- Why cross-case qualitative causal inference is weak, and why we should still compare?

Week 5: Feb 9 / Structural-Historical Analysis

Required Readings (Structural Historical Analysis)

1. Mahoney, James, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, ed. 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1.
2. Pierson, Paul, and Theda Skocpol. 2002. "Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science." In *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, 693–721. NY: W.W. Norton.
3. Capoccia, Giovanni, and R. Daniel Kelemen. 2007. "[The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism](#)." *World Politics* 59 (03): 341–69.

Required Readings (Institutionalism)

1. March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. 1984. "[The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life](#)." *American Political Science Review* 78 (3) (September 1): 734–749.
2. Hall, Peter A., and Rosemary C. R. Taylor. 1996. "[Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms](#)." *Political Studies* 44 (5): 936–957.
3. Thelen, Kathleen. 1999. "[Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics](#)." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1): 369–404.
4. North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press, 3-10.

Recommended Reading

1. Mahoney, James. 2004. "[Comparative-Historical Methodology](#)." *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (1): 81–101.
2. Skocpol, Theda, and Margaret Somers. 1980. "[The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry](#)." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22 (2) (April 1): 174–197.
3. Pierson, Paul. 2000. "[The Limits of Design: Explaining Institutional Origins and Change](#)." *Governance* 13 (4): 475–499.
4. Katzelson, Ira. 2009. "Strong Theory, Complex History: Structure and Configuration in Comparative Politics Revisited." In *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*, 96–116. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press.
5. Steinmo, Sven, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, ed. 1992. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge University Press, 1-32.

6. Remmer, Karen L. 1997. "[Theoretical Decay and Theoretical Development: The Resurgence of Institutional Analysis.](#)" *World Politics* 50 (1) (October 1): 34–61.

Questions

- How is the comparative method used in these analyses?
- What do we learn about the causes of macro-political change?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of structural-historical explanations?
- What are the key strategies used by historical institutionalists to explain political developments? Do these analyses miss out anything important?
- The new institutionalism has been criticized for being too narrow and static. Is this a fair criticism?

Feb 16 / Mid-term recess, **NO CLASS**

Week 6: Feb 23 / Culture & Constructivism

Required Reading

1. Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, 3–30. N.Y.: Basic Books.
2. Almond, Gabriel Abraham, and Sidney Verba, ed. 1989. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Sage Publications, Inc, Chapters 1 and 3.
3. Wedeen, Lisa. 2002. "[Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science.](#)" *The American Political Science Review* 96 (4): 713–28.
4. Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 2001. "[Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics.](#)" *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (1): 391–416.
5. Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "[The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi.](#)" *American Political Science Review* 98 (04): 529–45.

Recommended Reading

1. Berman, Sheri. 2001. "[Ideas, Norms, and Culture in Political Analysis.](#)" *Comparative Politics* 33 (2) (January 1): 231–250.
2. Tarrow, Sidney. 1996. "[Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical Reflection on Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work.](#)" *The American Political Science Review* 90 (2) (June 1): 389–397.
3. Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. "[The Clash of Civilizations?](#)" *Foreign Affairs*, June 1.

Questions

- What is political culture? How are they created? How do we know culture matters?
- Do Almond and Verba provide a credible explanation?
- Is there a constructivist methodology? How does Constructivists propose to bridge the divide between international relations and comparative politics?
- Discuss the importance of ideas, norms and values in the study of comparative politics. Support your argument with empirical examples.

Week 7: Mar 2 / Rational Choice

Required Reading

1. Munck, Gerardo L. (Gerardo Luis). 2001. "[Game Theory and Comparative Politics: New Perspectives and Old Concerns.](#)" *World Politics* 53 (2): 173–204.

2. Huber, Evelyne, and Michelle Dion. 2002. "[Revolution or Contribution? Rational Choice Approaches in the Study of Latin American Politics.](#)" *Latin American Politics and Society* 44 (3) (October 1): 1–28.
3. Dixit, Avinash K. 2009. *Games of Strategy*. 3rd ed. W. W. Norton & Co., Read Chapters 2 and 3 for basic concepts and techniques used in Game theory.
4. Magaloni, Beatriz. 2010. "[The Game of Electoral Fraud and the Ousting of Authoritarian Rule.](#)" *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (3): 751–65.
5. Little, Andrew. 2015. "[Fraud and Monitoring in Non-Competitive Elections.](#)" *Political Science Research and Methods* 3 (1): 21–41.

Recommended Readings

1. Levi, Margaret. 2009. "Reconsiderations of Rational Choice in Comparative and Historical Analysis." In *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, 117–133. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Green, Donald P., and Donald P. Green Ian Shapiro. 1994. *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*. Yale University Press, 1-46.
3. Cox, Gary. 2004. "Lies, Damned Lies and Rational Choice Analyses." In *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, 167–86. US: Cambridge University Press.

Questions

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of rational choice approach in comparative studies? Choose two or three major rational choice contributions in comparative politics and assess whether they have micro-foundations.
- Rational choice has often been accused of oversimplifying human behaviour, ignoring the origins of institutions and overlooking culture that shape preferences and decision-making processes. Discuss.

Week 8: Mar 9 / State and Regimes and Democratization

States and Regimes

Required Reading

1. Midgal, Joel. 2009. "Researching the State." In *Comparative Politics Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, 162–192. Second. Cambridge University Press.
2. Skocpol, Theda. 1985. "Bringing the State Back In." In *Bringing the State Back In*, 3–43. U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
3. Levi, Margaret, ed. 2002. "The State of the Study of the State." In *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, 33–55. U.S.: W. W. Norton & Company.
4. Levitsky, S, and D Collier. 1997. "[Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research.](#)" *World Politics* 49 (3): 430–451.
5. Lawson, Stephanie. 1993. "[Conceptual Issues in the Comparative Study of Regime Change and Democratization.](#)" *Comparative Politics* 25 (2): 183–205.

Recommended Reading

1. Fishman, Robert M. 1990. "[Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy.](#)" *World Politics* 42 (3): 422–40.
2. Linz, Juan J. 2000. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Lynne Rienner, Chapter 1.
3. Bogaards, M. 2009. "[How to Classify Hybrid Regimes? Defective Democracy and Electoral Authoritarianism.](#)" *Democratization* 16 (2): 399–423.
4. Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan. 1996. "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes." In *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, 38–54. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ Press.

Questions

- What is the difference between “state” and “regime”?
- What makes a strong state? What is a developmental state? What is a weak state?
- Define and differentiate between two or three major political regimes (democracy, authoritarianism, electoral authoritarianism, totalitarianism, communism etc.) in the articles.

Democratization

Required Reading

1. Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late 20th Century*. University of Oklahoma Press, 3-108 (read selectively and note key arguments).
2. Bunce, Valerie. 2000. “[Comparative Democratization Big and Bounded Generalizations.](#)” *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (6-7) (September 1): 703–734.
3. Schedler, Andreas. “[Elections Without Democracy: The Menu of Manipulation.](#)” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 36–50.
4. Howard, Marc, and Philip G. Roessler. “[Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes.](#)” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 2 (April 2006): 365–381.

Recommended Reading

1. Brownlee, Jason M. “[Low Tide after the Third Wave: Exploring Politics under Authoritarianism.](#)” *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 4 (July 2002): 477.
2. Carothers, T. “[The End of the Transition Paradigm.](#)” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5–21.
3. Linz, Juan J. and Alfred C. Stepan. “[Toward Consolidated Democracies.](#)” *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996): 14–33.
4. Geddes, Barbara. “[What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?](#)” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 115–144.
5. Art, David. 2012. “[What Do We Know About Authoritarianism After Ten Years?](#)” *Comparative Politics* 44 (3): 351–373.

Questions

- What are the causes of the “third wave” of democratizations?
- What are the key challenges of democratization in the post-third wave era?
- Do mass protests necessarily bring about regime change and stability?
- Why do authoritarian regimes persist in the age of democracy

Week 9: Mar 16 / Reflection Week **NO CLASS**

Week 10: Mar 23 / Elections, Electoral System and Malpractices

Required Reading

1. Powell, G. Bingham. “[Political Representation in Comparative Politics.](#)” *Annual Review of Political Science* 07, no. 1 (May 2004): 273–296.
2. Norris, Pippa. “[Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems.](#)” *International Political Science Review* 18, no. 3 (July 1, 1997): 297–312.
3. Birch, Sarah. 2007. “[Electoral Systems and Electoral Misconduct.](#)” *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (12): 1533–56.
4. Lehoucq, Fabrice. 2003. “[Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types, and Consequences.](#)” *Annual Review of Political Science* 6 (1): 233–56.

5. Van Ham, Carolien, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2015. "[From Sticks to Carrots: Electoral Manipulation in Africa, 1986–2012.](#)" *Government and Opposition* 50 (Special Issue 03): 521–548.

Recommended Reading

1. Svensson, Palle, and Jørgen Elklit. 1997. "[The Rise of Election Monitoring: What Makes Elections Free and Fair?](#)" *Journal of Democracy* 8 (3): 32–46.
2. Fortin-Rittberger, Jessica. 2014. "[The Role of Infrastructural and Coercive State Capacity in Explaining Different Types of Electoral Fraud.](#)" *Democratization* 21 (1): 95–117.
3. Reynolds, Andrew, Benjamin Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Accessed February 12, 2013.
4. Grofman, Bernard, and Arend Lijphart. *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2003. Read selectively.

Questions

- Are some electoral systems more democratic and representative than others?
- Is there a best electoral design to ensure the representation of ethnic minorities?
- Is there an electoral system that is most vulnerable to electoral manipulation and fraud?

Week 11: Mar 30 / Ethnicity, Gender and Political Representation

Required Reading

1. Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New Edition. Verso, Chapter 1.
2. Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, pp.3-54.
3. Lijphart, Arend. "[Constitutional Design for Divided Societies.](#)" *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (2004): 96–109.
4. Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "[Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent 'Yes.'](#)" *The Journal of Politics* 61 (3): 628–57.
5. Wängnerud, Lena. "[Women in Parliaments: Descriptive and Substantive Representation.](#)" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, no. 1 (2009): 51–69.
6. Htun, Mala. 2004. "[Is Gender Like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups.](#)" *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (03): 439–458.

Recommended Reading

Ethnic Conflict

1. McCauley, John F. 2017. "[Disaggregating Identities to Study Ethnic Conflict.](#)" *Ethnopolitics* 16 (1): 12–20.
2. Lublin, David, and Shaun Bowler. 2018. "[Electoral Systems and Ethnic Minority Representation.](#)" *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*, April, 2018.
3. Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "[Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.](#)" *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 01 (2003): 75–90.
4. Lake, David A., and Donald Rothchild. 1996. "[Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict.](#)" *International Security* 21 (2) (October 1): 41–75.

Gender

1. Rule, Wilma. 1981. "[Why Women Don't Run: The Critical Contextual Factors in Women's Legislative Recruitment.](#)" *Political Research Quarterly* 34 (1): 60–77.
2. Bush, Sarah Sunn. "[International Politics and the Spread of Quotas for Women in Legislatures.](#)" *International Organization* 65, no. 1 (2011): 103–37.
3. Dahlerup, Drude. 2007. "[Electoral Gender Quotas: Between Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Result.](#)" *Representation* 43 (2): 73–92.
4. Hughes, Melanie. 2011. "[Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women's Political Representation Worldwide.](#)" *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 604–20.
5. Rule, Wilma. 1987. "[Electoral Systems, Contextual Factors and Women's Opportunity for Election to Parliament in Twenty-Three Democracies.](#)" *Political Research Quarterly* 40 (3): 477–98.

Questions

- What is "ethnicity" and why is it a main source of national conflicts?
- Theories of ethnic conflict are usually premised on opposite assumptions. Where the theory of cultural pluralism conceives ethnic conflict as the clash of incompatible values, modernization and economic-interest theories of conflict as the struggle of resources and opportunities; others have posited "ancient hatred" and elite persuasion as sources of conflict.
- What is the best electoral design to contain ethnic conflicts? What is the best electoral system to ensure fair representation of ethnic minorities in government?
- Institutional remedies for the underrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities often assume distinct forms. Women tend to receive candidate quotas in political parties, whereas ethnic groups are granted reserved seats in legislatures. Discuss why there is a divergence between the modes of gender and ethnic representation in different countries.
- What is the best electoral system to ensure the women's political representation?

Week 12: Apr 6 / Digital Democracy

Required Reading

1. Moore, Martin. 2019. "[Protecting Democratic Legitimacy in a Digital Age.](#)" *The Political Quarterly* 90 (S1): 92–106.
2. Cheeseman, Nic, Gabrielle Lynch, and Justin Willis. 2018. "[Digital Dilemmas: The Unintended Consequences of Election Technology.](#)" *Democratization* 25 (8): 1397–1418.
3. Humprecht, Edda. 2018. "[Where 'Fake News' Flourishes: A Comparison Across Four Western Democracies.](#)" *Information, Communication & Society* 0 (0): 1–16.
4. Placek, Matthew Alan. 2017. "[#Democracy: Social Media Use and Democratic Legitimacy in Central and Eastern Europe.](#)" *Democratization* 24 (4): 632–50.
5. Greitens, Sheena Chestnut. 2013. "[Authoritarianism Online: What Can We Learn from Internet Data in Nondemocracies?](#)" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 46 (2): 262–70.

Recommended Reading

1. Aro, Jessikka. 2016. "[The Cyberspace War: Propaganda and Trolling as Warfare Tools.](#)" *European View* 15 (1): 121–32.
2. Howard, Philip N., Samuel Woolley, and Ryan Calo. 2018. "[Algorithms, Bots, and Political Communication in the US 2016 Election: The Challenge of Automated Political Communication for Election Law and Administration.](#)" *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 15 (2): 81–93.

3. Tucker, Joshua A., Yannis Theocharis, Margaret E. Roberts, and Pablo Barberá. 2017. "[From Liberation to Turmoil: Social Media And Democracy](#)." *Journal of Democracy* 28 (4): 46–59.

Questions

- Does digital technology promote or disrupt democracy?
- Is digital authoritarianism on the rise?
- Is it possible to regulate the growing cyber-chaos?

Week 13: Apr 13 /Course Overview

No required reading

Course Policies

Submission and Grading of Assignments

MA and PhD students

While the course requirements are identical for MA and PhD students, I expect a different level of understanding and engagement depending on a student's level of graduate study. MA students are expected to focus primarily on the assigned readings read recommended literature only for the research papers. PhD students are expected to read the recommended readings each week, draw upon those readings and respond in greater depth in their written assignments and oral presentations.

Citation and Style Guidelines

All written work ought to follow the author-date citation style according to the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) available through the McMaster University Library site.

In-class Behaviour

All cell-phones must be turned off and stowed away during class.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
69-0	F

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due dates. Assignments turned in after the beginning of the class will not earn full credit. **5% will be deducted each day after the submission deadline. Late assignments will not be accepted 48 hours after the original due date.** If you anticipate having problems meeting these deadlines, please contact me before the assignment is due to discuss your situation. To avoid late penalties and ensure fairness, written documentation of your emergency may be required

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should contact me via email as soon as possible to work out an alternative assignment or submission deadline.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.