

The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his/her students to recognize inconvenient facts—I mean the facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions (Max Weber)

INTA 3203 • Fall 2020 • Comparative Politics • Asynchronous Course

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Office Hours: By appointment through Bluejeans or Zoom

Syllabus can change at discretion of the faculty

Zero tolerance for plagiarism and lack of citations in formal written work

Lectures will include material not covered in readings and not all readings will be covered in lectures. You are responsible for readings and lectures.

Hello! I am very happy to be teaching this class. Comparative Politics is both the most interesting field in social science and also a method that helps us understand causation and make comparisons with inference. The comparative method is the core of comparative politics and what appeals to so many of us that make this our passion, interest, and career. It helps us develop and solve puzzles. It helps us to think critically about the role and potential of government, society, and power. Comparative politics is a very broad field that includes international comparative research on democracy, gender, inequality, economic development, elections, authoritarianism, class, the state, comparative social policy, etc. Why is Costa Rica richer and more democratic than Honduras? Why are some countries parliamentary democracies with prime ministers while other democracies have presidents and senates? Does it matter? Why is 40% of the Argentine legislature made up of women politicians compared to only 8% in Brazil? Why did revolution spread across North Africa and the Middle East in recent years? How did Robert Mugabe get re-elected so often in Zimbabwe? What are the causes and effects of binomial voting districts? Why are populists so en vogue in 2020? Why do some governments do much better than others in dealing with Covid-19?

This class introduces the method and concepts and some cases of comparative politics. After mastering the method and concepts through a lecture and readings, we practice the comparative method with group research to explain variation in the response to Covid-19 across countries. This exciting research will generate interesting individual and group findings on an important developing global issue. One of the principal themes of this course will be populism and the global rise in authoritarianism and ethnonationalism, often cloaked in religion. The battle between cosmopolitanism and tribalism was pronounced dead 20 years ago, with cosmopolitanism and economic liberalism proclaimed the End of History. We were very wrong and cosmopolitanism and economic liberalism are endangered. Is this transitory? Illusory? Ephemeral? Is fascism possible again as a viable alternative for those who seek order and protection of traditional power relations?

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- Students will gain a working knowledge of the comparative method, inference, variables, and will use scientific methodology to make claims about causation and inference.
- Student will demonstrate the role of institutions and electoral rules in political outcomes.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and theories of comparative politics.

- Students will demonstrate an advanced understanding of populism, authoritarianism, fascism, and democracy.
- Students will demonstrate the skill and ability to work in teams in creating inference about the causes of effective government policy and implementation to succeed against Covid-19.

Books, required: This course will use 2 very short books (and inexpensive) that you must purchase plus PDFs of additional readings.

1. *Kenneth Minogue. Politics: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford. 1995*
2. *Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser. Populism: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford 2017.*
3. Brief readings sent out per week from *The Economist* or other source that will be uploaded to FILES in CANVAS.
4. PDFs in FILES. See readings below.

Written Assignment:

Your written assignment will incorporate two foreign films set in different countries and the comparative method. You will select and watch two films that have a similar political theme. You will give a one page comparative summary of the films and then 2 pages reviewing two academic articles dealing with your topic. Your paper will then feature 4 pages to explain a research project based on the theme that fits one of the two models of the comparative method and 1-2 pages of preliminary research and data. Finally, you are to include a 1-page conclusion; 6-7 compelling pages total. Turned in electronically in ASSIGNMENTS.

Group assignment. Groups of 4 will work on MSSD and MDSD examinations of the COVID-19 response in different countries. Each student will have their own case. Each group will prepare a short 12-minute presentation to give to class. Grade will be on content and delivery. A grading rubric will be provided.

Grading:

Midterm:	25%
Film Assignment	25%
Final exam:	25%
Group Project	25%

The first week of class will be recorded presentations. Thereafter, we will decide on a time that is best for students and you will be welcome to join for “class”, though not in any way required. I hope to meet with each of you in Zoom or Bluejeans at least once or twice during the semester and to meet with each group for the projects. The last month of class will have very limited assigned reading, if any. Students will be working on their group projects and doing the necessary reading for their individual cases.

Week 1, August 17. The comparative method. Why we compare countries? How we do it? Readings: PDFs. Alexander Stafford, “Comparative Analysis Within Political Science”, “FSU Digital: Chapter 8, Comparative Politics.”

Week 2, August 24. Green and Luermann: *Comparative Politics of the Global South*, Chapter 1 (PDF). Samuel Huntington: "The Goals of Development."(PDF).

Week 3, August 31. Minogue *Politics*, Pages 1-51.

Week 4, September 7. Minogue *Politics*, Pages 52 to end.

Week 5, September 14. Mudde and Kaltwasser, *Populism*, Pages 1-61. Film paper due on September 20 midnight.

Week 6, September 21. Mudde and Kaltwasser, *Populism*, Pages 62 to end.

Week 7, September 28. Connor "Ethnonationalism" and Huntington "The Goals of Development." Midterm. Essay.

Week 8, October 5. Bowman "Kuznets", and Bowman, Lehoucq & Mahoney "Measuring Democracy".

Week 9, October 12. Arocena and Bowman (entire book *Lessons from Latin America* as PDF in FILES), "Gender and Representation" Ch. 2, and "Counting Votes", Ch. 3.

Week 10, October 17. Arocena and Bowman, "Demilitarization" Ch. 4, "Delayed Revolution" Ch. 8, and "Pension Reform" Ch. 9.

Week 11-15. Work on group projects with weekly progress reports due.

Final exam after Thanksgiving. Remote. Essay exam.