

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 2023 • Comparative Politics

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Tuesday – Thursday 2:00 to 3:15 760 Spring Street 235

Office Hours • Tuesdays noon to 1 pm or by appointment

Syllabus can change at discretion of the faculty: Flexibility important this semester

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.

NO SCREENS OF ANY KIND IN CLASS WHEN WE MEET IN PERSON—phones, tablets, laptops.

PERIOD. Failure to follow this policy will result in asking you to leave class.

Hello! I am excited 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 will take a deeper look at democracy and the current demise of full, liberal democracy around the globe. Then, pairs of students will develop comparative analysis and present to the class in the form of a TedX Talk.

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 connect linkages between an historical novel and concepts and theories of comparative politics.

Books, required: This course will use 2 books that you must purchase plus PDFs of additional readings.

Doing Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Approaches and Issues, 3rd edition. Timothy C. Lim.

Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy. Michael Albertus and Victor Menaldo.

Assignment: Students in pairs will develop a comparative politics analysis using MSSD or MDSD

and will select two cases for analysis. Students will meet with professor before October 15 to finalize topics and cases. Each pair will write a 10-12 page analysis and present a TedX Talk on their topic and cases. More information to come.

Grading:

Midterm:	30%
TedX Talk:	15%
Paper	15%
Final exam:	40%

Final exam is cumulative. I cannot stress enough that exam content will include reading not covered in class and class material not covered in reading. Lecture slides will NOT be shared.

Schedule of Readings, Exams, and Assignments

8/22	INTRODUCTION	10/12	Democracy, Chapter 4
8/24	Huntington, the Goals of Development (in Files in Canvas)	10/17	Midterm
8/29	Lim, Chapter 1	10/19	Democracy, Chapter 5
8/31	Lim, Chapter 2	10/24	Democracy, Chapter 6
9/5	Lim, Chapter 3	10/26	Democracy, Chapter 7
9/7	Lim, Chapter 4	10/31	Democracy, Chapter 8
9/12	Lim, Chapter 5	11-2	Democracy, Chapter 9
9/14	Lim, Chapter 6	11/7	TBA
9/19	Lim, Chapter 7	11/9	TBA
9/21	Lim, Chapter 8	11/14	TedX Talks
9/26	Lim, Chapter 9	11/16	TedX Talks
9/28	Democracy, Chapter 1	11/21	TedX Talks
10/3	Democracy, Chapter 2	11/23	Thanksgiving
10/5	Democracy, Chapter 3	11/28	TedX Talks
10/10	No class, fall break	11/30	TedX Talks
		12/5	TedX Talks

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to come to class and to come prepared to discuss the readings.

ADAPTS: We strive to help every student succeed. (<http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/>)

Honor Code statement: You are responsible for understanding and avoiding plagiarism in your written work.

- *Plagiarizing is defined by Webster's as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source."*
If caught plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code.
- GT Honor Code at <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9>