

**INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS**  
**Political Science 0300**  
**University of Pittsburgh • Fall 2017**  
**TR 12-12:50pm • 121 Lawrence Hall**

**Professor:** Jae-Jae Spoon

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**Office Hours:** Tues. and Thurs. 1-2:30pm or by appointment in 4441 Posvar Hall

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**Office Hours:** Weds. 10am-12pm in 4434 Posvar Hall

Lecture is scheduled for TR from 12-12:50 in 121 LH. You are also required to attend one recitation section, which are:

0300-1075 (25636)	F 9-9:50 am	229 Victoria Bldg
0300-1080 (25637)	F 10-10:50 am	229 Victoria Bldg
0300-1085 (25638)	F 12-12:50 pm	142 CL
0300-1090 (25639)	F 1-1:50 pm	142 CL

### **Course Description**

Why are some countries authoritarian regimes while others are democracies? Is there a democratic political culture? What's the difference between a president and a prime minister? Why do voters in Europe have so many more options than voters in the US? In this course, you will be introduced to these and other key questions and themes in the study of comparative politics. We will explore regime types, political culture, institutions and political behavior and draw examples from authoritarian states, developing, and developed democracies. We will approach the study of comparative politics through the scientific method which focuses on generalizing across countries, identifying causes and effects, and using empirical evidence. One of the goals of this course is for you to become critical consumers of information about politics. This course will serve as a useful foundation for all future courses you take in comparative politics at Pitt. Introduction to Comparative Politics fulfills two General Education requirements: Social Science and International/Foreign Culture (COM).

### **Reading Materials**

1) There is one required book for this course, which is available at the Pitt Bookstore. If you choose to purchase the text on-line, be sure to buy the 8<sup>th</sup> edition.

- Rod Hague, Martin Harrop, and John McCormick. 2016. *Political Science: A Comparative Introduction*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [Denoted as HHM].

2) You will also be required to read articles (both academic and current event) and other book chapters throughout the semester, all of which will be available on the CourseWeb site, denoted [CW] below.

3) As part of learning about comparative politics, you are strongly encouraged to follow international current events throughout the course. We will be discussing relevant world events in lecture and section and they may appear on the quizzes/exams. There are many great on-line resources for international news, including: *New York Times*—[www.nyt.com](http://www.nyt.com), *Economist*—[www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com), BBC—[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), *Der Spiegel*—[www.spiegel.de/international](http://www.spiegel.de/international); CNN—[www.CNN.com](http://www.CNN.com); Al Jazeera—[www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com). Feel free to check out non-English language sources as well. Some of these may have a limited number of free articles you can browse from the website, but there are student subscriptions and unlimited access through the library for most. I'd also suggest becoming a regular NPR listener. Our local station is WESA, 90.5 FM—[www.wesa.fm/www.npr.org](http://www.wesa.fm/www.npr.org).

**Evaluation**

Your grade in this course will be comprised of the following. Grades will be calculated on a scale of A-F, broken down as follows:

97-100=A+	87-89=B+	77-79=C+	67-69=D+	59 and below=F
94-96=A	84-86=B	74-76=C	64-66=D	
90-93=A-	80-83=B-	70-73=C-	60-63=D-	

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	25%
Constitution Paper	30%
Quizzes (4)	15% (3.75% each)
Recitation/Participation	10%

\*All work will be weighted according to the break-down above. Your final grade will thus be out of 100 possible points.

**1) Exams.** There will be two in-class exams. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay. The midterm will cover all of the material from the first half of the class. The final exam will be cumulative. The midterm will be Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> and the final will be Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>.

**2) Constitution Paper.** During the second-half of the class, you will be working on a constitution project. This will be a 6-7 pg. paper (plus bibliography) and will be due on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> in section. You

will turn it in on CourseWeb and bring a hard copy to class. A draft of part of the paper will be due on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. Details TBA.

**3) Quizzes.** There will be **5 unannounced quizzes**. The quizzes will be in section and may be at any point during class. You will take the quizzes through CourseWeb using a web-enabled device. We will drop the lowest one (only 4 will be counted). These quizzes will cover material from readings and lecture from the week's lectures, textbook and recitation readings, and current events. They are a way for us to check in and see if you are doing the readings, coming to class, understanding things, and keeping up with the news. There will be no make-ups.

**4) Recitation.** Your recitation grade will be 10% of your total grade and will reflect your participation in recitation sections. Make sure you come to section prepared to participate, ask questions, and discuss the readings and relevant current events.

### Class Policies

**Class Expectations.** I expect you to come to class prepared to actively listen (lecture) and participate (section). When you're in class, I expect you to be fully engaged. You may use your laptop or other device to take notes, but if you are using it for something other than taking notes (and distracting other students), we may not allow you to continue using it. Please turn your phone off while you are in class and do not text, check Facebook, Twitter, or look up information that is not relevant to class. If you plan to come to class to do something else, I suggest that you not come. Please read the textbook and any other assigned lecture readings before lecture and do the recitation readings before your weekly section. Make sure to bring the recitation readings to section each week. You may bring hard copies or have them on your electronic device. To do well in this course, you need come to lecture and section and do the readings.

**Attendance.** Given the size of the class, attendance will not be taken in lecture. I will not post PowerPoint slides on CourseWeb and will not provide you with notes. It is also not the responsibility of the TA to provide you with notes, so please don't ask. If you miss lecture or section, please ask a classmate for notes. There will, however, be announced quizzes in the recitation section that will be based on lecture material. You are required to attend your weekly recitation section, where attendance will be taken within the first **10 minutes** of class. Should you arrive after 10 minutes, this will be counted as an absence. You are allowed **two absences** from your recitation during the semester. You do not need to tell the TA why you will be absent or bring any sort of document to justify your absence. Each additional absence will result in a 1% deduction from your Recitation/Participation grade. If there is a circumstance in which you will be absent more than twice (e.g. Pitt team travel) please discuss this with your TA **in advance**. In order to have any additional absence excused, you will need to provide documentation.

**Email.** Please make sure you check your **Pitt email** regularly. If you do not use your Pitt account, make sure you link your Pitt account to whichever email address you do use. We will send email

messages to the class periodically and will use your official Pitt email address. If you want to contact me or your TA, please use our Pitt addresses above and do not email us through CourseWeb.

**CourseWeb.** All materials handed out in class will be posted here. We will also post announcements, links, graphs/tables shown in class, and other useful information. So, check CourseWeb often!

**Extensions and Alternate Dates.** In general, I will not allow extensions on assignments or alternate exam dates. However, should you find yourself in a situation where you will not be able to turn an assignment in on-time or be present for an exam, please discuss this with your TA as soon as you can, and not the day the assignment is due or the day of the exam or afterwards.

**Late Policy.** A late assignment will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day it is late. After 1 week, it will no longer be accepted.

**Grade Appeals.** Should you want to appeal a grade you've received, it must be in writing. You will need to explain why you believe you deserve a grade that is different than the one you received. The written appeal should be turned in to your TA, who will then schedule a time to meet with you to discuss your appeal. All final decisions will be made in consultation with me.

**Academic Integrity.** Students in this course are expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated by the instructor, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. More information and the complete policy can be found at <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>.

**Accommodations.** If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412-648-7890, 412-228-5347 for P3 ASL users), [drsrecp@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecp@pitt.edu), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, please see <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/>

**Classroom Recording.** To ensure free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor. Any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

## Syllabus

### Part 1: Introduction to Comparative Politics

#### **Aug. 29. Introduction and Preliminaries.**

No readings.

#### **Aug. 31. What is comparative politics? How do we study comparative politics?**

HHM, ch. 1 & ch. 5

*Recitations (9/1): Introductions and Discussing Comparative Politics*

#### **Sept. 5 & 7. How do we study comparative politics? (Continued)**

HHM, chaps. 5 & 6

*Recitations (9/8): Does Money Make You Happy?*

"Where Money Seems to Talk." *The Economist*. July 14, 2007. Pgs. 63-4. [CW]

### Part 2: Regimes, Political Culture, and Participation

#### **Sept. 12. *A Whisper to a Roar***

Background information on film and featured individuals—'About the Film' on <https://awhispertoar.com> [CW]

\*Extra Credit: due in section on 9/15—According to the film, what is/isn't democracy?

#### **Sept. 14 & 19. Democracies**

HHM, ch. 3 (skip pgs. 48-54)

Robert Dahl. 2005. "What Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?" *Political Science Quarterly*. 120.2: 187-97. [CW]

*Recitations (9/15): What is a Democracy?*

Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is...and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy*. 2.3: 75-88 [CW]

"The March of Democracy Slows." *The Economist*. Aug. 20, 2016. [CW]

## **Sept. 21. Transitions to Democracy and Backsliding**

HHM, pgs. 48-54

Guillermo O'Donnell. 1994. "Delegative Democracy." *Journal of Democracy*. 5.1: 55-69. [CW]

*Recitations [9/22]: Democracies No Longer?*

Larry Diamond. 2015. "Facing Up to the Democratic Recession." *Journal of Democracy*. 26.1: 141-155. [CW]

"What Comes after a Farcical 'Election' in Venezuela." *The Economist*. Aug. 5, 2017.

Nicholas Casey. "Venezuela's New, Powerful Assembly Takes Over Legislature's Duties." *New York Times*. Aug. 18, 2017.

## **Sept. 26 & 28. Authoritarian Regimes**

HHM, ch. 4, pgs. 282-284, 299-302, 338-340

\*Evening showing of *Persepolis*. TBD. Or watch on your own.

As background, please read/watch the following:

Joel Krieger, ed. 2001. "Iran." *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Pgs. 431-34. [CW]

"Iranian Revolution." <https://youtu.be/kY0ixG94cHE> [CW]

Marjane Satrapi—*Persepolis*. "Historical Context." <https://satrapi1.wordpress.com/about/> [CW]

*Recitations (9/29): Life in an Authoritarian Regime*

### **Oct. 3 & 5. Political Culture**

HHM, ch. 12

Robert Putnam, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti. 1994. *Making Democracy Work*. Chapters 1 & 4 (pp. 3-14 and 83-120). [CW]

*Recitations (10/6): Clash of Cultures?*

Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. 2003. "The True Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Policy*. March/April. Pgs. 63-70. [CW]

**Oct. 10. Fall break. Mon. classes meet on Tues. No class.**

### **Oct. 12. Civil Society and Participation**

HHM, ch. 13 & 18

Lisa Anderson. 2011. "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya." *Foreign Affairs*. 90.3: 2-7. [CW]

*Recitations (10/13): Civil Society: Too Much of a Good Thing?*

Sheri Berman. 1997. "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World Politics*. 49 (April). Pgs. 401-29. [CW]

**Oct. 17. Catch-up and midterm review**

**Oct. 19. Midterm**

*Recitations (10/20): Assign Paper, Research and Writing in Political Science*

Henry Farrell. 2010. "Good Writing in Political Science: An Undergraduate Student's Short Illustrated Primer." [CW]

## Part 3: Institutions and Actors

**Read the following as an Introduction to Part 3 of the course:**

Arend Lijphart. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in 36 Countries*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Ch. 1. Pgs. 1-8. [CW]

### **Oct. 24 & 26. Multi-Level Governance**

HHM, ch. 11

*Recitations (10/27): What's Up with Catalonia?*

Omar G. Encarnación. 2004. "Democracy and Federalism in Spain." *Mediterranean Quarterly*. 15.1: 58-74. [CW]

"Spain and Catalonia: The Trials of Keeping a Country Together." *The Economist*. Nov. 24, 2012. [CW]

"Playing Chicken: Catalonia Plans an Independence Vote Whether Spain Likes It or Not." *The Economist*. July 15, 2017. [CW]

### **Oct. 31 & Nov 2. Legislatures (One House or Two?)**

HHM, ch. 8

*Recitations (11/3): What's a Senate Good For?*

Meg Russell. 2001. "What are Second Chambers for?" *Parliamentary Affairs*. 54: 442-458. [CW]

Douglas Dalby. 2013. "Irish Say No to No Senate in Blow to Prime Minister." *New York Times*. Oct. 5. [CW]

### **Nov. 7 & 9. Executive I: Presidential, Parliamentary and Semi-Presidential Systems**

HHM, ch. 9 (skip pgs. 150-156)

*Recitations (11/10): Presidents and Prime Ministers: The Good and the Bad*

Juan Linz. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy*. 1.1: 51-69. [CW]

"A Bold Move." *The Economist*. May 31, 2014. [CW]

## **Nov. 14 & 16. Executive II: Parliamentary Systems and Government Formation**

Review HHM, ch. 9 (focus on pgs. 150-156)

WATCH IN CLASS: British Prime Minister's Question Time  
(<https://www.c-span.org/series/?PrimeMinisterQue>)

*Recitations (11/17): Forming a Government in Germany/Netherlands*

Articles—TBA

*\*Draft of paper due on CW and hard copy to TA in section. The draft is to include the structure, executive and legislature sections of the paper.*

## **Nov. 21. Elections and Electoral Systems I**

HHM, ch. 16

**Thanksgiving Break—no class on 11/23 or recitations on 11/24**

## **Nov. 28 & 30. Electoral Systems II**

HHM, ch. 16

*Recitations (12/1): Why Change the Rules?*

David Denemark. 2001. "Choosing MMP in New Zealand: Explaining the 1993 Electoral Reform." In *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* M.S. Shugart and M.P. Wattenberg, eds. New York: Oxford UP. Pgs. 70-95. [CW]

"With Different Rules, Some Big Elections in 2015 Would Have Had Very Different Outcomes."  
*The Economist*. Dec. 28, 2015. [CW]

## **Dec. 5 & 7. Political Parties and Party Systems**

HHM, ch. 15 & pgs. 286-294

"Empty Vessels?" *The Economist*. July 24, 1999. Pgs. 51-2. [CW]

"The March of Europe's Little Trumps." *The Economist*. Dec. 12, 2015. [CW]

**\*\*Constitutional Design Paper Due in Recitation on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>\*\***

*Recitations (12/8): Designing a Constitution Discussion*

**FINAL EXAM – MONDAY, DEC. 11 – 12-1:50PM**