

# **POLS 103: Introduction to Comparative Politics**

Department of Politics  
Sewanee: The University of the South

## **Prof. Aaron Gold**

Office Hours: TR 11:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Office Location: 302 Carnegie  
Email: [ajgold@sewanee.edu](mailto:ajgold@sewanee.edu)

**Easter (Spring) 2024**

Walsh-Ellett 310  
Time: TR 1:30 – 2:45 pm

## **Course Description**

This course is an introduction into the academic study of comparative politics. The goal is to give students a theoretical and substantive basis for understanding and analyzing the enduring questions of comparative politics. Examples of topics include understanding the modern state, questioning why some states are democratic while others maintain authoritarian regimes, the effects of different models of economic development, the conditions that lead to violence from sub-state actors, and how salient identities contribute to political participation. Throughout the course, we will use the concepts from the readings to explore in-depth in the United Kingdom, Russia, China, Iran, Japan, Germany, France, the United States, and others from a comparative perspective.

## **Course objectives**

By the end of the course, students will gain basic knowledge and understanding of comparative politics, its subfields, and core questions. They will learn how to think critically, analyze and then evaluate how various theoretical models explain comparisons across states. Students will learn how to assess the scholarly community's findings and theoretical explanations for the main questions surrounding comparative politics.

## **General education objectives**

Students will learn how to describe theoretical paradigms, apply theoretical concepts to empirical phenomena, think critically, and analyze competing theories and empirical evidence.

## **Required Textbooks**

O'Neil, Patrick H. et al. (2021). *Essentials of Comparative Politics, Seventh Edition*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company (**called "Essentials" hereafter**)

O'Neil, Patrick H. et al. (2021). *Cases in Comparative Politics, Seventh Edition*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company (**called "Cases" hereafter**)

## **Classroom Policies and Expectations**

No tobacco products, food, beverages (except water in a closed container), or gum are allowed. Profanity or any prejudicial slurs will not be tolerated. Use of cell phones or smart phones or other electronic devices for non-course-related communication during class is prohibited. Students are expected to attend every class period and be on time. Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss them. **Four unexcused absences**

**will result in a zero for your participation grade and an email to the Dean of Students to recommend you for an “F” in the course.**

### **Communication**

My primary mode of communication is email. I will not answer emails with casual or informal, improper, or unprofessional language. Your email must have a salutation, body, and a manual signature. Automated signatures in the footer do not count. **If you do not follow these guidelines I will not read or respond to your email. I do not answer emails after final grades are posted.**

### **COVID-19**

I used to require masks during class. I have a “pre-existing” condition that makes me high risk for contracting COVID. Masks are optional for our class. However, I may change this policy and ask you all to wear one. I will probably ask you to wear a mask during office hours. COVID-19 is a serious threat to public health. **If you believe you have COVID or you were in the vicinity of someone who tested positive, please do not come to class. I promise you that I will do everything I can to help you make-up what you missed. Please only come to class once you have completed a negative test. Please take this seriously.**

### **Statement of Accommodations**

The University of the South is committed to fostering respect for the diversity of the University community and the individual rights of each member of that community. In this spirit, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the University seeks to provide students with disabilities with the reasonable accommodations needed to ensure equal access to the programs and activities of the University.

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as early in the semester as possible. If approved for accommodations, the student has the responsibility to present their instructors with a copy of the official letter of academic accommodations. Please note: Accommodation letters should be dated for the current term; accommodations will not be provided without a current accommodation letter; and accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

SAS is located in the Office of the Dean of Students (931.598.1229). Additional information about accommodations can be found at <https://new.sewanee.edu/campus-life/playing/wellness-commons/university-wellness-center/student-accessibility-services/>. Students who have questions about physical *accessibility* should inform their instructors so that we can ensure an accessible, safe, and effective environment.

### **Title IX and Sex Discrimination Policy**

Sex Discrimination is a violation of federal Title IX law and University policy. Disclosure of sex discrimination to University faculty, staff, or student leaders (i.e. proctors, Orientation Leaders, FYP mentors) is not confidential and these individuals are required to make reports, including names and circumstances, to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. To report incidents of sex discrimination, including sexual violence, stalking, and/or sexual harassment, please file a report

at [ReportSexualMisconduct.sewanee.edu](http://ReportSexualMisconduct.sewanee.edu) or contact the Title IX Coordinator (Dr. Sylvia Gray, [titleix@sewanee.edu](mailto:titleix@sewanee.edu), Woods Lab 138, 931-598-1420). For more information on Title IX, the [Title Policy and Procedure](#), [related policies such as mandatory reporting](#), or [resources for support and confidential disclosure](#), please refer to the Title IX website: [new.sewanee.edu/titleix](http://new.sewanee.edu/titleix)

### **Wellness Center resources**

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as stress, strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance misuse, mood changes, difficulty concentrating, and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Free counseling, psychological, and psychiatric services are available at the University Wellness Center, and treatment does work. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on campus at <https://new.sewanee.edu/campus-life/flourishing/wellness-commons/university-wellness-center/>.

### **Honor Code**

You agreed to follow the Honor Code when you matriculated. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are violations of the Honor Code and will be treated as such. If you ever have a question about an assignment or need additional help, please ask for assistance rather than jeopardize your academic career.

### **The Writing Center**

The Writing Center, located on the main floor of duPont Library, provides objective peer support to Sewanee students who seek assistance with their writing projects. The student tutors can help at any stage in the writing process, including topic development, rough drafts, final drafts, and revisions. Students should bring a copy of the professor's written instructions to the meeting. The Writing Center will not accept papers that are dropped off.

### **The Center for Speaking and Listening**

The Center for Speaking and Listening, located on the main floor of duPont Library, provides peer support to Sewanee students who seek assistance with their presentations.

### **Research Help Center**

The Research Help Center in duPont Library is available for all of your research paper, project, and presentation needs. Our librarians can help with each stage of the research process, including topic selection and narrowing, outlining, finding resources, interpreting academic resources, avoiding plagiarism, and integrating research into your paper or presentation. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments with a research expert are strongly encouraged. You can find more details and sign up for appointments at [library.sewanee.edu/researchhelplibrarians](http://library.sewanee.edu/researchhelplibrarians).

### **Extra Credit (+2 points maximum on your final grade)**

**Extra credit can be turned in anytime, but is due on 4/25 at 11:59 pm CST via Brightspace, the last day of classes.**

Extra credit opportunities include writing a summary or analysis of a recent event or issue in comparative politics broadly defined. Examples of topics include democratization, economic development, salient identities, elections, political violence, and institutional design. The proper

format is 600 words (roughly two pages double-spaced), Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and proper in-text citations with a bibliography. They will be graded as completed or not completed. The extra credit papers need to be in your own words. Limit the number of direct quotes. Cite appropriately always with the author's last name, publication year, and page number for direct quotes and when citing something specific to that page. You must cite appropriately for your extra credit to be accepted. If you do not turn in your extra credit in the right format I will email you to resubmit. I will only give you one chance to resubmit an assignment. You may not do the same extra credit assignment for more than one of my classes.

### **Notice on School-Sponsored, Medical, Weather-Related, Family Emergency, or Other Excused Absences**

My personal philosophy, one that I believe very strongly in, is that you should be treated like adults. If something happens and you are not able to make it to class I will be more than happy to work with you; however, you need to communicate with me and keep me informed of your situation. Life happens: you get sick, someone you love passes away, a family member is in need, you have an interview. I consider myself to be very understanding so if you are not able to bring me a note right away, it is okay; just please keep me informed the best you can through email and then later when you are able to, please bring or send me an excused note. If it is a medical note, **please cross out your personal information.** If you bring me an excused note you will be allowed to make up the work that you missed. For long-term situations, I am more than happy to work with you. **Four unexcused absences will result in a zero for your participation grade and an email to the Dean of Students to recommend you for an "F" in the course.**

### **Right to Alter the Syllabus**

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter and/or amend this syllabus, as necessary. Students will be notified by email and/or Blackboard of any such revisions, alterations, and/or amendments.

## **Grading**

The requirements for this course include a midterm exam (20%), a final exam (25%), a case study paper (40%), and ten take-home quizzes on Brightspace (15%).

### **Quizzes: 15%**

You are required to complete **all ten take-home, open-book and open-note quizzes** worth 1.5% each. You are not allowed to work with others. The quizzes must be done on your own. The quizzes will mainly come from the “Essentials” textbook chapters with additional questions from the class lectures. The answers will come from the textbook. Students that googled in previous semesters sometimes found the answer, but mostly they did not fare well. There is not a “best of five out of six or seven” option. You have to decide beforehand what quizzes to take. You can take the quizzes whenever you want until the last day of class. Students that scored the best paced themselves throughout the semester. **4/25 at 11:59 pm CT is the last time to take all ten quizzes.**

### **Exam #1 (Midterm): 20%**

The midterm exam will be an in-class exam of short answer and essay questions. There will be five short answer questions and two essay options from which you will pick one. **The midterm is on 3/5 during our normal class time.**

### **Exam #2 (Final): 25%**

The final exam will also be an in-class exam of short answer and essay questions. There will be five short answer questions and two essay options from which you will pick one. It will not be cumulative. **The final is on 4/30 from 9-11 am.**

## **Most Similar Systems (Method of Difference) Case Study: 40%**

**Due Dates at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace**

### **Part I.**

2/8 – Research Question, Two Cases, Justification, Dependent Variable (5% of your final grade)

### **Part II.**

3/21 – Rough Draft and Outline (5% of your final grade)

### **Part III.**

4/18 – Final Paper (30% of your final grade)

Each student is required to complete a most similar systems (method of difference) case study of two states (countries). The goal of this assignment is: 1) to develop expertise on two states, 2) to apply your knowledge of comparative politics concepts to critically evaluate the causes of an empirical phenomenon. This assignment is designed to be completed in steps over the course of the semester. The final product is a 1,000-word paper (a little over four pages double-spaced) that uses the comparative method to propose a research question and answers it with a similar systems research design analysis.

### **PART I. Research Question and Reviewer Evaluation – TWO THINGS DUE on 2/8 at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace (worth 9/15%):**

#### **1) Research question, two states, justification for two states, dependent variable**

Turn in your research question, the variation in your dependent variable (the outcome you are looking at), your two states (these are your control variables), and the justification for your two states (this is called case selection). Look below at the example to see what I am looking for. Note: you do not have to pick two states (countries). Most students use states because it is easier. You are welcome to pick, for example, two political parties, two religious, racial, or ethnic groups, two protest movements, two civil conflicts, etc. The research question must be in the realm of comparative politics. Remember, comparative politics is concerned with analyzing the domestic differences across states, not the relationships between them; therefore, questions about why some states go to war, trade, or other interactions are out of bounds for this assignment.

The justification for your two cases is important. Your two cases need to share at least two important similarities. The justifications are called your control variables. The goal is simple. You are picking your two cases because they share important characteristics that might be alternative plausible explanations, but explanations that ultimately do not work, so you want to isolate them. Ultimately, when you make an argument for explaining variation in an outcome (the dependent variable), your explanation (called an independent or explanatory variable), will be something different between these two cases.

For instance, I want to explain democratic transitions and authoritarian resilience. Egypt and Tunisia are two interesting countries because they are both in the Middle East where Tunisia

transitioned and Egypt did not. In order to justify this case selection, I need two similarities. Both are presidential systems and both have a population that is majority-Muslim. The institutions both countries have and their societal religious might be plausible explanations for why a country transitioned to a democracy and why a country stayed authoritarian; however, my eventual argument is going to make the case that institutions and religions are not the cause. I am choosing Egypt and Tunisia because both have the same institutions and the same religion. Therefore, because my research question is “why do countries transition or stay authoritarian?”, by picking Egypt and Tunisia, I can isolate institutions and religion as control variables or alternative plausibly explanations that do not work. In other words, I can “control for them”.

If you are still confused, think about it this way; when someone takes a poll of a population to see how they are going to vote they not only need to ask the respondents how they will vote, they need to ask them questions about their age, gender, race, level of education, and employment. But why? Even though these are two different types of research designs, the concept is the same. In the poll, in order to make sure you have a good representative sample, you do not want an overpopulation of one type of people because that would skew your results. In our comparative research design, we are actively selecting our two cases to isolate any competing explanations.

This assignment does not ask for your explanatory variable, the thing that will explain why one transitioned and one did not, but keep it in mind. When you turn in your rough draft, the explanatory variable will be something different between these two countries. Please turn it in on a Word Document via Brightspace.

**Examples of broad topics include:**

Political regimes, legislative-executive systems, economic development, elections, identity, political violence, electoral systems, authoritarianism, democracy, communism, state capacity, state centralization, economic systems, models of authoritarianism, nationalism, ideology, revolution, civil war, terrorism, performance during the pandemic, variation in governmental policies (e.g., the economy, dealing with the pandemic, education, civil rights, social issues).

**Research Question: example of what I am looking for you to turn-in:**

Research question: Under what conditions do countries transition from an authoritarian to a democratic regime?

	<b>Egypt</b>	<b>Tunisia</b>
<b>Control Variable (Justification) 1:</b> Institutions	Presidential System	Presidential System
<b>Control Variable (Justification) 2:</b> Societal religion	Majority Muslim	Majority Muslim
<b>Dependent Variable (Outcome):</b> Democratic Transitions	Stayed an authoritarian regime	Transitioned to a democracy

**PART II. Rough Draft, Outline – TWO THINGS DUE on 3/21 at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace (worth 5/40%):**

There are two things due. Please turn them in using one document. Write a one-page rough draft of your theory and empirical sections only (no introductory and concluding paragraphs, no background section), and an outline of your research design. The purpose of this assignment is to make sure you are on the right track for the final paper. I am looking for you to turn in two things in one document:

- 1) One-page double-spaced rough draft of your argument (see instructions below)
- 2) Outline of your research design (see example below)

**1) Rough Draft**

The rough draft is a one-page double-spaced page of your theoretical argument and the evidence that you are using for its support. In the rough draft you need to do two things: 1) make a theoretical argument, and 2) bring empirical evidence to support it. You are making an argument about why one variable, called an independent or explanatory variable, explains variation in an outcome. I am also looking for you to describe your mechanism or the link between your explanatory and dependent variable.

For instance, a research question is: under what conditions do states transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes? Tunisia and Egypt are two acceptable states to pick because they both have presidential systems and are predominately Muslim-majority states. The explanatory variable is military independence. Tunisia had an independent military while Egypt's military stayed loyal to the regime.

In your paper, you will: a) theoretically argue that military independence leads to a democratic transition while military loyalty does not; and b) show evidence to support your argument that Tunisia's military independence led to its transition while the Egyptian military's loyalty led to the preservation of its authoritarian regime. Remember to make your argument with your mechanism. The mechanism is the thing that connects the explanatory and dependent variable. The mechanism for this example is patronage. In Egypt, the military stayed loyal because it has a history of economic patronage rewards for sticking with the regime that it did not want to give up. In Tunisia, the military was not only independent of the regime, it was not as fully integrated into the state-based economy and therefore had less to lose. I am not looking for perfection for the rough draft. I am; however, looking for a good honest effort that your argument follows a comparative research design, makes logical sense, and has evidence to support it. The main thing I am looking for is if you have a theory, empirical evidence, and a mechanism.



## 2) Outline

I am also looking for an outline of your paper or research design to turn in. I do this specifically to make sure you are on the right track for the final paper. In the same document, please provide an outline of your paper as follows.

	<b>Tunisia</b>	<b>Egypt</b>
<b>Control Variable 1:</b> Legislative-Executive System	Presidential system	Presidential system
<b>Control Variable 2:</b> Religion (or Identity)	Sunni Islam	Sunni Islam
<b>Explanatory Variable:</b> Military Relationship with Regime	Independent military	Military loyal to the regime
<b>Mechanism (connects EV to DV):</b> patronage/corruption	<b>Small amount of patronage.</b> Military not given economic favors to stay loyal. Less to lose	<b>Large amount of patronage.</b> Military is given state's largest contracts, is interdependent with the state's economy, generals run local governments. More to lose
<b>Dependent Variable (Outcome):</b> Democratic Transition or Not	Did transition	Did not transition

**Part III. Turn in your final paper on 4/18 at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace (worth 30/40%)**

The final paper should be a professionally-written assignment. Do not turn-in an outline only a final paper. I will use the outline example below to describe how to write the final paper. The example explains why the United States performed relatively poorly during the pandemic while Germany performed relatively well. *Note: this is not my personal opinion; it is only an example.*

	<b>United States</b>	<b>Germany</b>
<b>Control Variable 1:</b> Form of Government	Democracy	Democracy
<b>Control Variable 2:</b> Centralization	Federal (not unitary) system	Federal (not unitary) system
<b>Explanatory Variable:</b> Legislative-Executive System	Presidential system	Parliamentary system
<b>Mechanism (connects EV and DV):</b> Divided or united government	<p>Presidential systems = divided government (under Trump Administration).</p> <p>President and Senate are Republican, House is Democratic. Difficult to pass legislation</p>	<p>Parliamentary systems = no divided government. But, Germany (under Merkel) has a coalition-based government.</p> <p>The CDU, CSU, and SPD all worked together to pass legislation quickly.</p>
<b>Dependent Variable (Outcome):</b> Performance During COVID-19	Performed relatively poorly	Performed relatively well

First section: introductory paragraph

The first paragraph should do three things. 1) Introduce your topic and research question; 2) in no more than a few sentences briefly summarize your argument; and then 3) briefly outline the structure of your paper. Your argument is why your explanatory variable affects your dependent variable in the way it does. For instance, in the US-Germany example, the argument is that the US performed poorly because it had a presidential system while Germany performed well because it had a parliamentary system. In your paper, you will elaborate on why aspects of each system had their effect. Keep in mind that writing in the social sciences uses a clear, direct, and simple organizational format. Writing is expository; meaning it is designed to explain.

Second section: case selection (make this section relatively short)

In this short section, you will describe why you selected your two cases. The key to this section is to narrow your focus and show that your two control variables are isolating the key explanatory variable that explains your outcome. In other words, these are rival, but not good enough explanations for your outcome. In the example, the two controls are being a democracy and having a federal system. You will describe how being a democracy does not give us any insight into a state's performance. You will also describe why Germany and the United States having a federal system is *not* a good explanation for how it performed during the pandemic. The

key here is to show, through your research, that the problems are not based on federal, state, and local structures. Make sure in this section to keep it relatively short and keep an eye on the next section, which is the most important. This section sets up your argument in the next section.

**Fourth section: explanatory variable (This is the main part of the paper and the part I will be focusing on).**

First, this section needs to be at least three pages double-spaced. It should be the vast majority of your paper. Here you will make your argument for why your variable explains variation in the outcome you've chosen for your two states. Using the example above, the explanatory variable is legislative-executive system; the US has a presidential system and Germany has a parliamentary system. You will do two things in this section:

- 1) Make a theoretical argument explaining why legislative-executive relations explains pandemic performance, specifically why the United States having a presidential system led to a poor performance and Germany having a parliamentary system led to a better performance
- 2) Provide empirical evidence that the United States presidential system led to a weak performance and the German parliamentary system led to a better performance

How should you go about making your argument? The key is to focus on your mechanism, the thing that connects your explanatory and dependent variable. Think about how your main explanatory variable varies between both countries and then how that connects to variation in the outcome. For example, you might say the United States presidential system performed poorly because it had divided government plus partisanship, making it difficult to pass legislation while Germany's parliamentary system performed well because the prime minister was the leader of what in German politics is called a grand coalition and thus had an easier time enacting legislation. Then, continuing with this example, you will give evidence of:

- 1) How divided government (Republican president, Republican Senate, Democratic House) and partisanship led to a difficult time passing COVID legislation.
- 2) How the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU), and Social Democratic Party (SPD) worked together with Angela Merkel (from CDU) as prime minister to more easily pass COVID legislation.

Remember, you picked the explanatory variable you picked for a reason. For the example, this means you will make an argument explaining why the United States having a presidential system is a *good* explanation for why it performed poorly during the pandemic and why Germany having a parliamentary system is a *good* explanation for why it performed well. The key here is to show why the problems for the United States are mainly attributed to it having a president (not the individual person who is president, the system, or something else) and the success for Germany is mainly attributed to it having a prime minister (not the individual, the system, or something else).

**Section five: short conclusion**

Briefly conclude your paper by summarizing your argument.

### **Paper Format**

The body of the paper is a minimum of 1,000 words (a little over four pages), it is written in Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and is double-spaced. The format is in Microsoft Word. It is turned in on Brightspace. I will not accept papers that are not Microsoft Word and not turned in on Brightspace. Please also write the word count on top.

### **Sources**

Need *five* independent sources of the readings and textbook on the syllabus. The five sources need to be peer-reviewed, meaning, academic in nature. News articles are perfectly fine to have, but they do not count as part of the five academic sources. I do not have a preference for the citation style, I only care that you cite appropriately. Your papers should always be properly cited with the author's last name and publication year. You cite with the author's last name, publication year, and the page number when citing direct quotes or something specific to that page. Please use in-text citations, not footnotes. Please limit your direct quotes.

**Style and proper citations.** The language should also be your own. The paper should not repeat itself or have fluff; every sentence needs to matter. Your paper should also refrain from normative, absolutist, aesthetic, metaphysical, fictionalized, hateful language, personal opinions, hyperbole, platitudes, colloquialisms, and qualifiers. Write in simple, clear, professional language. The paper should use proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, paragraphs, spacing, and syntax. Social science writing is expository. Write using short, clear, direct, easy to understand language. Try to use active voice. Papers that are not properly cited will automatically receive a 50/F.

**Late policy.** The paper is five points off for everyday it is late including weekends and holidays.

**First Assignment Grading Outline (5/40%)**

Item	Points	Points Earned
Research Question	30	
Two Cases and Justification	30	
Dependent Variable. Identify variation in the DV with both states.	40	

**Rough Draft and Outline (5/40%)**

Item	Points	Points Earned
Title	5	
Research Question	5	
Explanatory Variable – Theoretical argument	30	
Explanatory Variable – Evidence for theoretical argument	30	
Dependent Variable. Identify variation in the DV with both states.	30	

**Final Paper Grading Outline (30/40%)**

Item	Points	Points Earned
Introductory paragraph. Introduces topic, gives research question, briefly summarizes argument and gives outline of the paper	10	
Second section. Paper persuasively justifies case selection and explains why the two control variables do not have an effect on the outcome	20	
Explanatory variable. Paper persuasively explains why the explanatory variable has an effect on the outcome and provides empirical evidence for it. 25 points for theory, 25 for evidence.	50	
Style and proper citations. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, paragraph spacing, and syntax	10	

Proper format. Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, double-spaced, Microsoft Word, turned in on Brightspace, five legitimate academic sources	10	
---	----	--

**List of all dates – everything due at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace**

1/23: First day of class

2/8 – Research Question, Two Cases, Dependent Variable

3/5: Midterm

3/7 – Spring break begins

3/17 – Spring break ends

3/21 – Rough draft and outline due

4/18 – Final paper due

4/25: Last day of class

4/25: Five quizzes completed

4/25: Extra credit due

4/30: Final exam from 9-11am

## Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

### I. Introduction, Theory, and Foundations

#### **Part 1: Introduction**

1/23: Introduction

- No readings

Day 2: Introduction to Comparative Politics

- Essentials: Chapter 1: Introduction

*Day 3: Discussion: Introduction, Part Two*

- Cases: Chapter 1: Introduction (skim!)
- Discussion Topic: “COVID-19: Policy Response in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico: Three Different National-Subnational Approaches” by Julie VanDusky-Allen, Olga Shvestova, and Andrei Zhirnov. Guest Post in *Duck of Minerva*, July 2, 2020.

#### **Part 2: The State**

Day 4: The origins of the modern state

- Tilly, Charles (1985). “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in *Bringing the State Back In*. Evans et al. (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969-1986.
  - Focus on trying to answer two questions: 1) how does Tilly argue states historically formed? 2) what actions do states perform?

Day 5: States: political order, legitimacy, and capacity

- Essentials: Chapter 2
  - Focus on the different forms of legitimacy, and how different combinations of state capacity and autonomy relate to each other (44-53)

*Day 6: Discussion: The United Kingdom in Comparative Perspective*

- Cases: Chapter 2: United Kingdom, pages 35-79
  - What factors influenced the development of the modern UK state? Does Tilly’s model of war-making leading to state-making fit?
  - The UK has a hereditary monarchy and a parliamentary system; however, does the UK have different political norms than the US?
  - Scottish independence from the UK (which failed) and the UK’s exit from Europe (which passed) have been major events in the past ten years. How have these events characterized British identity?



### Part 3: Identity

#### Day 7: Ethnic and National Identity

- Essentials: Chapter 3: Nations and Society, pages 60-76
  - Focus on understanding the difference between ethnic identity, nationalism, and patriotism

#### Day 8: Political Attitudes and Culture

- Essentials: Chapter 3: Nations and Society, pages 76-95
  - Focus on the difference between different political ideologies and political attitudes. How do the different ideologies view the concepts of equality and freedom?

#### *Day 9: Discussion: German Identity in Comparative Perspective*

- Cases: Chapter 5: Germany, pages 224-241; 252-262; and 267-268
  - What are the sources of Germany's many identity changes?
  - How would you describe Germany's current political culture?
  - How has the issue of immigration playing a role in Germany politics today?

#### *Day 10 (2/6): First group workshop at the end of class*

- *Please come to class prepared with your topic, research question, and an idea of your two cases and dependent variable*

#### *Day 11 (2/8): Extra group workshop and review day*

- *Please come to class prepared with your topic, research question, and an idea of your two cases and dependent variable*

**2/8 – Research Question and Two States Due via Brightspace at 11:59 pm CT**

## Part 4: Democracy

### Day 12: Origins and Explanations of Democratization

- Essentials: Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pages 138-150
  - Focus on the different theoretical models that explain democratization (modernization, elites, society, international relations, and culture)

### Day 13: Presidential Systems

- Essentials: Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pages 150-160
  - Focus just on presidential systems for today. What are the roles and responsibilities of a president? How do elections work? What is the relationship between the three branches of government?

### Day 14: Parliamentary and Semi-Presidential Systems

- Essentials: Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pages 150-160
  - Focus just on parliamentary and semi-presidential systems today. How are parliamentary systems different from presidential ones? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of parliamentary and semi-presidential systems?

### Day 15: Political Parties and Electoral Systems

- Essentials: Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pages 160-169
  - Focus on understanding the difference between single-member districts (plurality and majoritarian districts) and multi-member districts (proportional representation and mixed districts). Focus on PR for the latter.

### Day 16: *Discussion: French Democracy in Comparative Perspective*

- *Cases: Chapter 4: France, pages 160-174 and 204-209*
  - Did France slowly democratize in the same way the UK developed?
  - How is France's semi-presidential system different from the American presidential system?
  - Describe the different main French political parties. How would you describe their political ideologies and attitudes?
  - Describe some of France's current political debates. What do you think the sources of these political disagreements are?

## Part 5: Authoritarianism

### Day 17: Origins and Sources of Control

- Essentials: Chapter 6: Nondemocratic Regimes, pages 178-190
  - Focus on the defining the different between authoritarianism and totalitarianism. Focus on the different theoretical models that explain authoritarianism (modernization, elites, society, international relations, and culture)

### Day 18: Models of Authoritarianism

- Essentials: Chapter 6: Nondemocratic Regimes, pages 191-203
  - Focus on understanding the different governing strategies autocratic leaders use to gain and keep power. How do the different authoritarian regimes use these strategies?

### Day 19: *Discussion: Russian Authoritarianism in Comparative Perspective*

- Cases: Chapter 7: Russia, pages 350-388
  - What are the sources of authoritarianism in Russia?
  - How have Russian leaders used Russia's institutions to consolidate their rule?
  - Does Russia have political and societal actors that are able to put a check on Putin's power?

## **MIDTERM (Day 20)– 3/5**

## **3/7 – No class because Spring Break**

### *Day 21 (3/19): Rough draft group workshop at the end of class*

- Please come to class prepared with your one-page double-spaced rough draft and outline. You should be prepared with your question, two cases, theoretical argument, and begin to show what evidence you are using or going to use to support it.

### *Day 22 (3/21): Extra rough draft group workshop*

## **3/21 – Rough Draft, Outline due via Brightspace at 11:59 pm CT**

## Part 7: Conflict

### Day 23: Revolution, Insurgency, and Civil War

- Essentials: Chapter 7, pages 210-223
  - Focus on the different explanations for political violence. How do they differ in their approaches to free will and universal vs. particularistic explanations?

### Day 24: Discussion: Revolution in Iran

- Cases: Chapter 10: Iran, pages 528-550, 555-559
  - The book gives three models of political violence: institutional, ideational, and individual. What model best explains the cause of the 1979 Iranian Revolution?
  - What model best explains the current Iranian regime's consolidation of their power after the revolution? In other words, what models best explains why the revolution was successful?

### Day 25: Terrorism

- Essentials: Chapter 7, pages 217-232
  - Focus on understanding the debate over how to define terrorism. How are revolution and terrorism different?

### Day 26: Discussion: Social Movements and COVID-19's effect on conflict

- Chenoweth, Erica (2016). "How Can We Know When Popular Movements are Winning?" *Political Violence at a Glance*.
  - The reading gives four trends that social movements may or may not experience. Do you see these trends today in the United States?
  - The reading is essentially a how-to based on social science research for how to be a successful movement. In contrast, what is the insight for how a government should respond if it wants to prevent or stop a movement from succeeding?

## Part 8: Democratic Backsliding

### Day 27: Causes of Backsliding

- Waldner, David and Ellen Lust (2018). “Unwelcome Change: Coming to Terms with Democratic Backsliding.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 93-113.
  - Focus on understanding the main models of democratic backsliding. What models do the authors say explain backsliding the best?

### Day 28: *Is the United States a Case Study in Democratic Backsliding?*

- Is the US currently backsliding as a democracy? How? What theoretical framework best explains why?
- What are the sources of illiberalism in the United States? What framework gives us guidance about how to keep them at bay?

## Part 9: Communism and Post-Communism

### Day 29: Communism and Its Collapse

- Essentials: Chapter 9: Communism and Post-Communism, pages 276-285
  - Focus on understanding the main elements of Marxist thought: proletariat, bourgeoisie, superstructure, dialectical materialism, vanguard of the proletariat. How does Marxism interpret history? What is Marxism’s ultimate goal and method for achieving it? Also, focus the understanding communism’s main economic and political institutions, and how they are supposed to work in theory.

### Day 30: Transitioning and Post-Communism

- Essentials: Chapter 9: Communism and Post-Communism, pages 285-303
  - Focus on understanding the ways communism failed economically and politically in real life. Focus on understanding the different outcomes for post-communist regimes, for example, countries that are closer and farther away from Europe/Russia.

### Day 31: *Discussion: China in Comparative Perspective*

- Cases: Chapter 8: China, pages 392-430
  - How did the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward change China? What were the goals of these policies and were they successful?
  - How did Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping view communism and capitalism? How did their policies differ?
  - In what ways has the Chinese Communist party evolved since the end of Mao Zedong's rule to today?

*Day 32 (4/16): Final paper workshop*

- Please come to class prepared with your main theoretical argument and your empirical evidence supporting it; including your explanatory variable and mechanism

*Day 33 (4/18): Final paper workshop*

- Please come to class prepared with your main theoretical argument and your empirical evidence supporting it; including your explanatory variable and mechanism

4/23 and 4/25: Make-up days

**Final paper due on 4/18 at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace**

**Extra credit due on 4/25 at 11:59 pm CT via Brightspace**

**Final Exam on 4/30 from 9-11 am**