

POLS 1130 (002): Comparative Politics

Fall 2021

Lecture:	Tuesday 2:30 – 3:45 p.m. at Fretwell 121 & online asynchronous
Professor:	Dr. Yaoyao Dai
Email:	yaoyao.dai@uncc.edu (include “POLS1130” in subject line)
Office:	Fretwell 450B
Office Hours:	Tuesday 4:15 – 5:15 pm (in-person & online) Thursday 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. (online) and by appointment
TA:	Ana Perez Ochoa (aperezoc@uncc.edu)
Discussion Session:	Thursday 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.(online)
Office Hour:	Tuesday 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. (online) and by appointment

This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for POLS 1130 Comparative Politics. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Unless you are prepared to abide by these policies and expectations, you risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

I reserve the right to modify the standards and requirements outlined in this syllabus at any time. I will notify you of such changes by announcements in class and posting a new syllabus on Canvas.

Because this course is 50% online, I expect students to regularly check their uncc email and the course canvas page for updates about the course.

1 Course Description

This course examines politics around the world through a comparative lens. It is organized around a set of important political questions: What is the state and where did it come from? What is democracy? Why are some countries democratic but others authoritarian? How does democracy and dictatorship affect the material well-being of their citizens? Why are ethnic groups politicized in some countries but not others? Why do some countries have many parties whereas others have only a few? Do presidential or parliamentary democracies more stable and why?

Using the latest research in comparative politics, we examine and evaluate competing answers to those questions for their logical consistency and empirical accuracy. Along the way, students will also learn a variety of methods that are central to the study of comparative politics. At the end of the course, students will be in a better position to understand and critically engage in contemporary arguments about key political developments around the world.

2 Required Readings:

- William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder. 2017. *Principles of comparative politics*. CQ Press
- **Additional Readings:** Will be available on Canvas.

3 Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation in all lectures are **required and graded** unless otherwise noted by the professor. To facilitate the participation in the classroom, there will be various in-class activities, such as

polls, quizzes, and discussions. We will use **Poll Everywhere** for in class polls and quizzes. Students can access Poll Everywhere using a phone, laptop, or tablet to answer in-class polls and quizzes. Please check <https://www.poll Everywhere.com/> and <https://teaching.uncc.edu/academic-technologies/student-response-system/student-guides> for more information. Participation in video (asynchronous online) lectures will be graded using embedded quiz questions in the videos. Please remember that attending class and sitting silently is not, by definition, “participation.” You can earn additional participation points by speaking in class. Please don’t be afraid to speak up! Remember that a sincere question often adds as much (if not more) to our understanding of the course material as my lecture. If you have a compelling reason for missing class (hospitalization, family death, etc.), you can provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office and they will contact your instructor. Please inform me as soon as possible as well; I reserve the right to grant excused absences (and make-up work) in extraordinary circumstances. If you miss class, you are expected to get notes from a fellow student – “private make-up lectures” with the professor or lab instructor will not occur.

Readings. All readings should be completed before class. Unless otherwise noted, this means that weekly readings should be completed before the first lecture each week. It is very important that you come to class prepared so you can get the most out of the lectures and are ready to ask (and answer) questions about the readings. I may call on students at random with questions from time to time.

Weekly Assignments. There will be almost weekly assignments given on Fridays and due before the next Friday. The assignments usually include multiple-choice questions and occasionally short answer questions. Those assignments will help you to review the weekly course content and to prepare for the two exams. Late submissions will be accepted; however, they will be subject to a 5% scores per day (including weekends) late penalty. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis and should be discussed in advance with the professor or the teaching assistant.

Exams. Students will take a midterm exam and a final exam. The exams will assess your knowledge of the material contained within the assigned readings, the lecture, and our course discussions. The exams may consist of multiple-choice, problem-solving, and essay questions. I will provide more information as the exam dates approach. The final exam will be cumulative, though its content will be heavily weighted to the material covered between the midterm and final exams.

Extra Credit Game Participation. To facilitate your understanding of the strategic component of politics, we will play multiple “Game” in class with various rules that mimic the strategic interactions between political actors. The points you earn at the end of the game will be your extra credit points towards the final grades. Detailed rules will be announced before the game during class.

4 Grading Policy

Lecture Participation (PollEverywhere)	10%
Video Quizzes	10%
Weekly Assignments on Canvas	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
Extra credit game participation	5%
Extra credit POLS Lab participation	1%
Extra credit research participation	1%

107 points possible out of 100 points total

Points	Letter Grade
90 – 100	A
80 – 90	B
70 – 80	C
60 – 70	D
0 – 60	F

5 General Policies and Expectations

RESPECT. In this course, we will read and discuss political science research on sensitive and controversial topics. Everyone comes to this course with a different background and knowledge in those topics. It is important that we all treat each other with the utmost respect. The conflict of ideas is encouraged and welcome. However, you should base your opinion on logic and empirical evidence, instead of beliefs and stereotypes. I will exercise my responsibility to manage the classroom so that ideas and arguments can proceed in an orderly fashion. You should expect that if your conduct during class seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect, you will not be permitted to participate further. Unwelcome conduct directed toward another person based upon that persons actual or perceived race, actual or perceived gender, color, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, or veteran status, or for any other reason, may constitute a violation of University Policy 406, The Code of Student Responsibility. Any student suspected of engaging in such conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

WORKING TOGETHER. I encourage you to work together on the course materials and assignments. We learn from each other's questions and experiences. Moreover, there is no better way to master the materials than to explain to your peers. However, every keystroke that you type and every mark you make with a pen or pencil must be your own work. You **cannot** collaborate on the midterm and final exams.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS. Assignments not submitted by the assigned due date and time are late. All assignment deadlines are based on the Eastern Time Zone (ET), not your local time zone. Please be sure to pay close attention to any time differences if you are located in a different time zone. Given potential technical difficulties that may arise with things like your internet connection, I strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last moment to submit your assignments. Late submissions will be accepted; however, they will be subject to a 5% scores per day (including weekends) late penalty.

EXTENSIONS. Extensions will be granted in only the most severe circumstances. If you foresee the need for an extension, one needs to be requested and granted at least 24 hours before the due date. No one is entitled to an extension; they will be offered only at my discretion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online at <https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. The instructor and TA may ask students to produce identification at examinations and may require students to demonstrate that graded assignments completed outside of class are their own work. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation are responsible for checking with their instructor.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS. Students in this course seeking accommodations for disabilities

must first consult with the Office of Disability Services and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations. I will do everything I can to meet the requested accommodations.

PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUN. This course affirms people of all gender expressions and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

ABSENTEEISM DURING COVID-19. Students are expected to attend every class and remain in class for the duration of the session when it is safe to do so in accordance with university guidance regarding COVID-19. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. An absence, excused or unexcused, does not relieve a student of any course requirement. Regular class attendance is a student's obligation, as is a responsibility for all the work of class meetings, including tests and written tasks. Any unexcused absence or excessive tardiness may result in a loss of participation points.

For absences related to COVID-19, please adhere to the following:

- Complete your Niner Health Check each morning.
- Do not come to class if you are sick. Please protect your health and the health of others by staying home. Contact your healthcare provider if you believe you are ill.
- If you are sick: If you test positive or are evaluated by a healthcare provider for symptoms of COVID-19, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. Upon learning that you have tested positive or have been diagnosed for symptoms of COVID-19, either from your reporting or from Student Health Center testing or diagnosis, representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with you, and your instructors will be notified of the need for accommodations, as necessary.
- If you have been exposed to COVID-19 positive individuals and/or have been notified to self-quarantine due to exposure, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with you as necessary. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. If you need any additional support verifying your absence after you have communicated with your professors, contact [Student Assistance and Support Services](#).
- To return to class after being absent due to a period of self-quarantine, students should submit a copy of their Niner Health Check clearance email to their instructor(s). To return to class after being absent due to a COVID-19 diagnosis, students should submit an [online request form](#) to Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS). Supporting documentation can be attached directly to the request form and should be from a student's health care provider or the Student Health Center, clearly indicating the dates of absences and the date the student is able to return to class. Instructors will be notified of such absences.

6 Tentative Course Schedule

This schedule should be treated as tentative and flexible, given that we live in a time full of uncertainty. It may also be the case that it takes us more or less time for a particular topic than I have allotted here. We will adapt accordingly. In the event that deviations from this schedule are necessary, they will be announced in class and updated on Canvas. Additional readings to the textbook will be uploaded to Canvas at least one week before class.

- Week 1 (Aug.23 - Aug.29): Introduction to class and comparative politics**
 - Syllabus
 - Clark, Golder & Golder. Chapter 1.
- Week 2 (Aug.30 - Sep.5th): What is science?**
 - Clark, Golder & Golder. Chapter 2.
- Week 3 (Sep.6 - Sep. 12): What is politics?**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 3.
- Week 4 (Sep. 13 - Sep.19): What is the state?**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 4.
- Week 5 (Sep. 20 - Sep. 26): What is democracy and what is dictatorship?**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 5.
- Week 6 (Sep. 27 - Oct. 3): The economic and cultural determinants of democracy and dictatorship.**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 6-7.
 - **APSA annual conference, no office hour with Dr. Dai**
- Week 7 (Oct. 4 - Oct. 10): Democratic transitions**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 8.
- Week 8 (Oct. 11 - Oct. 17): Mid-term review and exam**
 - **Oct. 12: No class, Student recess**
 - Mid-term review sheet (CANVAS)
 - **Oct.14: Mid-term exam, online via canvas.**
- Week 9 (Oct. 18 - Oct. 24): Democracy or Dictatorship? Does It Make A Difference? & Varieties of dictatorship**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 9-10.
- Week 10 (Oct. 25 - Oct. 31): Problems with Group Decision Making**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 11.
- Week 11 (Nov. 1 - Nov. 7): Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Democracies**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 12.
- Week 12 (Nov. 8 - Nov. 14): Elections and Electoral Systems**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 13.
- Week 13 (Nov. 15 - Nov. 21): Social Cleavages and Party Systems**
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder. Chapter 14.
- Week 14: Thanksgiving. No Class**
- Week 15 (Nov. 29 - Dec.5): Institutional Veto Players & Consequences of Democratic Institutions.**
 - Clark, Golder & Golder, Chapter 15-16.

Week 16 (Dec. 6 - Dec.8): Final Review.....

- **Reading:**
 - Final review sheet (CANVAS)

Final Exam: TBD

7 Additional Information

Counseling and Mental Health Services. It is common for college students to experience challenges that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus at no additional cost.

Visit the Counseling and Psychological Services website at caps.uncc.edu for information about the broad range of confidential on-campus mental health services, online health assessments, hours, and additional information.

Call CAPS at (704) 687-0311 if interested in scheduling an appointment with a counselor. After-hours crisis support is also available through this phone number.

Title IX Statement. UNC Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. UNC Charlotte has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that many UNC Charlotte employees, including all faculty members, are considered Responsible Employees who are required to relay any information or reports of sexual misconduct they receive to the Title IX Coordinator. This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must report the information to the Title IX Coordinator. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator: (1) University Counseling Center (counselingcenter.uncc.edu, 7-0311); (2) Student Health Center (studenthealth.uncc.edu, 7-7400); or (3) Center for Wellness Promotion (wellness.uncc.edu, 7-7407). Additional information about your options is also available at titleix.uncc.edu under the “Students” tab.

Political Science Honors Program. If you earn an A in POLS 2220 Research Methods and you meet minimum GPA requirements (3.5 in Political Science, 3.25 overall), you will be eligible for admission into the Political Science Honors Program. Students in this program are invited to special events throughout the year, including lunches with guest speakers, panels on applying to graduate school, and “meet the faculty” sessions. In order to graduate with the honors designation affixed on the transcript, POLS Honors students must complete a two-course honors thesis sequence: one semester to write the proposal (including literature review and research design) and another semester to complete and defend the thesis. For more information about the Political Science Honors Program, please contact Dr. Whitaker at BWhitaker@uncc.edu.

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Video and/or audio recording is not permitted during class unless the student obtains permission from the instructor. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited. Students with specific electronic recording accommodations authorized by the Office of Disability Services do not require instructor permission; however, the instructor must be notified of any such accommodation prior to recording. Any distribution of such recordings is prohibited.