

PLSC 28901  
Autumn 2016  
INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS  
Lectures: Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30-10:20am  
Location: Social Sciences 122  
Professor Nalepa  
Office: Pick 324A  
Email: [mnalepa@uchicago.edu](mailto:mnalepa@uchicago.edu)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30–5pm

#### TEACHING ASSISTANTS STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Teaching Assistant</u>	<u>Office Hours</u>	<u>Last Names</u>
Genevieve Bates ( <a href="mailto:genbates@uchicago.edu">genbates@uchicago.edu</a> )	Fridays 10:30am-12pm	TBD
Mark Deming ( <a href="mailto:jmdeming@uchicago.edu">jmdeming@uchicago.edu</a> )	Tuesdays 1-3:30pm	TBD
Alysia Mann Carey ( <a href="mailto:manncarey@uchicago.edu">manncarey@uchicago.edu</a> )	Fridays 10:30am-12pm	TBD

This introductory course fulfills the Comparative Politics breadth requirement for the political science major. But preparing students planning to major in political science for other Comparative Politics courses is not my main teaching objective. Instead, this course will introduce students from all backgrounds to the ideas and tools pertaining to the most significant debates in Comparative Politics today.

#### **DISCUSSION SECTIONS**

There will be weekly discussion sections for this course and students are encouraged to meet with their assigned TA (by student last name, as listed above) during office hours to clarify concepts, discuss readings in greater detail, and receive feedback on assignments as necessary. Attending TA office hours should always be a supplement for doing the readings and attending the lectures – never a substitute.

#### **MOVIE NIGHTS**

Twice this quarter, I will invite you to participate in a movie night. The films we will be showing are thematically connected to the topics covered in class. The first film we will show is Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's "The Lives of Others" (10/28) and the second movie is Istvan Szabo's "Sunshine" (11/11). Pizza and drinks will be provided during the movie nights, courtesy of the VOC faculty partnership. The movies will be shown at 5pm in a room to be determined based on the number of students who sign up.

#### **COURSE SUMMARY**

This course introduces some of the key concepts, approaches, and debates in the Comparative Politics subfield. It is divided into two parts. In Part I, after learning about the comparative method and the challenges facing research in Comparative Politics, we will study the key institutions of democratic regimes we will study the "good" cases of democratic regimes followed by the "bad" cases of non-democratic regimes. You will be surprised to learn how much overlap there is in the characteristics of countries exhibiting these two seemingly distinct regime types. Next, we will study the dynamics of regime change, focusing on transitions to democracy as well as authoritarian reversals. We will

examine successes in overcoming collective action problems (peaceful transitions) but also failures leading to political violence and civil war. The remainder of the class will be devoted to considering problems permeating countries that have transitioned from “bad” (authoritarian) to “good” (democratic) states—even when such transitions were successful. We will study transitional justice, gender issues in politics, and economic development.

In Part II, we will build on the concepts, approaches, and theories introduced in Part I by applying them to books written by some of the Comparative Politics faculty here at UChicago. This should help familiarize you with much of the work our faculty does, and prepare you for future coursework with these same professors. Some of the substantive questions raised in Part II will include: Why do attempts by states to curb drug cartels exacerbate rather than ameliorate violence? How do authoritarian regimes generate compliance and establish political order, and why have some of them proven to be so much more durable than others? Why do only some fledgling democracies pursue transitional justice to reckon with the authoritarian past? Is large-scale redistributive land reform more likely under democracy or under dictatorship? Why are some insurgent groups more capable than others at maintaining cohesion and winning civil wars?

## **GRADES**

Grades are based on two exams (a Midterm and Final). These exams will consist of four sections: the first section will consist of true and false statements, the second will be multiple choice questions, the third will be definitions, and the fourth will be a short essay (1.5 blue book pages). The discussion section directly prior to the exam will be devoted to solving a “mock exam.” The exam dates will be October 24<sup>th</sup> (Midterm) and December 9<sup>th</sup> (Final, 10:30am-12:30pm).

You can only miss an exam for a documented illness (doctor’s note is required for scheduling a make-up exam).

Final grades are determined as follows:

Midterm 1: 40% of final grade

Midterm 2: 40% of final grade

Discussion Participation: 20% of final grade (awarded in consultation with the TAs).

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

As a member of The University of Chicago community you will neither participate nor tolerate academic dishonesty. I will hold you to the University’s standards for academic responsibility. In the context of this course, that means honesty on (closed book and closed notes) exams. If you are not adequately familiar with the University’s Policy on Academic Honesty, please consult page 31 of the Student Manual ([http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/sites/studentmanual.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/StudentManual\\_2014-15.pdf](http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/sites/studentmanual.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/StudentManual_2014-15.pdf)). I will report any violation in accordance with the procedures to the Dean of the College.

## **NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The use of laptops, tablets, and cell phones is not permitted during lectures. Please bring hard copies of the assigned readings to lecture for your easy reference, since we will

often be discussing specific passages in the readings. Although we appreciate that the cost (and inconvenience) of printing is non-negligible, it proved far lower than assigning a course pack, which carries considerable added cost for copyright fees.

## **REQUIRED BOOKS**

The following four books are available for purchase at the Seminary Co-op, and for short-term checkout at the Regenstein Reserve Desk:

- Albertus, Michael. 2015. *Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Nalepa, Monika. 2010. *Skeletons in the Closet: Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Slater, Dan. 2010. *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- The pdf of Professor Lessing's forthcoming book is available on CHALK

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note that all of the readings for weeks 1 through 5 are located at the course CHALK site—either under “Course Material” or “Library Course Reserves.”

### **Part I: Concepts, Approaches, and Debates**

*Week 1: What is Comparative Politics* (Sept 26-28)

- Samuels, David. 2010. *Comparative Politics*. New York: Pearson, pgs. 2-23 (“Doing Comparative Politics”)
- Wood, Elisabeth “Field Research” in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*
- Przeworski, Adam “Is the Science of Comparative Politics Possible” in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*

*Week 2: The State and State Formation* (Oct 3-5)

- Tilly, Charles. 1990. *Coercion, Capital and European States: A.D. 990-1992*. Cambridge: Blackwell, pgs. 1-5 (“States in History”), 20-28 (“War Drives State Formation and Transformation”), and 67-95 (“How War Made States, and Vice Versa”)
- Weber, Max. 2013. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Hoboken: Routledge, pgs. 77-83 (excerpt from “Politics as a Vocation”)

*Week 3: Institutions of Democratic Regimes* (Oct 10-12)

- Patty, John and Maggie Penn “The Debates Surrounding Social Choice” in *Social Choice and Legitimacy*, Cambridge University Press 2014 (Chapter 2, esp. pp 20-30)
- Dahl, Robert. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pgs. 1-16 (“Democratization and Public Opposition”) and 33-47 (“Historical Sequences”)
- Przeworski, A., 1999. 2 Minimalist conception of democracy: a defense 1.

*Week 4: Parties and Assemblies (Oct 17-19)*

- Boix, Carles “The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems” in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*
- Vanberg, Georg and Lanny Martin “Legislative Institutions and Coalition Governemnt” in pgs 436-454 in *Oxford Handbook of Legislatures*
- Aleman, Eduardo “Legislative Organizations and Outcomes”, pgs145-161 in *Routledge Handbook of Comparative Institutions*

**Week 5: Midterm (Oct 24)**

**October 28<sup>th</sup> (Friday) 6-9PM MOVIE NIGHT “LIVES OF OTHERS”**

**Part II: Comparative Politics, UChicago-Style**

*Week 5: Making Peace in Drug Wars (Oct 26- Oct 31)*

- Lessing, Making Peace in Drug Wars, Chs 1-3
- Lessing, Making Peace in Drug Wars, Chs 5-6

*Week 6: Autocracy and Compliance in Syria (Nov 2- Nov 9)*

- Wedeen, Ambiguities of Domination, Chs. 1-3
- Wedeen, Ambiguities of Domination, Chs. 4-5

**November 11<sup>th</sup> (Friday) 6-9PM: MOVIE NIGHT: “SUNSHINE”**

*Week 8: Authoritarian Durability in Southeast Asia (Nov 9- Nov 14)*

- Slater, Ordering Power, Chs. 1, 2
- Slater, Ordering Power, Chs. 6, 7 and 9

*Week 9: Transitional Justice in Eastern Europe (Nov 16 -Nov 22)*

- Nalepa, Skeletons in the Closet, Chs. 1-3
- Nalepa, Skeletons in the Closet, Chs. 4 and 8

*Week 10: Land Reform in Latin America (Nov 28 – Nov 30)*

- Albertus, Autocracy and Redistribution, Chs. 1-2 and 3 (pp. 60-77 only)
- Albertus, Autocracy and Redistribution, Chs. 6, 8-9

**December 9<sup>th</sup> 10:30-12:30: Final Exam**