

CPO2002: Intro to Comparative Politics

Marielena Dias

Summer B

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E-mail: md16x@my.fsu.edu

Office Hours: M—F 8-9am

Office: BEL 564

Web: <https://marielenadias.com/> & <https://canvas.fsu.edu/>

Class Hours: M—F 11am-12:15pm

Class Room: BEL 0004 (G)

Course Description

The primary purpose of this course is to familiarize students with a broad array of political systems, their origins, and possible future trajectories. We will consider questions such as the following: What is a state and where did it come from? What is democracy, and how do states democratize? Is democracy consequential for citizens' wellbeing? If so, how so? Why do some countries have many parties whereas some have very few? What are the implications of different kinds of governments?

In an attempt to answer these questions and assess the answers already posited by scholars, we will approach the study of comparative politics using the tools of the scientific method. A scientific approach to studying the political world structures our attempts to understand these types of questions by encouraging the advancement of well-reasoned hypotheses that are grounded in theory, including some indication of what it would mean for our hypothesis or theory to be incorrect. The goal is to build theories that allow us to generalize beyond particular people, places, countries, or events to build causal models of the political world that are applicable to as many specific questions as possible. We will engage questions that explore cause and effect, using falsifiable hypotheses and empirical data to test our theories.

We will adopt a strategic approach to theory construction; this means that we will assume that rulers and citizens are forward thinking, goal-oriented and rational and their behavior is dependent on the behavior of others. To study these behaviors, we will use game theory. To test our theories, we will use real world data, and statistical analysis of quantitative data. Many of the methods we employ in this class, including logic, game theory and statistical analyses, will require students to use simple mathematical techniques. No prior knowledge of these methodological tools is required or expected; the only thing necessary is an open mind and a willingness to learn. Investing time to master these skills will provide excellent preparation for other Political Science course work at Florida State University.

Course Objectives

This is an introductory class on a vast subject. Students are not expected to develop a mastery of comparative politics from just this semester. I aim to introduce students to important theories and skills that will help them excel in other politics classes—and hopefully their future careers. However, at the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Utilize the methodological tools of political science to solve logic problems, employ simple game-theoretic models, and interpret statistical results;
- Compare different types of political systems, and understand their transition to democracy;
- Appraise the form and function of institutions present in democratic states.

Liberal Studies Component

As a Liberal Studies Social Sciences Course, the requirements suggest that students will become **critical appraisers of theories and the facts that support them** and meet the goals of the following three Social Sciences competencies:

1. **Competency 1:** Critically examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, economic, and social experiences and/or structures shape the past and/or the present;
2. **Competency 2:** Employ appropriate social scientific and/or historical methods and technology in the selection and appraisal of data, and use these data to assess causal arguments, and analyze assertions and evidence;
3. **Competency 3:** Evaluate and employ appropriate methods and technology in the collection and analysis of data.

The Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program at FSU builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world in which they live and work. Liberal Studies thus offers a transformative experience.

Required Materials

There is one required book in the course, available for purchase at the FSU bookstore. While I will be teaching from the 3rd edition, you may purchase the 2nd edition and I will make sure the reading quizzes / assignments are compatible.

Clark, William, Matt Golder and Sona Golder. 2017. Principles of Comparative Politics. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. Third Edition.

Additional online resources to complement the CGG book, including online quizzes, flashcards and study materials, are available [here](#).

In addition to the assigned textbook, this course includes other outside readings that will consist of academic articles relevant to course topics. These will be listed in the course schedule and made available through Canvas. We will be using Canvas extensively in this course, where you will find and complete assignments, view grades, and receive announcements and emails from your instructor. It is your responsibility that you have access to **Canvas**.

For those of you interested in pursuing some preliminary data analysis for your research design project, you might consider downloading some statistical software such as R.

Assessments and Grading

Please read this section carefully. Registration in this course implies that you agree with all elements of evaluation herein described. Though I reserve the right to modify this syllabus with advance notice to students, I will not do so with respect to the parameters of student evaluation or the final examination schedule. In order to accomplish the above stated course goals and ensure your success in the course, I strongly encourage you to do the following (at a minimum):

- Complete all reading in advance of the class period and come to class prepared to discuss the readings. These reading assignments are required, not optional, and are a necessary first step toward in-class participation. **We will not necessarily cover all the reading in class, so it is imperative that you complete the assigned readings before the final exam.** If you do not voluntarily participate in our discussions, you should expect to be called-on regularly;
- Come to class, take good notes, ask informed and pertinent questions of your instructor;
- Engage with the material and participate in class discussions;
- Contact your instructor early and often if you have questions or concerns about course materials, course expectations or your grade;
- Refrain from negative participation, defined as classroom behavior that is disrespectful to other students or the instructor.

Your grade will be determined by the following components:

Attendance and Participation — 30%

Consistent attendance and participation is crucial to success in the class. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and exercises. All classes will begin with practice exam questions, therefore it pays to come to class. Class participation will be assessed as follows:

As long as students are prepared for class and contribute to discussion when called upon they should receive 100%. However, should they be unprepared when called upon, they will be marked down. I will conduct review days and on these days I will call on participants using the notecards you have provided me with your names. Should you be absent when I call on you, you will be marked down. All students begin with a 100% for class participation and each time that they fail to show preparation, they will lose 2 points out of a possible 100 for the "Attendance and Participation" category.

Students are responsible for planning ahead by checking the Syllabus for upcoming readings and assignments. Students are responsible for all assigned readings. As stated above **NOT ALL READING MATERIAL WILL BE COVERED IN CLASS**. Therefore, it is imperative that students complete all readings in preparation for the final exam.

Problem Sets — 25%

To work towards the goals of the 3 Social Sciences competencies, students will be assigned 2 problem sets and 1 research design writing assignment (see next component).

Problem Set 1 will be structured to let students practice employing scientific methods and technology in analyzing data used in causal arguments. Students will be asked to work through a variety

of statistical results and assess whether they support the causal claims they are used for as evidence. It will be posted to Canvas by 5 PM on May 18.

Problem Set 2 will be structured to give students an opportunity to practice our introduction to game theory in week 2. Students will design their own — either extensive form or normal strategic form — game and explain all of elements, (Subgame Perfect) Nash Equilibrium, and outcome / payoffs. It will be posted to Canvas by 5 PM on May 25.

Research Design — 20%

In weeks 4 and 5, students will work on a proposed research design. (More information and a rubric to come will be posted on Canvas.) The purpose of this research design is to allow students the opportunity to practice identifying an interesting (and hypothetically doable) research question and think about how they would approach answering it. This will help students meet the goals of the first and third Social Sciences competencies. It will also allow them to practice all of the concepts from week 1 (What is Science?)

Extra Credit

While working on the research design, students will be able to earn 1 or 2 points toward their final grade. I will coordinate visits with the writing center and the library, so that students will learn how to utilize helpful tools on campus when pursuing research projects. Students who attend one or two of these pre-planned visits will gain 1 or 2 extra credit points. All information about these pre-planned visits will be posted on Canvas.

Final Examination — 25%

Students will have one exam. This exam is worth 25% of the final grade. **The date of the exam is during our last class session, June 22.** The exam will be predominately multiple choice, but short response questions are possible. I will announce the exact format of the exam prior to its scheduled date (last day of class).

Students are expected to be present for the exam at the beginning of the exam period. Students will be allotted the entire final exam period that the University has appropriated. A ten-minute grace period will apply for the beginning of all exam periods. After the initial ten minutes have expired, students will be penalized 10 points for arriving late for an exam. Absences or late arrivals for exams will only be excused for participation in formally sanctioned University events, or extraordinary events if they are accompanied by sufficient (i.e. Health Services Excuse Forms) documentation within two calendar days of the absence or late arrival. The instructor reserves the right to determine what constitutes an extraordinary circumstance as well as what shall be considered "sufficient documentation." If they have been excused for their absence, students will have five working days to make up a missed exam. If there are extraordinary circumstances, which would prevent the student from making up the exam in five working days, the instructor must be informed of this fact prior to the expiration of the five-day period. The instructor reserves the right to administer makeup exams of any format (multiple choice, short answer, essay), which may not necessarily correspond to the original exam's format. If a student misses an exam and does not have an excused absence, the student will receive a zero for the exam.

Grading Policy

I adhere to the following number-to-letter grade conversion for all exams, quizzes, and assignments. FINAL course grades ending in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole percentage point — not the individual assignments and exams. *An A is the highest grade you can earn in this class.

94-100 A*	90-93 A-	87-89 B+	83-86 B	80-82 B-	77-79 C+
73-76 C	70-72 C-	67-69 D+	63-66 D	60-62 D-	0-59 F

Late Work

All assignments are to be turned in on the announced due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without legitimate excuses. The instructor retains the right to determine legitimate excuses.

Incomplete Grades

No incomplete grades will be given unless there is an agreement between the instructor and the student PRIOR TO the end of the course. The instructor retains the right to determine legitimate reasons for an incomplete grade.

Classroom Policies

Attendance Policy

As with a standard employment contract, each student has a maximum number of personal days. **Each student will have three absences from the class with no need for an excuse.** All other absences must be excused (see below). **Students with documented university-excused absences may request the day's lecture notes from me.** Students with non-excused absences will have to request the lecture notes from a classmate. All students will still have access to the assignments, rubrics, answer keys, exam reviews, and reading guides for make-up work.

Email Policy

Students should include their first and last name and course information in the subject line of their emails. I will make every effort to respond **within 48 hours** of receiving a message. Though I may reply sooner than that, students should not expect an immediate response. I will contact students via their FSU designated email address listed on Canvas, so please see to it that these accounts are setup to receive these communications. **Please treat all email correspondences with the instructor as any other professional exchange.** Accordingly, I expect emails to be respectful and polite, to use correct grammar and complete sentences. I reserve the right to summarily delete rude, disrespectful, and/or poorly written emails without reply. Furthermore, emails asking questions that can be answered by checking the syllabus will also not receive a reply.

Technology Policy

Cell phones and laptops are generally a distraction and detrimental to the classroom experience. **This course is designed to ensure success taking notes with a pen or a pencil.** However, if you must use your laptop please make sure to bring charging cables (not ask to borrow any and distract others) and stay on the course material at all times. Cell phones should be on silence or vibrate. **If you have a family or emergency situation going on, I will permit you to use your phone.** You do not need to alert me of the situation — I will understand by seeing your phone on your desk. However, if it becomes clear to me that students are using their cellphones for non-emergency or family situations, this permission will be revoked from the entire class.

Free Tutoring/Resources from FSU

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options: <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact tutor@fsu.edu. **These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.**

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect parameters of evaluation, i.e. grading and the date of the final exam, **this syllabus is subject to change at discretion of the instructor.** I will provide you with advance notice in class and via your university registered email contact.

Administrative Policies

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Dishonesty

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless the instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly and properly cited. Students are responsible for policing themselves with respect to plagiarism. Any student engaging in academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, academic misrepresentation, etc.) will receive a zero for the relevant assignment and will be reported to the proper university officials for further action.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "... be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found [here](#).)

Students with Disabilities

If you anticipate needing any type of an academic accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please discuss this with the instructor within the first week of class. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC).
2. Bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating you need academic accommodations. This should be done within the first week of class.

If a student's accommodations change during the semester, the student will present an updated official letter from the SDRC outlining the specific modifications. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center

874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice) • (850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu

<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Week	Dates	Topic	Assignments / Notes
Week 1	May 14—18	What is Science? Economic Determinants of Democracy	ch. 1, 2, 5 ch. 6
Class 1	May 14	Introduction to CPS	CGG (3rd ed.) 5-7 (2nd ed.) 5-7
Class 2	May 15	Scientific Method, Logic	(3) 17-38 (2) 21-42
Class 3	May 16	Conceptualization & Operationalization	(3) 150-168 (2) 149-166
Class 4	May 17	Modernization Theory	(3) 175-193 (2) 171-191
Class 5	May 18	Evaluating Empirical Evidence	(3) 198-218 (2) 196-208 Problem set 1 assigned
Week 2	May 21—25	What is Politics? What is the State?	ch. 3 ch. 4
Class 6	May 21	REVIEW DAY , Ross (2001), Fish (2002)	Problem set 1 DUE
Class 7	May 22	Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Game (EVL)	(3) 48-65 (2) 50-57
Class 8	May 23	Solving & Evaluating the EVL Game	(3) 56-69, 74-78 (2) 57-70, 75-79
Class 9	May 24	The State, Simultaneous Games	(3) 90-92, 99-110 (2) 88-90, 99-108
Class 10	May 25	Contractarian, Predatory View of the State	(3) 110-125 (2) 108-124 Problem set 2 assigned
Week 3	May 28—June 1	Democratic Transitions	ch. 8
Class 11	May 28	NO CLASS	(Memorial Day Holiday)
Class 12	May 29	REVIEW DAY	Problem set 2 DUE
Class 13	May 30	Bottom-Up Democratic Transitions	(3) 270-291 (2) 266-290
Class 14	May 31	Top-Down Democratic Transitions	(3) 292-312 (2) 290-307
Class 15	June 1	Professionalization Seminar	Research design assigned
Week 4	June 4—8	Cultural Determinants of Democracy Nations, Nationality & Identity	ch. 7, 14 (Special readings)
Class 16	June 4	Cultural Arguments, Civic Culture, Religion	(3) 224-242 (2) 214-235
Class 17	June 5	Empirical Assessment, Experiments	(3) 242-260 (2) 235-258
Class 18	June 6	Ethnic, National, and Civic Identity	Canvas: Essentials of CP ch. 3
Class 19	June 7	Political Parties and Party Systems	(3) 586-601 (2) 604-619
Class 20	June 8	Social Cleavages and (Party) Identity	(3) 601-621 (2) 620-641
Week 5	June 11—15	Problems with Group Decision Making Types of Democracies	ch. 14, 11 ch. 12
Class 21	June 11	Decision-making, Duverger's Theory	(3) 621-640 (2) 641-666
Class 22	June 12	REVIEW DAY	Research design due
Class 23	June 13	Problems with Group Decision Making	(3) 410-422 (2) 415-427
Class 24	June 14	Median Voter & Arrow's Theorem,	(3) 423-439 (2) 427-444
Class 25	June 15	Presidential, Parliamentary Systems	SKIM (3) 454-509 (2) 458-522
Week 6	June 18—22	Varieties of Dictatorship	ch. 10
Class 26	June 18	Typology of Authoritarian Regimes	(3) 355-376 (2) 351-374
Class 27	June 19	Regime Survival, Selectorate Theory	(3) 376-400 (2) 374-402
Class 28	June 20	REVIEW DAY (new material)	
Class 29	June 21	FINAL EXAM REVIEW	(There will be treats)
Class 30	June 22	FINAL EXAM	Have a great summer!