

Comparative Politics Syllabus

Welcome to Comparative Politics!!!

Comparative politics is an interesting field of study because it encompasses both specific political topics and a method of doing political science research. In this course we will study the structures, functions, and processes of selected political systems, examining the domestic politics of different countries and how comparing those politics can give us a greater understanding of the world. Finally, we will examine how the comparative method can be used to better understand relevant political topics in the United States.

Student Learning Objectives

- Define and apply foundational concepts in comparative politics, including regime type, sovereignty, political institutions, and state capacity, to describe how political systems are organized and function
- Analyze the structures, functions, and processes of selected political systems, comparing how different countries organize executive, legislative, and judicial institutions.
- Evaluate how institutional design shapes political outcomes, such as representation, accountability, and governance, across a range of democratic and non-democratic systems.
- Explain the comparative method as a research tool, including its strengths and limitations for drawing inferences about political phenomena across countries
- Apply comparative frameworks to the U.S. political system
- Construct evidence-based arguments about contemporary political challenges, using comparative data and case studies to support claims about democratic stability and reform

Contacts and Communication

Office Hours: I will be available in my office every Monday and Wednesday from 3:15 to 4:15 PM. However, I am also happy to schedule a zoom meeting at another time, just send me an email and we can arrange a time.

Email: kscofield@tamusa.edu

Phone Number: 979-803-1653 This is a google voice number. If you hate to email feel free to call or text. Just make sure I know who you are and what you are texting about.

Communicating with the Class: I will leave information that the whole class may need to know on the “Announcement” tab on Blackboard.

Textbooks

This Course will use two textbooks Norton’s *Essentials of Comparative Politics* 8th edition, and *Tyranny of the Minority* by Levitsky and Ziblatt. Both need to be purchased through the course’s Perusall link so that they can use the Perusall program.

Grading Scheme

Readings 25%

Exams over Book Material 25%

Paper on Tyranny of the Minority 15%

Articles 20 %

Participation 10%

Tyranny of the Minority Comparative Analysis 5%

Readings

Assigned text for the class are Norton’s *Essentials of Comparative Politics* 8th edition, and *Tyranny of the Minority* by Levitsky and Ziblatt. Both need to be purchased through the course’s Perusall link so that they can use the Perusall program. Perusall will evaluate quality of student’s reading and comments and give a grade. Ordinarily a 1 will score between a 0 and a 70 depending on the amount of time spent on the reading, a 2=85 and 3=100. These grades will be averaged together to form the reading grade. I will drop two reading grades, so students can miss up to two readings.

Articles

Students will bring two articles in each article discussion day, with a short write-up about the article. Students will be prepared to discuss the articles in class with classmates. Students will send articles to me at least 15 min before class time, so that I can print them and bring them to class. I will drop the two lowest article grades from the course. Articles should be lengthy enough to spark a general class discussion.

Participation

Students will be expected to attend class and be active participants during class discussions. If a student misses more than two classes I will deduct from their participation grade.

Paper over Tyranny of the Minority

Students will write a five page final paper evaluating the book *Tyranny of the Minority*.

Tyranny of the Minority Comparative Analysis

Students will write a brief analysis of how the authors use comparative analysis to make their argument. In order to get fully credit students will bring these to class on 11/23 to discuss.

Exams Over Textbook

There will be two exams over the material in the textbook. The exams will be a mixture of multiple choice and short answer.

Class Policies

Late Work Policy

I will not be accepting late work, since this class relies on students having readings and articles submitted before class for discussion. However, I will drop two article grades and two reading grades.

AI Policy

This course assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Schedule for the Course

Date	Topic/Readings
8/24	Introduction to Class Quick Introduction to Comparative Method
8/26	Comparative Method Chapter One of Textbook Pages 3-12 and 19-25 (Skip sections entitled "can we make a science of comparative politics" and "In Sum")
8/31	Chapter Two: States Pages 31 to 38 and pages 45 to 59

Date	Topic/Readings
9/2	Chapter 3: Nations and Society pages 62-78
9/7	Labor Day – No Class
9/9	Chapter 3 Continued 78-96
9/14	Chapter 4: Political Economy 101-113
9/16	Chapter 4 Continued 113-122
9/21	Chapter 5 Democratic Regimes 139-143, 145-160
9/23	Chapter 5 Democratic Regimes Continued
9/28	Book Exam One
9/30	Chapter 6 Non-democratic Regimes 179-197
10/5	Chapter 6 Continue 198-208
10/7	Podcast Colonialism Extra Article
10/12	Chapter 7 Political Violence 216 to 231
10/14	Chapter 7 Continued 231-240
10/19	Chapter 8 Developed Democracies 245 to 271
10/21	Chapter 8 Continued
10/26	Chapter 9 Post Communist Countries (No Reading)
10/28	Chapter 10 Developing Countries pages 321-343
11/2	Chapter 10 pages 343-353
11/4	Chapter 11 Globalization Reading TOM Introduction and Chapter 1
11/9	Chapter 11 continued pages Reading TOM Chapter 2
11/11	Exam 2
11/16	TOM Chapter 3 Reading
11/18	TOM Chapter 4 Reading
11/23	TOM Chapter 5 Reading and Comparative Method Assignment Discussion
11/25	Thanksgiving Break!
11/30	TOM Chapter 7
12/2	TOM Chapter 8
12/10	Final Paper Due

General School Policies and Resources

Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support

Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').

Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer to peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>. Download the

SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend by the census date will have their financial aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester, a Care report will be submitted, and you will possibly be dropped from the class. Your financial aid may have to be recalculated and a portion of your federal aid may have to be returned to the DoE.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a CARE referral (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the

Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such

discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence.

Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course

syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the Student Code of Conduct (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/documents/Student-Handbook-2022-23.pdf>) or visit the resources available in the OSRR website (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-integrity.html>).