

INTL 4300: Comparative Political Institutions

Spring 2020: Oxford, UK

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Office Hours: By Appointment
Course Webpage: <http://www.shanepsingh.com/teaching.html>

Class Meeting Times: Monday and Wednesday, 9:00AM-11:00AM

Class Location: TBD

Description and Goal of Course: This course will focus on political institutions and their effects on voters, political parties, the economy, policymaking, representation, and more. We will study political institutions comparatively, using countries as our units of analysis. In addition to a focus on electoral institutions, we will discuss presidentialism, parliamentarism, and federalism from a comparative perspective. We will use the tools we acquire to better understand how democracy works across several countries.

Required Readings:

Farrell, David M. 2011. *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. New York: Palgrave. Second Edition.

Lijphart, Arend. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Second Edition.

Several journal articles, available online with your UGA access.

Optional Readings:

Crepaz, Markus M. L. 2017. *European Democracies*. Oxon: Routledge. Ninth Edition.

Student Responsibilities:

Readings: Students are required to do the readings for each class period. I expect everyone to finish the readings for each class ahead of time.

Exams: There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The format of each exam will be announced prior to the exam. The final exam is non-cumulative.

Quizzes: There will be a number of unannounced short quizzes, which will cover material from recent classes and reading assignments. There will be no makeups without a documented, university approved excuse.

Participation/Attendance: This is an upper-level course. As such, students are expected to contribute to the discussion of topics. I will not always seek to lecture for entire class periods. I strongly encourage students to read articles from national and international news sources that are pertinent to class material. (*The New York Times* and *The Economist* are my two favorite news sources.) Remember, you have to be in class to participate—and to take the quizzes!

Grade Distribution:

Exams:	70% (35% each)
Quizzes:	20%
Participation:	10%

Grade Scale:

>=93%:	A
90-92.99%:	A-
87-89.99%:	B+
83-86.99%:	B
80-82.99%:	B-
77-79.99%:	C+
73-76.99%:	C
70-72.99%:	C-
60-69.99%:	D
<60%:	F

Policy on Laptops and Smartphones: The use of smartphones during class is strictly prohibited, but students may use their laptops to take notes or to refer to the readings. Students may not, however, browse the web or check their email. Students caught doing so will lose participation points.

Late/Missed Assignments: Missed assignments will result in a zero without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Students will be penalized for late assignments; 20% of the grade for each day late without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Make-up exams can be arranged with the instructor with a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency.

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Readings and Course Schedule: *The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

Readings with a “*” in front are optional

WEEK 1

1/20 Introduction to Course, Review of Syllabus, the Big Picture, and Democracy

1/22 Types of Democracy: The Majoritarian and Consensus Models

Lijphart, Chapters 1-3

WEEK 2

1/27 Parliamentarism

Lijphart, Chapter 7, 105-115

*Crepaz, Chapter 4 (will be helpful for this class and the next two)

1/29 Presidentialism and Semi-presidentialism

Lijphart, Chapter 7, 105-115 (again)

Chaisty, Paul, and Timothy J. Power. 2019. “Flying Solo: Explaining Single-Party Cabinets under Minority Presidentialism.” *European Journal of Political Research* 58(1): 163-83.

WEEK 3

2/3 Consequences of Presidentialism and Parliamentarism

Linz, Juan J. 1990. Perils of Presidentialism. *Journal of Democracy* 1 (1): 51-69.

Lijphart, Chapter 7, 115-129

*Gerring, John, Strom C. Thacker, and Carola Moreno. 2009. Are Parliamentary Systems Better? *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (3): 327-359.

*Sedelius, Thomas, and Jonas Linde. 2018. “Unravelling Semi-Presidentialism: Democracy and Government Performance in Four Distinct Regime Types.” *Democratization* 25(1): 136-57.

2/5 The Federal/Unitary and Unicameral/Bicameral Divides

Lijphart, Chapters 10 and 11

*Crepaz, Chapter 6

WEEK 4

2/10 Consequences of Federalism and Bicameralism/Midterm Review

Biela, Jan, Annika Hennl, and André Kaiser. 2012. Combining Federalism and Decentralization: Comparative Case Studies on Regional Development Policies in Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and Ireland. *Comparative Political Studies* 45 (4): 447-76.

Druckman, James N., and Michael F. Thies. 2003. The Importance of Concurrence: The Impact of Bicameralism on Government Formation and Duration. *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (4): 2002.

2/12 Midterm Exam

WEEK 5

2/17 Electoral Design 1: Single Member Plurality Systems, the Alternative Vote, and Two-Round Systems

Farrell, Chapters 1-3

*Lijphart, Chapter 8 (will be helpful for discussion of electoral systems)

*Crepaz, Chapter 3 (will be helpful for this class and the next one)

2/19 Electoral Design 2: Proportional Electoral Systems (List and STV) and Mixed Electoral Systems

Farrell, Chapter 4 and 5

Skim Farrell, Chapter 6

WEEK 6

2/24 Electoral Systems' Consequences for the Number of Parties

Amorim Neto, Octavio, and Gary W. Cox. 1997. Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (1): 149-174.

Farrell, Section 7.2 (pages 159-162)

2/26 No Class, Away at Conference

WEEK 7

3/2 Electoral Systems' Consequences for Party Ideologies/Positioning

Dow, Jay K. 2011. Party-System Extremism in Majoritarian and Proportional Electoral Systems. *British Journal of Political Science* 41 (2): 341-361.

Ezrow, Lawrence. 2011. Reply to Dow: Party Positions, Votes and the Mediating Role of Electoral Systems? *British Journal of Political Science* 41 (2): 448-452.

*Crepaz, Chapter 2

3/4 Electoral Systems' Consequences for Turnout and Attitudes Toward Democracy

Jackman, Robert W. 1987. Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 81 (2): 405-424.

*Banducci, Susan A., Todd Donovan, and Jeffrey A. Karp. 1999. Proportional Representation and Attitudes About Politics: Results from New Zealand. *Electoral Studies* 18 (4): 533-555.

WEEK 8

3/9 Compulsory Voting/Final Exam Review

Singh, Shane P. 2019. "Compulsory Voting and Parties' Vote-Seeking Strategies." *American Journal of Political Science* 63(1): 37-52.

Umbers, Lachlan M. forthcoming. "Compulsory Voting: A Defence." *British Journal of Political Science*.

3/11 Final Exam