

# **POL 002: Introduction to Comparative Politics**

## **University of California, Davis**

Spring Quarter, 2021  
Tuesday and Thursday  
12:10-1:30pm (live online via Zoom)

Live lecture URL: <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/91243195309>  
Class YouTube URL: <https://tinyurl.com/5df47jub>  
Class Discord Invite URL: <https://discord.gg/DeSsSZUWPM>

**Instructor:** Dr. Isaac Hale  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday, 11 AM - noon via Zoom (or by appointment)  
**Office Hours Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/99868190920>

**Teaching Assistant:** Rico La Viña  
**Email:** [eblavina@ucdavis.edu](mailto:eblavina@ucdavis.edu)  
**Sections:** A01 (Tuesday, 9:00-9:50 AM) & A02 (Tuesday, 10:00-10:50 AM)  
**Section Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/98721902247>  
**Office Hours:** Wednesday, 10 AM-noon via Zoom (or by appointment)  
**Office Hours Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/96997680647>

**Teaching Assistant:** JD Mussel  
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**Sections:** A03 (Wednesday, 8:00-8:50 AM) & A06 (Wednesday, 9:00-9:50 AM)  
**Section Zoom Link:** <http://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/92592445529>  
**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 9-11 AM & 2-3 PM via Zoom (or by appointment)  
**Office Hours Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/94715407078>

**Teaching Assistant:** Sandeep Regmi  
**Email:** [sregmi@ucdavis.edu](mailto:sregmi@ucdavis.edu)  
**Sections:** A04 (Thursday, 2:10-3:00 PM) & A05 (Thursday, 3:10-4:00 PM)  
**A04 Section Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/95953969537>  
**A05 Section Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/93048356461>  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 3:10-5:10 PM via Zoom (or by appointment)  
**Office Hours Zoom Link:** <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/91523093338>

## **Course Description**

The study of politics can generally be divided into four broad sub-fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations and Political Theory. Of these four, Comparative Politics has the least helpful name. What makes it different from International Relations? Is it just an extension of American Politics research to a global context? Comparative Politics does have much in common with both fields, but it stands on its own as well.

This course is not really an in-depth introduction to the entire subfield of Comparative Politics – that is simply too much to ask in a single quarter. If this class piques your interest, you are highly encouraged to seek out additional upper division Comparative Politics courses which will provide more detailed explorations of specific topics in the sub-field. Instead, this class will attempt to provide a broad overview of the main concepts and research areas that dominate Comparative Politics. Each week will focus on a different topic, and will feature readings, lecture, and discussion that will unpack why that topic is important to the study of Comparative Politics.

Substantively, this class will address the interplay between the two main branches of Comparative Politics: institutions and behavior. The institutional approach to Comparative Politics examines how variation in institutions across countries (or other politically relevant units) shape political outcomes, incentives, and policy. While institutions provide the framework within which political actors operate, the behavioral approach allows us to understand how and why those actors behave the way they do within those constraints. Understanding both approaches is critical for a holistic view of Comparative Politics.

I also know that the transition to online courses means that the course structures you are probably used to at UC Davis are not appropriate this quarter. As such, I have taken several steps to make this course as engaging and accessible as possible. There will be no midterm or final exam for this course. Instead, the course will have brief weekly response papers and a short final paper. This will help ensure that students face less time pressure and that each graded assignment is worth less of the total grade.

The class will feature both live lectures on Zoom (at the regularly scheduled class time) and lecture recordings will be uploaded to YouTube. I encourage you to attend live lecture when possible – there will be opportunities for Q&A engagement every class. Because this class is about current events, we will also be discussing new developments in the campaign every class. If you sometimes cannot attend class though, don't worry: you can watch the lecture recording at a time that works for you. Regardless, you are expected to keep up with the class material. The links for both the live lecture and the YouTube channel are posted at the top of the syllabus.

One final note – this course is meant to be fun! While the material in this class will take a broad perspective on Comparative politics, our discussions should be extremely relevant to recent political events. If there is something happening in the news that is relevant to our class, I will be sure to allocate time to discuss it. Elections, changes in government, institutional reform, and policy debates are all fair game!

## **Class Expectations**

### ***Live Lecture***

Because of the COVID-19 suspension of in-person classes, all lectures will be given digitally on Zoom. These lectures will be given live on Zoom during the normal class time. There will be opportunities for students participating live to ask questions during lecture. To join lectures throughout the session, use the following link: <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/91243195309>

### ***Lecture Recordings***

Lectures will be recorded and posted to YouTube for students who are not able to attend lecture at the

regular time. The YouTube link for class lectures is <https://tinyurl.com/5df47jub>. You are responsible for keeping up with lecture and should take care not to fall behind.

### ***Sections***

Sections in this course will be dedicated to going over the reading for the week. Some of the questions asked in the response papers will ask about material gone over in section, so it strongly behooves you attend. Sections will be held live and will not be recorded. I encourage you to attend the office hours of your TA (or the other TAs) if you are unable to attend.

**There will be a section every week EXCEPT for week 1.**

### ***Office Hours***

The office hours for the instructor and TAs are listed at the top of this syllabus. You can join our Zoom office hours using the links provided at the beginning of the syllabus.

In addition, we are happy to set up additional office hours at a time more convenient for you. Send us an email if you wish to do so. Once you have scheduled additional office hours you may use that same link to meet with us.

### ***Online Access***

All readings and documents for this course can be accessed through the Canvas website or via hyperlinks in the syllabus schedule. Messages will be sent by me via Canvas, so make sure you have email notifications for Canvas messages activated.

### ***Participation***

Because this class is fully online, “participation” will not be a part of your grade. However, I still encourage you to ask questions, participate in the class chat, and share your opinions. There will be opportunities to do so during the virtual lecture.

### ***Email***

I welcome questions and comments, either by email or by Canvas message. When you email me, you should compose your email as you would any piece of professional correspondence. I will respond to your emails as quickly as possible, but please do not expect a quick response to email sent on weekends or after 5pm on any day.

### ***Lecture Slides***

Slides will be used in class on most days. Slides will be posted to Canvas before class.

### ***Class Discord***

There is a Discord channel for this class. Participation is not required and will not affect your grade. You may use it to ask me questions, chat about the class, talk politics, and socialize. While you are encouraged to discuss class material with each other, please keep in mind that you are expected to complete your assignments individually. You may join using the following link:

<https://discord.gg/DeSsSZUWPM>

## Required Texts

There is **no** required textbook for this course. You may access all readings through the Canvas portal for this class or via hyperlinks in the syllabus.

## Grading

Grading for this course will be calculated as follows:

Response Papers (best 7 out of 8)	70%
<u>Analytic Essay</u>	<u>30%</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

The final letter grade will be assigned according to the standard table:

97-100: A+	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+
93-96: A	83-86: B	73-76: C	63-66: D
90-92: A-	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	60-62: D-
			00-59: F

If you are 0.5 points or less from the next letter grade at the end of the course, the grade submitted to the registrar will be rounded up to the next letter grade. You will not be able to see this rounding on Canvas.

All grading items listed above are detailed in the sections that follow.

### Analytic Essay

In lieu of a final exam, you are required to submit an analytic essay for this class. Make sure to use 12-point font, one-inch margins, double-spacing, and proper citation format. Additionally, please number each page. The essay should be roughly four-five pages long (not including the bibliography). Essay prompts with formatting & grading guidelines are posted to Canvas.

### Response Papers

There are no exams in this class. However, 70% of your grade will be determined by **eight (8)** short weekly response papers. The response papers are a means for you to engage on a deeper level with the (often complex!) articles and chapters we are reading for class.

**There will be a response paper every week EXCEPT for weeks 1 and 10.**

Each response paper will be short (generally less than a page), though the exact length will vary from paper to paper. Each one should take you no more than an hour to complete. Your lowest scoring response paper will be dropped from your final grade.

**Prompts will be posted to Canvas at 5:00 PM every Thursday. You will have 72 hours to complete each assignment, meaning submissions will close at 5:00 PM each Sunday.**

Make sure to use 12-point font, one-inch margins, and double-spacing. All response papers will receive in-text comments on Canvas via the SpeedGrader tool.

## **Grade Appeals**

If you are not satisfied with the grade you receive on an assignment or exam, please take the following steps:

- 1) Review any comments/feedback I or the TAs have provided.
- 2) If you still have questions, go the office hours of the TA who graded you, or contact them by email.
- 3) If you still believe the grade you received is in error, submit a one-paragraph written request for a regrade by email. If the request is approved, your work will receive a completely new evaluation by me. Your score may increase, decrease, or stay the same.

## **Late Submissions**

Do not wait until the night before it is due to begin to work on an assignment. Life is complicated and full of unexpected surprises. Plan for uncertainty by managing your time efficiently. Even if your work is not complete because something unexpected interfered, submit what you have accomplished prior to the emergency. After-the-fact extensions will be granted only under extreme circumstances, and at my sole discretion.

If you know in advance that you will miss an assignment deadline, you may submit a partially completed assignment early — and then appeal for an extension.

Response papers submitted late will have 10% deducted from their final score for every day they are late. This penalty begins immediately following the day and time the assignment is due and will not be prorated. Late analytic essays will not be accepted after the end of the quarter.

## **Writing Resources**

There are lots of writing resources still available, even with social distancing. The writing center (<https://tutoring.ucdavis.edu/writing>) provides video resources and handouts with writing guides. They also offer one-on-one appointments with both professional specialists and undergraduate peer tutors. If you do not feel confident in your writing, I highly encourage you to take advantage of these resources.

## **Disabilities**

UC Davis encourages qualified students with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. I am strongly committed to the same policy. If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact the Student Disability Center at (530) 752-3184 as soon as possible to identify and document your specific needs. Additionally, it is your responsibility to contact me privately immediately at the beginning of the session (i.e., within the first week) so we can discuss how to accommodate your needs. Do not wait until just before an assignment deadline or an exam to inform me of a learning disability.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless otherwise specified by me. Any reference materials used to prepare an assignment must be cited. The following document contains specific guidelines for avoiding plagiarism: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/plagiarism.pdf>. In general, you must cite the person at the end of the sentence in which you use another person's idea. When you use a specific phrase, you must put that phrase in quotation marks and cite the original author at the end of the sentence in which you use the phrase. If you wish to submit a piece of writing that you have used in another class, you must receive my permission before doing so.

## Weekly Assignments and Topics

The list below indicates reading assignments and class topics. All journal articles and other readings will be available on Canvas or linked below. You should do each day's readings before that day's class. I will generally keep us on schedule but note that discussions may bleed over from one class to the next.

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Week 1		
Tues, Mar 30	Course Introduction & Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the Syllabus</li> </ul>
Thurs, Apr 1	The Comparative Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: O'Neil, Patrick. 2012. <i>Essentials of Comparative Politics</i>, chapter 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Gerardo Munck. 2007. "The Past and Present of Comparative Politics." In Munck and Snyder, <i>Passion, Craft and Method in Comparative Politics</i>. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.</li> </ul>
Week 2		
Tues, Apr 6	Presidentialism and Parliamentarism I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Shugart, Matthew. 2006. "Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations." <i>The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions</i>.</li> <li>McElroy, Justin. 2017. "Timeline: the B.C. Election that took 52 days." <i>CBC News</i>. <a href="http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/timeline-the-b-c-election-that-took-52-days-1.4184196">http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/timeline-the-b-c-election-that-took-52-days-1.4184196</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Cheibub, J. A., &amp; Limongi, F. (2002). "Democratic Institutions and Regime Survival: Parliamentary and Presidential Democracies Reconsidered." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 5(1), 151–179.</li> </ul>

Thurs, Apr 8	Presidentialism and Parliamentarism II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pillalamarri, Akhilesh. 2016. “America Needs A Parliament.” <i>The National Interest</i>. <a href="http://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-needs-parliament-17220">http://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-needs-parliament-17220</a></li> <li>• Canvas: Mainwaring, S., &amp; Shugart, M. S. (1997). Juan Linz, “Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal.” <i>Comparative Politics</i>, 29(4), 449–471.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Horowitz, Donald L. 1990. “Comparing Democratic Systems.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, Vol. 1, Issue 4, 73-79.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b>		
Tues, Apr 13	Legislative Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Laver, Michael. 2008 “Legislatures and Parliaments in Comparative Context.” <i>The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions</i>.</li> <li>• Canvas: Carey, J. M. (2003). “Discipline, Accountability, and Legislative Voting in Latin America.” <i>Comparative Politics</i>, 35(2), 191–211.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Heller, W. B. (2007). “Divided Politics: Bicameralism, Parties, and Policy in Democratic Legislatures.” <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 10(1), 245–269.</li> </ul>
Thurs, Apr 15	Semi-presidentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Selection from Shugart, Matthew and John Carey (1992). <i>Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics</i></li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b>		
Tues, Apr 20	Country Case: France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Selection from Elgie, Robert (2002). <i>Divided Government in Comparative Perspective</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Pierce, Roy. (1991). “The Executive divided against itself.” <i>Governance</i>, 4(3), 270–294.</li> </ul>

Thurs, Apr 22	Electoral Systems I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electoral Systems Factsheet. 2017. Government of Canada.</li> <li>• Electoral Systems 101, FairVote: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y3zhspsp">https://tinyurl.com/y3zhspsp</a></li> <li>• Electoral Systems Around the World, FairVote: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y3ufplpp">https://tinyurl.com/y3ufplpp</a></li> <li>• Canvas: Gallagher, M., &amp; Mitchell, P. (2018). “Dimensions of Variation in Electoral Systems.” <i>The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems</i>, 23.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Norris, Pippa. "Choosing electoral systems: proportional, majoritarian and mixed systems." <i>International Political Science Review</i> 18, no. 3 (1997): 297-312.</li> </ul>
Week 5		
Tues, Apr 27	Electoral Systems II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Grofman, B. (2016). “Perspectives on the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.” <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 19(1), 523–540.</li> <li>• Drutman, Lee. 2017. “The Case for Proportional Voting.” <i>National Affairs</i>. <a href="http://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-case-for-proportional-voting">http://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-case-for-proportional-voting</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Carey, J. M., &amp; Shugart, M. S. (1995). “Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: a Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas.” <i>Electoral Studies</i>, 14(4), 417–439.</li> </ul>

Thurs, Apr 29	Party Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Stokes, S. C. (1999). "Political Parties and Democracy." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Kitschelt, Herbert. 2009. "Party Systems." <i>The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics</i>. Oxford University Press.</li> </ul>
Week 6		
Tues, May 4	Country Case: The United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liptak, Adam. 2013. "Smaller States Find Outsize Clout Growing in Senate." <i>The New York Times</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ar4v54k">https://tinyurl.com/ar4v54k</a> (also on Canvas if paywalled)</li> <li>• Weigel, David. 2016. "How do other countries elect presidents without an electoral college? Pretty easily." <i>The Washington Post</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yxkua4np">https://tinyurl.com/yxkua4np</a> (also on Canvas if paywalled)</li> <li>• Desilver, Drew. 2016. "Trump's victory another example of how Electoral College wins are bigger than popular vote ones." <i>Pew Research Center</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/hvhg4fh">https://tinyurl.com/hvhg4fh</a></li> </ul>
Thurs, May 6	US Institutions in Comparative Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor, Steven. "Reforms: the Possible, the Improbable, and the Unpossible." August 16, 2020. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/vvsp3ayc">https://tinyurl.com/vvsp3ayc</a></li> <li>• Drutman, Lee. (2019). "U.S. Democracy Needs a Multiparty System to Survive" <a href="https://tinyurl.com/vroohe7">https://tinyurl.com/vroohe7</a> (also on Canvas)</li> </ul>
Week 7		
Tues, May 11	Electoral Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Flinders, M. (2010). "Explaining Majoritarian Modification: The Politics of Electoral Reform in the United Kingdom and British Columbia." <i>International Political Science Review</i>, 31(1), 41–58.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Lundberg, T. C. (2018). "Electoral Systems in Context: UK." <i>The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems</i></li> </ul>

Thurs, May 13	Country Cases: Canada, the UK, & New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Johnston, Richard. (2014). "Canada is polarizing -- and it's because of the parties." <i>The Washington Post</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y59ypbaj">https://tinyurl.com/y59ypbaj</a> (also on Canvas if paywalled)</li> <li>• McElroy, Justin. (2014). "3 strikes and you're out: Decisive referendum sounds death knell for electoral reform in B.C." <i>CBC</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y2rs7qd9">https://tinyurl.com/y2rs7qd9</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Leduc, L., Clarke, H. D., Pammett, J. H., &amp; Jenson, J. (1984). "Partisan Instability in Canada: Evidence from a New Panel Study." <i>The American Political Science Review</i>, 78(2), 470–484.</li> </ul>
Week 8		
Tues, May 18	Democratization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvas: Geddes, Barbara. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 2, no. 1: 115-144.</li> </ul>
Thurs, May 20	Country Case: Bolivia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hetland, Gabriel. (2019). "Many wanted Morales out. But what happened in Bolivia was a military coup." <i>The Guardian</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/sb7uo5d">https://tinyurl.com/sb7uo5d</a></li> <li>• Weisbrot, Mark. (2020). "Silence reigns on the US-backed coup against Evo Morales in Bolivia." <i>The Guardian</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y4cpbwpb">https://tinyurl.com/y4cpbwpb</a></li> <li>• Young, Kevin. (2020). "The Bolivian left's election win is a positive sign, but it inherits a dire situation." <i>The Guardian</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y5ljrprs">https://tinyurl.com/y5ljrprs</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Major Coding Error Reveals Another Fatal Flaw in OAS Analysis of Bolivia's 2019 Elections." <i>Center For Economic and Policy Research</i>. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yylhw4nm">https://tinyurl.com/yylhw4nm</a></li> </ul>

Week 9		
Tues, May 25	Country Case: Chile (pt. 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Siavelis, P. M. (2010). <i>President and Congress in Postauthoritarian Chile: Institutional Constraints to Democratic Consolidation</i>. Penn State Press. Chapter 1.</li> </ul>
Thurs, May 27	Country Case: Chile (pt. 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Gamboa, R., &amp; Morales, M. (2016). Chile's 2015 Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of the Game. <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i>, 58(4), 126–144.</li> <li>Sajuria, J. (2017) “Chile just went to the polls — and transformed its legislature.” <i>Washington Post</i>. <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/21/chile-just-went-to-the-polls-and-transformed-its-legislature/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/21/chile-just-went-to-the-polls-and-transformed-its-legislature/</a> (also on Canvas)</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Carey, J. M., &amp; Siavelis, P. M. (2005). “Insurance for Good Losers and the Survival of Chile’s Concertación.” <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i>, 47(2), 1–22.</li> </ul>
Week 10		
Tues, Jun 1	Niche & Far-Right Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Golder, M. (2016). “Far Right Parties in Europe.” <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 19, 477–497.</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canvas: Grant, Z. P., &amp; Tilley, J. (2019). “Fertile soil: explaining variation in the success of Green parties.” <i>West European Politics</i>, 42(3), 495–516.</li> <li>Canvas: Meyer, T. M., &amp; Miller, B. (2015). “The niche party concept and its measurement.” <i>Party Politics</i>, 21(2), 259–271.</li> </ul>
Thurs, Jun 3	<b>Comparative Politics Zoom Jeopardy!</b>	
<b>NO FINAL EXAM – Analytic Essay due 11:59 PM on Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup></b>		