

**POL 114: Introduction to Comparative Politics  
Fall 2020**

**Section B: MWF 10-10:50 Wake Forest Time, Kirby 109**

Instructor: Carrie Coberly  
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202-375-3705 (mobile)

**Office Hours:**

Virtual: Fridays 1-3 pm (sign up at [www.calendly.com/carriecoberly/office-hours](http://www.calendly.com/carriecoberly/office-hours) or just join the waiting room at this [Zoom link](#) (passcode: 880196)

In Person: Email me to request a time on Mondays or Wednesday

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Why are some countries dictatorships and others democracies? Why are some countries rich and others poor? Why do some countries fall into civil war and others manage political conflict peacefully? This course will introduce the main concepts and theories of comparative politics, focusing on the interaction of history, culture, and economics in shaping political systems. Using contemporary and historical examples from around the world, we will challenge the meaning of ideas like “dictatorship” and “democracy” and explore how state strength, regime type, and institutional choice shape economic and social policy.

Specifically, by the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Identify key differences between political systems and articulate debates over key concepts.
- Evaluate the relative merit of institutional, cultural, and economic arguments about the origins of a country’s political system and its effect on policy outcomes.
- Assess the advantages and disadvantages of applying general arguments about comparative politics to a specific country.

### **Health and Well-being**

This is a hybrid (online/face-to-face) class. That means that you can take it entirely online or through a combination of weekly in-person discussions and online content. You can switch to the online format at any time, so if you are feeling ill (even just a cold) or attended a large or unmasked gathering, you can (and should!) participate in class online - the content will be the same in either format. In line with [Wake Forest University](#) and [CDC](#) policy, in face-to-face classes, all students must properly wear cloth masks and maintain a distance of six feet from each other. **Your health and welfare are my highest priority, so please let me know if you are having any problems or have any concerns.** Please also review the full university policy on classroom behavior in the time of COVID at the end of this syllabus.

### Meeting in person and online

In order to keep a safe number of students in face-to-face elements of the course, the class will be divided into three cohorts, one of which will attend class in person on Mondays (cohort M), the second in person on Wednesdays (cohort W), and the third will meet online during class time on Friday (cohort O). *Since we must limit the number of people in a room at a time, it will not be possible to switch in-person cohort days – if you can’t make it to class in person on your day, just attend the online session on Friday.* Occasionally (including the first and last weeks of class), all

students will attend class together online for one or more days. See the Canvas modules for those weeks for specific guidance on what to do.

## Evaluation

Your grade will be based on class activities, two essays, and a semester-long country study project:

- **Class Activities (20% of total grade)**
  - In-class activities, short homework assignments, and reflective statements will reinforce ideas discussed in course readings and lectures. For example, I will ask you to write several reaction paragraphs after class that can help you write the required essays. These activities will be graded credit/no credit, and you need to complete 90% of them to receive an A for this portion of your grade. See the course modules and assignments tab for details on individual assignments.
- **Essays (40%)**
  - The Concepts Essay (20%) will give you the opportunity to discuss a core idea of comparative politics (such as “democracy” or “corruption”), commenting on how the concept is defined in different contexts and how it is used in cross-national analysis.
  - For the Causes Essay (20%), you will select a key question discussed in class (such as, what is the relationship between war and state formation?) and defend your answer to that question using course readings.

Both essays will receive letter grades based on how well you demonstrate your understanding of the ideas discussed in class and on how well you construct your argument. See “Assignments” for links to detailed descriptions of each essay.

- **Case Study and Cross-National Comparison (40%)**

You will also engage in a semester-long research project into the political and economic challenges in a single country of your choice. This project will have two main components: an individual country study and a group project comparing countries.

  - For the individual project (25%), you will identify a key policy question in your country and propose an answer to that policy question in the form of a blog post or podcast.
  - For the group project (15%), you and your team members will compare how each of your countries approaches key questions in comparative politics, concluding with a debate on the merits of each approach.

Each project has several graded and credit/no-credit elements, please see the assignments tab for further information.

## Course Schedule

This class is divided into three units – state, regime, and government. In each, we will discuss core concepts, theories of change, and the policy implications of those theories. As much as possible, I break each unit into weeks in which I introduce an argument in recorded lectures and readings, we discuss the details of the argument in our in-person/on-line synchronous meeting, and you apply the argument to a specific country or countries in group discussions and activities.

### Key Dates

Monday, September 28

Last day to drop with no penalty

Friday, October 2	Essay 1 due
Monday, October 26	Last day to withdraw from class
Friday, November 6	Essay 2 due
Wednesday, December 2	Final part of Group Project due
Friday, December 11	Final part of Individual Project due

I have tried to keep course readings to 50 pages/week, but occasionally ask for more (when we need to compare and contrast two different theories, for example). My goal and expectation is that you spend nine hours a week on all elements of this class – reading/watching course material, participating in class discussion, and preparing assignments. Detailed information on daily class content and activities can be found in each Canvas module. Please note you are not required to do the “Background” readings. I include these sources for your general reference or as a starting point for sources if you choose to write an essay on a related topic.

### **I. State Formation**

#### **Wednesday, August 26**      What are states?

- Weber, Max. 1918. “Politics as a Vocation,” 1-5 (paragraphs 2-23 only). In H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Translated and edited), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, pp. 77-128, New York: Oxford University Press, 1946. (5 pages)
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1968. “Political Order and Political Decay.” In *Political Order in Changing Societies*. Yale University Press, 1-24. (24 pages)
- Wimmer, Andreas. 2019. “Why Nationalism Works and Why It Isn’t Going Away.” *Foreign Affairs* 98(2): 27-34. (7 pages)

#### **Friday, August 28**      What is state capacity?

- Levitsky, Stephen and Maria Victoria Murillo. 2009. “Variation in Institutional Strength.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 115-118 only. (3 pages)
- Hanson, Jonathan and Rachel Sigman. 2013. “Leviathan’s Latent Dimensions: Measuring State Capacity for Comparative Political Research.” Unpublished Manuscript. (NOTE: Read p. 1-9 only; sections 1-3.3) (3 pages)
- Rose-Ackerman, Susan and Bonnie J. Palifka. 2016. “What is Corruption and Why Does it Matter” In *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*. Cambridge University Press, 3-26 only. (23 pages)

#### **Week of August 31-September 4**      Causes: State Formation – Historical

- Charles Tilly. 1985. “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in Peter Evans, et al. eds., *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge University Press, 169-186. (17 pages)
- North, Douglass and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England.” *The Journal of Economic History*, 49(4): 803-832. (29 pages)
- Hui, Victoria Tin-Bor. 2005. *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge University Press. 1-7, 38-41, 168-190. (25 pages)
- Thies, Cameron G. 2005. “War, Rivalry, and State Building in Latin America.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 451-465. (14 pages)

## Week of September 7-11

### Contemporary State Development

- Evans, Peter. 1995. "States and Industrial Transformation." In *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Princeton University Press, 18-32. (14 pages)
- Rose-Ackerman, Susan and Bonnie J. Palifka. 2016. "What is Corruption and Why Does it Matter" In *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*. Cambridge University Press, 27-36 only. (10 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - McDonnell, Erin Metz. 2017. "Patchwork Leviathan: How Pockets of Bureaucratic Governance Flourish within Institutionally Diverse Developing States." *American Sociological Review* 82(3) 476-510. (34 pages)
  - Persson, Anna, Bo Rothstein and Jan Teorell. 2013. "Why Anticorruption Reforms Fail – Systemic Corruption as a Collective Action Problem." *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 26(3): 449-471. (22 pages)

#### Background reading

Dimant, Eugen and Guglielmo Tosato. 2018. "Causes and Effects of Corruption: What has the Past Decade's Empirical Research Taught Us? A Survey." *Journal of Economic Surveys* 32(2): 335-345.

## Week of September 14-18

### Consequences: Economic Development and Service Delivery

- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail*. New York: Currency, 3-95. (Chapters 1-3; 92 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - Lee, Melissa M., Gregor Walter-Drop, and John Wiesel. 2014. "Taking the state (back) out? Statehood and the delivery of collective goods." *Governance* 27(4): 635-654.
  - Cingolani, Luciana, Kaj Thomsson, and Denis De Crombrughe. 2015. "Minding Weber more than ever? The impacts of state capacity and bureaucratic autonomy on development goals." *World Development* 72: 191-207.
- Read 1 article about your country

#### Background reading

Olken, Benjamin. 2007. "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia." *Journal of Political Economy* 115(2): 200-249

## Week of September 21-25

### Consequences: State Failure

- Bates, Robert H. 2008. "State failure." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 1-12. (12 pages)
- Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90. (15 pages)
- Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545. (16 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

### Background reading

Krasner, Stephen and Carlos Pascual. 2005. "Addressing State Failure." *Foreign Affairs* 84(4): 153-163.

Moss, Todd, Gunilla Pettersson, and Nicolas van de Walle. 2006. "An Aid-Institutions Paradox? A Review Essay on Aid Dependency and State Building in Sub Saharan Africa." Center for Global Development Working Paper Number 74

[https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/5646\\_file\\_WP\\_74.pdf](https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/5646_file_WP_74.pdf) (28 pages)

Monten, Jonathan. 2014. "Intervention and state-building: comparative lessons from Japan, Iraq, and Afghanistan." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 656(1): 173-191.

## **Week of September 28-October 2**

### State Development – Review

- Read ONE of the following:
  - King, Charles. 2012. "The Scottish Play." *Foreign Affairs* 91(5): 113-124. AND Johnson, Steven. 2017, October 28. "When Rich Places Want to Secede." *The Atlantic* <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/10/catalonia-secede-rich-region/544244/> (12 pages)
  - Walls, Michael. 2009. "The Emergence of a Somali State: Building Peace from Civil War in Somaliland" *African Affairs*, 108(432): 371-389. (17 pages)
  - Jude, Johannes. 2017. "Contesting borders? The formation of Iraqi Kurdistan's de facto state." *International Affairs* 93(4): 847-863. (16 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

## **II. Regime Change**

### **Week of October 5-9**

#### Concepts: Regime type

- Robert Dahl. 1971. "Democratization and Public Opposition." *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press, 1-16. (16 pages)
- Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is ... And Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 67-73. (6 pages)
- Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65. (14 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. 2010. "Democracy and dictatorship revisited" *Public Choice* 143(1/2): 67-101 (34 pages)
  - Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. 2014. "Autocratic breakdown and regime transitions: A new data set." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(2): 313-331. (17 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

### Background Reading

Zakaria, Fareed. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76: 22-43.

Amartya Sen. 1999. "Democracy as a Universal Value." *Journal of Democracy* 10(3): 3-17.

Carothers, Thomas. 2002. "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13(1): 5-21.

## Week of October 12-16

### Transitions to democracy – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves

- Robert Dahl. 1971. "Historical Sequences." *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press, 33-47. (14 pages)
- Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi. 1993. "Political Regimes and Economic Growth," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7(3): 51-69. (18 pages)
- Ingelhart, Ronald and Christian Welzel. 2005. "Introduction" in *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 1-12. (12 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - Michael Ross. 2001. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53: 325-361. (35 pages)
  - Dunning, Thad. 2008. "Does Oil Promote Democracy?" In *Crude democracy: Natural resource wealth and political regimes*. Cambridge University Press, 1-36. (36 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

#### Background Reading

Huntington, Samuel. 1991. "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 2(2): 12-34.

Moore, Barrington. 1966. *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Zakaria, Fareed. 2003. "A Brief History of Human Liberty." In *The Future of Freedom*. W.W. Norton, p. 29-58.

Geddes, Barbara. 2007. "What Causes Democratization?" In Charles Boix and Susan C. Stokes, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press: ch. 14.

Haggard, Stephan and Robert Kaufman. 2012. "Inequality and regime change: Democratic transitions and the stability of democratic rule." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 495-516.

Weinthal, Erika and Pauline Jones Luong. 2008. "Combating the Resource Curse: An Alternative Solution to Managing Mineral Wealth." *Perspectives on Politics* 4(1): 35-53.

## Week of October 19-23

### Transitions to democracy – 3<sup>rd</sup> wave and contemporary

- Bunce, Valerie J. and Sharon L. Wolchik. 2010. "Defeating dictators: Electoral change and stability in competitive authoritarian regimes." *World Politics* 62(1): 43-86. (23 pages)
- Campante, Filip and Davin Chor. 2012. "Why was the Arab World Posted for Revolution? Schooling, Economic Opportunities, and the Arab Spring." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 26: 167-88. (19 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2000. "From Civil War to Democracy." In *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press, 3-19. (16 pages)
  - Gurses, Mehmet and T. David Mason. 2008. "Democracy Out of Anarchy: The Prospects for Post-Civil-War Democracy." *Social Science Quarterly*, 89(2): 315-336. (21 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

## Week of October 26-30

### Democratic breakdown and backsliding

- Linz, Juan J. 1978. "Elements of Breakdown." In *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, & Reequilibration*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 14-40. (26 pages)

- Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil Society and the Collapse of Weimar Germany," *World Politics* 49: 401-429. (28 pages)
- Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27(1): 5-19. (14 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

## November 2                      Effects: economic development and service delivery

- Read ONE of the following:
  - Acemoglu, Daron, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo, and James A. Robinson. 2019. "Democracy does cause growth." *Journal of Political Economy* 127(1): 47-100. (Read sections I, VII, VII, tables 2 and 7, and figure 2; 16 pages)
  - Besley, Timothy, and Masayuki Kudamatsu. 2006. "Health and democracy." *American Economic Review* 96(2): 313-318. (5 pages)
  - Li, Quan and Rafael Reuveny. 2006. "Democracy and Environmental Degradation." *International Studies Quarterly* 50(4): 935-956. (21 pages)
  - Ott, Jan C. 2010. "Good governance and happiness in nations: Technical quality precedes democracy and quality beats size." *Journal of Happiness Studies* 11(3): 353-368. (13 pages)

## November 4-6                      Regime type: review

- Carothers, Thomas. 2007. "How Democracies Emerge: The 'Sequencing' Fallacy." *Journal of Democracy* 18(1): 12-27. (15 pages)
- Mansfield, Edward D, and Jack L Snyder. 2007. "The Sequencing 'Fallacy.'" *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 5-10. (5 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

### Background reading

Hanson, Jonathan. 2015. "Democracy and State Capacity: Complements or Substitutes?" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 50: 304-330. (26 pages)

Linz, Juan J. and Alfred Stepan. 1996. "'Stateness,' Nationalism, and Democratization." In *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 16-37.

## III.                      Forms of Government

### Week of November 9-13                      Varieties of Democracy - Institutions

- Cheibub, Jose Antonio. 2007. "Introduction" in *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 1-25. (25 pages)
- Horowitz, Donald L. 2003. "Electoral Systems: A Primer for Decision-Makers." *Journal of Democracy* 14(4): 115-127. (13 pages)
- Mainwaring, Scott. 1998. "Party Systems in the Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 9(3): 67-81. (14 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

### Background reading

Lijphart, Arend. 1996. "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies." In Larry Diamond and Mark F. Plattner, eds., *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*. Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 162-74.

Carey, John and Andrew Reynolds. 2011. "The Impact of Election Systems." *Journal of Democracy* 22: 36-47.

## **Week of November 16-20**      Varieties of Democracy - Participation

- Read ONE of the following:
  - Wantchekon, Leonard. 2003. "Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin." *World Politics* 55(3): 399-422. (23 pages)
  - Kruks-Wisner, Gabrielle. 2018. "The pursuit of social welfare: Citizen claim-making in rural India." *World Politics* 70(1): 122-163. (41 pages)
- Read ONE of the following:
  - Wampler, Brian. 2008. "When does participatory democracy deepen the quality of democracy? Lessons from Brazil." *Comparative Politics* 41(1): 61-81. (20 pages)
  - Geissel, Brigitte. 2009. "How to improve the quality of democracy? Experiences with participatory innovations at the local level in Germany." *German Politics and Society* 27(4): 51-71. (20 pages)
- Read 1-2 articles about your country

## **Monday, November 23**      Varieties of Dictatorship

- Read ONE of the following:
  - Malesky, Edmund, Paul Schuler, and Anh Tran. 2012. "The Adverse Effects of Sunshine: A Field Experiment on Legislative Transparency in an Authoritarian Assembly." *American Political Science Review* 106(4): 762-786. (24 pages)
  - Morse, Yonatan L. 2018. "Electoral authoritarianism and weak states in Africa: The role of parties versus presidents in Tanzania and Cameroon." *International Political Science Review* 39(1): 114-129. (14 pages)

### Background Reading

Gandhi, Jennifer. 2008. "The World of Dictatorial Institutions." In *Political Institutions Under Dictatorship*. Cambridge University Press, p. 1-41.

## **Week of November 30-December 4**      Review and Conclusion

### *Review and presentations*

### **Course Policies**

#### Masks and Social Distancing

Each of us shares responsibility for the health and safety of all in a learning space. Maintaining a consistent six feet of distance, wearing a face covering, limiting our gathering sizes, and isolating or quarantining when ill or exposed to someone with the virus are Wake Forest University directives and policies we all must follow. Students are encouraged to visit the Our Way Forward website ([ourwayforward.wfu.edu](http://ourwayforward.wfu.edu)) to stay informed about the latest guidance and review the [Public Health Emergency Addendum to the Student Code of Conduct](#).

Specifically, in the classroom, we will mitigate the risks of virus transfer and take care of our community by abiding by the following safety directives:

- maintain six feet of distance at all times when feasible.
- wear a face covering for the entirety of class. This face covering should cover your mouth and your nose. A face shield without a face covering is not an acceptable substitute for a face covering.
- stay out of class when sick or after being exposed to someone who is sick.

Any student who does not follow these requirements will be asked once to follow the safety directives. I will offer you a mask or ask you to find one. If you do not comply, I will ask you to leave the class for that day. I will also refer the matter to the COVID-19 compliance reporting system. Possible disciplinary actions may follow as described in the Wake Forest University Undergraduate Student Conduct Code Public Health Emergency Addendum.

### Civil discussion

We can only really learn in an environment where we keep an open mind and everyone is valued and respected. We will establish class expectations for civil discussion as a group, but as a starting point, please remember:

- Racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination and inequality exist. We may disagree about their causes and consequences, but we agree to work to better understand them and refrain from personal attacks.
- Personal experiences shared in class remain confidential unless otherwise agreed.
- No individual is expected to serve as a spokesperson for their identity group or country of origin.
- We all make mistakes. Questions and missteps are welcome in an environment of mutual respect and learning.

### Attendance

I will not take attendance in class, but students will need to complete 90% of class activities (listed as “class activities” under the assignments tab), some of which are conducted during class meetings, in order to receive full credit for the “participation” part of your grade. If you cannot attend class in person one day, please attend the online session that week.

### Late assignments

**Every student gets two “free passes” to turn in an assignment late.** If you need more time to complete an essay or part of your project, email me at least 24 hours before it is due. You don’t need to give a reason – just say you are using one of your free passes. Otherwise, you will lose a letter grade for each day your assignment is late. If you are finding completing your assignments challenging in general, email me and we can talk about a schedule that will work for you.

### Challenging a grade

If you disagree with a grade you received on an assignment, you may appeal that grade. To appeal, please submit a 1-2 paragraph explanation why the grade given was inappropriate. I will review the explanation and reevaluate the grade. Re-grade requests must be submitted no earlier than one day after grades have been returned and no later than one week from the time the grade was first received.

### Contact Policy

I am always reachable via email (I respond between 8 am and 9 pm daily) and during my office hours, but will not always respond immediately. I have also provided my phone number to you for

emergencies. I will not respond to questions about grades until 24 hours after they have been returned to you.

#### Academic Honor Code

All students are expected to submit work that is a reflection of their own ideas and to properly cite published sources when referencing the ideas of others. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for an assignment and possibly the course. If you have any questions about proper citation practices or what constitutes plagiarism, please come talk to me. Please review Wake Forest's honor code here: <https://studentconduct.wfu.edu/undergraduate-student-handbook/honor-code-and-conduct-system/>.

#### **Student Resources**

**We are all under unusual stress right now, and it is important we all acknowledge the toll social distance and anxiety are taking on our mental and physical health.** If you have specific needs or require an accommodation in class, please let me know as soon as possible. You may also find the following university resources of help:

- Learning Assistance Center: <https://lac.wfu.edu/>
- Office of Academic Advising: <https://advising.wfu.edu/>
- Wake Forest Office of Wellbeing: <https://thrive.wfu.edu/>
- University Counseling Center: <https://counselingcenter.wfu.edu/>
- Student Health: <https://shs.wfu.edu/>
- Wake Forest Information Systems: <https://is.wfu.edu/student/>