

# Comparative politics

**Code: P-231**

**Term:** Fall 2016

**ECTS credits:** 6

**Lessons per week:** 90 min + 90 min

**Language:** English

**Instructor:** Mgr. Dagmar Kusá, PhD.

**Form of study:** Lecture +Seminar

Meets: Tuesdays 11:10 – 12:40 and Thursdays 10:40 – 12:10 in Tatarka Room

Office Hours: Thursday 2:30-4 pm, Friday 10:00 – 12:00 or by appointment

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# Prerequisites

Intro to Political Science I and Theories of Political Parties and Systems

# Course Objectives

* Introduce the subject of comparative politics; key concepts, principles, theories, thinkers;
* Introduce the methods of comparative politics;
* Apply studied theories and methods to case studies of individual countries and regions;
* Apply studied theories and methods in a term paper.

Contents:

What makes for a democracy? Why have some states evolved towards democracy while others towards authoritarianism and totalitarianism? Can democracy be exported? How does democracy compare in advanced regions? What or who is a state? Are strong states conducive to weak societies? What are the elements of a successful transition after a regime change? What role do elites play in such political process? What shapes political culture of a country? How is it linked to stability and development of a country?

This course is an introductory look at the field of comparative politics. This is a field of systematic approaches towards studying the institutions, processes, actors, structures and cultures of the countries of the world. It is necessarily a selective course and does not intend to cover all of the themes in comparative politics. The focus of this semester is on the development and the state of democracy through the prism of the main approaches in comparative politics since 1950s to the present day.

During the first weeks, we will look briefly at the history of comparative politics as a political science field, at the paradigms and influential thinkers within, and the methods of comparison widely used. The next sections of the course will be devoted to the widespread explanatory approaches within CP including institutional, cultural, pluralist schools of thought, study of political processes and change and the new challenges facing the field of comparative politics.

Required readings:

**Comparative Politics Reader**

SELECTED TEXTS from:

Wiarda, H. 2007. *Comparative Politics: Approaches and Issues*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lijphart: *Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method*

Easton, D. *A Framework for Political Analysis*

Deutsch, K. *The Nerves of Government*

Moore, B. *Social Origins of Democracy*

Skocpol, T. *States and Social Revolutions*

Tilly, C*. Warmaking and* *Statemaking as Organized Crime*

Almond, G. and Verba, S. *Civic Culture*

Putnam, R. 1996 *Making Democracy Work*

Norris, P. *Critical Citizens*

Sen, A.K. *Development as Freedom*

Dahl, R. *A Democracy and Its Critics*

Huntington, S. *The Third Wave.*

Diamond, L. *The Coming Wave* and *Why Are There No Arab Democracies*

Almond, Powell, Dalton, Strom. 2010. *Comparative Politics Today*

All required and a multitude of recommended readings are also available on the course MOODLE page. Furthermore, on Google Drive, there will be extra resources available for individual studied countries.

# Evaluation criteria

Attendance and participation in discussions are crucial in this course. You will learn most from the interactions in the class itself. It is important to read all required texts for the class in advance. It is also expected that you will **follow domestic and international news** and be ready to discuss them and to put them into the context of studied theoretical frameworks. Each of you will have a **presentation** of your country project (within a narrower topic that is discussed in the class at the time).

# Course requirements:

NOTE: All written assignments are to be submitted via the course website. **Late submission of assignments is not possible via Moodle** – after the deadline for each assignment passes, you won’t be able to upload the assignment and will automatically receive 0 points for that assignment. **Late submission (via email) are penalized**

– 10% off the paper grade for submissions that are one day late,

- 20% for submissions that are 2 to 3 days late,

- 50% for up to one week late, and

- 100% for more than one week late.

1. **Active Participation - 10%**
2. **Weekly assignments - 20%.** Short 1-2 page assignments, each detailed on MOODLE.

**NOTE**:You can skip **two of the short weekly assignments** (no questions asked); skipping three or more will automatically result in Fx. In case you submit all of the assignments, the two least scoring ones won’t be counted towards your final grade.

1. **Midterm and Final - 25%** Two closed book exams, consisting of two parts. In the first part, you’ll be asked to demonstrate knowledge of theories and concepts covered in the readings and lectures. Second part will be an essay topic. Your essay should define concepts, understand connections between them, be able to explain and analyze studied institutions and processes, referring to readings and class discussions.
2. **Country project reports and the country project final paper- 30%**
3. **Country project presentation - 15%**  (Must include a printed handout)

***See the back of the syllabus for more detailed instructions on the assignments***

**Plagiarism will result in Fx and will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for review.** Consult the Plagiarism FAQ guidelines on the course Moodle page.

# Course Evaluation (%)

A – excellent: 100-93%,

B – very good: 92-84%,

C – good: 83-74%,

D – satisfactory: 73-63%,

E – sufficient: 62-51%,

Fx – fail: 50-0%.

**Passing a course assumes that student was not absent at more than 4 class sessions.**

# Topics and readings

**WEEK 1**  INTRO

**Tuesday September 13: WELCOME TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS!**

verview of the course, division of tasks, course requirements for the semester ahead.

**WHY COMPARE?**

* What is and what is not comparative politics?
* Main paradigms and shifts in the field,
* prevalent approaches and influences in the current CP literature.

***No short assignment this week***

**Reading: Howard Wiarda: New Directions in CP**

**THURSDAY: STATE HOLIDAY**

**WEEK 2 CONTENT AND METHOD**

**Tuesday September 20: DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD**

**HOW to COMPARE?**

* What is the added value of comparative methodology?
* Comparing few cases, many cases, comparing most similar or most different cases?
* What is the *science* in political science?
* Quantitative or a qualitative approach to comparing political systems?

**Short assignment on Lijphart is due on or before Thursday**

**Reading: Arend Lijphart: The Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method**

Extra reading: Giovanni Sartori: *The Concept Misformation in CP* (Moodle)

John Gerring: *What is a Case Study and What is it Good for?*

***Thursday: Methods workshop***

**WEEK 3 \_ \_ \_POLITICAL SYSTEM**

**Tuesday September 27: Political System and Systems Analysis.**

* Background and context- political science in the post War era;
* Quest for universal theory of decision-making;
* Uses of a model.
* Systems Analysis;
* Communication studies;
* Defining a political system;

**Short assignment on Easton due on Thursday**

**Reading: David Easton: *Framework of Political Analysis*,**

Extra reading: Karl Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government* (on MOODLE)

**WEEK 4 INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONALISM**

**Tuesday October 4: STATES AND SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS**

* What are institutions and institutionalism?
* How do they shape political and social life?
* How have the current political systems evolved from an institutional perspective?
* Historical institutionalism and path dependence

**Short assignment on Moore due on or before Thursday.**

**Reading: Barrington Moore: Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy**

***Thursday October 8: Presentation: Great Britain and/or Russia***

**WEEK 5**

**Tuesday October 11: BRINGING THE STATE BACK IN**

* Why does state receive attention as a separate subject in comparative politics?
* What makes a modern state?
* Attributes of “stateness”
* Stateness and democratization -- which comes first?
* State-building and nation-building
* Democracy,nation-state, and state-nation

**Short assignment on Tilly is due on or before Thursday**

***Thursday October 13: Presentation: India and/or South Africa***

**Required Readings: Charles Tilly: War Making and State Making as Organized Crime**

Recommended reading: Stepan, Linz, and Yadav: The Rise of State-Nations

Fukuyama: *The Missing Dimension of Stateness* (MOODLE)

**WEEK 6 MIDTERM**

**Tuesday October 18**

****TUESDAY: MIDTERM I

**POLITICAL CULTURE**

***Country Project I due on Sunday, October 23***

Follow the instructions at the end of this syllabus and/or on Moodle

**WEEK 7 POLITICAL CULTURE**

**Tuesday October 25 CIVIC CULTURE**

* The concept of a civic culture;
* Mixture of political cultures in a democratic society
* Culture, economy, and institutions;
* Historical legacy of political culture;
* Political culture in a variety of contexts;
* Slovak political culture.

**Short assignment on Almond and Verba due on Thursday**

**Reading: Almond and Verba: Civic Culture chapter 1**

***Thursday October 27: Presentation: USA***

**WEEK 8 Oct. 31- Nov.4**

**READING WEEK**

Carry out research – gather data on civic culture in “your” country

**WEEK 9**

**Tuesday, November 8 CIVIC CULTURE CONTINUED**

* What is democratic elitism?
* What is the role of civic activism in a democratic society?
* What is the relationship between civic culture and stability?
* Read: Almond and Verba, chapter XIII: The Civic Culture and Democratic Stability

**Short assignment on A& V due on Thursday**

**WEEK 10**

**Tuesday November 15: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

* Does political culture determine economic success?
* Or is culture shaped by political institutions and economic development?
* How to measure political culture?
* Political culture explored through a multitude of cases

**Reading: Robert Putnam: Making Democracy Work chapters 4**

***Thursday November 17: STATE HOLIDAY***

**WEEK 11**

**Tuesday November 22: SOCIAL CAPITAL**

* What makes a society is more prone towards civicness?
* How can trust evolve in societies where it is lacking?
* What lessons can be drawn from Italy's trajectory for countries building up democracies?
* Is there a wider regional political culture?
* How is political culture evolving in advanced democracies?

**Short assignment on Putnam due on Thursday**

**Reading: Robert Putnam: Making Democracy Work, ch. 6: Social Capital and Institutional Success**

Recommended: Ronald Inglehart, Pippa Norris

***Thursday, November 24: Presentation: Great Britain II, Norway II***

**WEEK 12 COMPARING DEMOCRACIES**

**Tuesday November 29: COMPARATIVE HAPPINESS**

* from measuring economic development
* to human development
* to subjective well-being
* ...and happiness
* How happy are citizens of various countries?
* Is happiness related to economy? Social welfare services? Culture? Religion?
* ******How do we compare to students in other corners of the world?

**SUBMIT COUNTRY PROJECT REPORT PART II – due by SUNDAY**

**READING: Amartya Sen: Development as Freedom**

Extra literature: Pippa Norris: Critical Citizens, World Happiness Report

***Thursday November 24: Presentation: Norway***

**WEEK 13**

**Tuesday December 6 : Governance**

* Polyarchy:an institutional checklist
* What is democratic pluralism?
* What are the institutional determinants of democracy?
* Measuring quality of democracy in human rights
* ****What makes for a kinder, gentler democracy?

**Country project III (weekly assignment) due on Sunday**

**Reading: Dahl: *Democracy and Its Critics***

Recommended readings: Lijphart: Patterns of Democracy

***Thursday, December 8: Presentation: Slovakia/South Africa***

**WEEK 14**  **DEMOCRATIZATION**

**Tuesday December 13 Democratization:new challenges and boundaries**

* Transitions from authoritarian rule;
* Preconditions for democracy;
* Democratic consolidation;
* Elite circulation and settlement.

**READING: S. P. Huntington, Democracy’s Third Wave**.

Recommended readings: Gould, J. and Szomolányi S. „Elite Fragmentation, Industry and the Prospects for

Democracy in Slovakia: Insights from New Elite Theory (MOODLE)

***Thursday December 10: Presentation: Slovakia***

**WEEK 15**

TUESDAY DEC. 20: FINAL EXAM

**Thursday, December 22: New challenges and boundaries**

* Is a fourth wave of democratization taking place?
* What are the limits and prospects of democracy?

**READING: Larry Diamond: *China and East Asian Democracy: The Coming Wave* and *Why Are There No Arab Democracies?***

Wiarda, “*Frontiers of Research In Comparative Politics*”, in: H. J. Wiarda *Comparative Politics.* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007), pp.233 – 250.

**FINAL PAPER DUE: December 31, 23:55 via MOODLE**

The Country project

Throughout the semester, you will be researching one particular country, its political system, institutions, culture, agents of social change… This research will be conducted in four steps, resulting in the Country project Report I, Country project Report II, Country Project Report III, and the Country project final paper.

You will also present your findings in one presentation to the class during the semester.

Here are some recommendations for approaching the assignments:

* Country project reports are expected to be short essays. Do not merely write up a “shopping list” of facts and information in answer to asked questions. Interpret and analyze them, structure the paper using introduction, main body, and a conclusion. Utilize sub-headings to mark important passages.
* Use the asked questions to delimit your essay – do not try to cover areas outside of asked questions because you found the information, and, on the other hand, do make sure you find relevant information for the questions asked.
* **Explain the data** you use, and include **definitions of concepts** you operate with,
* Use **multiple academic sources** and **cite them properly**, using APA style and citation guide. Always include a **bibliography**.

# List of countries:

**Britain**

**USA**

**Russia**

**Norway**

**India**

**Slovakia**

**South Africa**

**Germany**

**France, Japan, Brazil**

# Country project: Report I

The first country project research will provide you with information and data that will serve as a background for your final paper, analyzing the historical roots of the political system currently in place in your country. This assignment synthesizes and expands on the work you have done for the previous short assignments. **You can use what you wrote so far**, bring it together into one narrative, and elaborate on your arguments using new academic literature relevant to your case study (country project).

Keep structure and format in mind - include a title page and page numbers, make sure essay contains an introduction that states the main argument, analysis of key factors that you identify as important for supporting your main argument, and a conclusion. Provide bibliography at the end, using APA style of citation.

**Use five or more scholarly articles or book chapters** using accessible online databases (use Questia and vzdialeny pristup HAN at UK SAV library) that will provide you with answers to the following questions:

* what was the social structure of the pre-modern society and how did the classes come out of modernization struggles into modernity?
* what was the nature of this transition - (what role did violence or oppression or accommodation and cooperation play in this process?)
* how did the modern state evolve historically as an independent political actor? *Who* was and is the state?

Use Moore and Tilly's texts as the main theoretical foundation for your analysis. **NOTE: Moore and Tilly count as academic sources as well.** That means you have to find at least three more sources to work with, pertaining to your country context.

# Country project: Report II

The country project report II focuses on the character of society in your country and to identify the determinants of its political culture. Utilize the models presented in the course readings to apply to your country by seeking the data that will fit those models.

**Find five or more scholarly articles** (again, Almond & Verba and Putnam also count as sources) using accessible online statistical databases that will provide you with data on the following topics:

* Describe the political culture in your country
  + classify your country using the typology of subject, parochial, and participatory culture provided by **Almond and Verba**,
* Describe in greater detail a selected sub-topic within political culture of your country, qualitative and quantitative analysis (**consult the handout** with detailed instructions on how to use online databases)
  + you may utilize the **concept of civicness** **(Putnam)** and find data for the indicators of civicness index presented by Putnam

Use accessible data (World Values Survey, Gallup Poll, Eurobarometer, etc.) to provide full picture of political culture in the studied country.

# Country project: Report III

The third country project examines the procedural aspects of a democratic regime and governance in your country and, where relevant, recent processes of democratization. This report relies mostly on the text of Robert A. Dahl or A. Lijphart, you may, however, also rely on S. Huntington, and data you collected for the previous reports that pertain to quality of governance.

# Country project: Final paper

10-15 norm pages

The term paper is expected to examine one issue in greater depth through the application of one particular theoretical approach within a selected country. Students are encouraged to develop their argument by application of a theory to a case study or leaning on the debate between two theories. The paper should be c. 10 - 15 norm pages long. It will be graded according to the consistent application of a particular theory to the issue under observation, thorough argumentation and use of evidence, analytical value and contribution to the field, the coherence of logic, use of sources and organization.

**The paper may utilize all of the previously written assignments and country project reports** and string them together in one coherent narrative that seeks to answer the main posed research question.

**Suggested work sequence:**

1. Your final paper will be an **in-depth look at a topic within the country** you were researching throughout the semester.
2. Choose a **narrower theoretical model/topic** you want to explore in your paper (e.g. Putnam’s social capital model, or Lijphart’s consociational democracy). The narrower topic may be determined by the theme of the week in which you present, as you will likely gather most literature on that theme (you may chose a different topic if preferred);

For example, you might like to apply theory or a model from one of the texts we have been reading to your country, testing that theory or model on a different context and/or time. Or you may choose to combine approaches and raise new research questions. **See topic examples directly below**.

1. Formulate the main **hypothesis** and **arguments** to support it.
2. Utilize the **sources** collected within the three **country project reports**, utilize **texts from the course** for theoretical foundations of the paper, and seek out specific sources on your topic.
3. **TALK TO ME** about the sources for your final paper, I will likely have suggestions for sources.
4. Write a **draft of the paper**. Feel free to consult the draft with me. (By the end of the semester).
5. Write the **paper**… make sure to format it properly and cite sources **in APA format and include a bibliography**.

**Topic examples:**

**Social revolutions:** example: Roots of fascism in Germany; Evolution of democracy in India-an anomaly?; Race, language, and religion -- South Africa’s route to apartheid

**State:** Special position of small states in the world market: Slovakia’s choice of economic policies; Statemaking and Warmaking: Relationship of the military and the state in India …; Occupy State!: empire, state, and nation in Russia

**Political culture:** The development of *civicness* in Slovakia after 1993; Changing political participation in USA, Impact of religion on political participation of women in India, Through immigration to happier multicultural cities? The case of Norway; The emergence of national populism and secessionism in Great Britain.

**Institutions and institutional change:** Making Democracy Work?: Territorial administration reform in Slovakia – design and consequences; How does the Indian institutional design impact ethnic conflicts and tensions between regions? Gerrymandering: race and elections in the USA; Russia’s route to presidential monarchy, Societal corporatism and democratic civic culture in Norway,…

**Happiness:**

**Democratization:** Revolution or reform? The process of political change in Czechoslovakia in 1989; Role of the administrative class in Indian transition from colonialism to democracy, Negotiated transition in South Africa – reason for weak justice later?

**Elites:** Corruption and democratic governance – the curious case of Indian democracy, Elite fragmentation as an impediment to consolidated democracy in Slovakia, Elite circulation and regime continuity – political nominations to American public offices…

# COUNTRY PROJECT PRESENTATION

During the first week, you will select a country that will be the topic for your research for the duration of the semester. Your presentation will be **linked to this research**, presenting what you have found so far. It is also to be primarily **focused on the topic of the week** (political culture, transitions,…)

During your presentation, you are in charge of leading the discussion section. **Relate your presentation to the topic we are studying, explain the relevant theory, and use your country as an example**, an illustration of the theoretical problem at hand. Engage your colleagues in discussion.

For seminar presentation, **you are also required to write a one page handout containing the summary of the main arguments, points of critique, and questions for discussion.** Bring copies of the handout for your colleagues.

The presentation **handout** is **not a copy and paste** job. Try to succinctly select and map the main ideas, present them in a scheme, rely on the **sources you found in your research** as well as **readings in the course reader.**

Structure your presentation handout with sub-headings, work with bullet points and illustrations (tables, graphs, schemes…).

**DO NOT READ YOUR PRESENTATION** word for word from a paper or from the PPT.

If using a PPT, use it as an accompaniment, not replacement of your input. Do not crowd slides with text. PPT is mostly a VISUAL support

**Prepare questions for discussion**, or short quizzes,… for other students and be prepared to answer questions in return.

If you have actually read these instructions for your presentation, email me a picture of a flying piglet.

Do use presentation software (PPT, Prezi) if you see it adds value to your talk. However, do not crowd slides with text, or prepare more slides than you can cover in c. 30 minutes.

# Searching for academic sources online:

For the purposes of country project reports and final paper, you will need to find academic sources that will provide you with information

* Use **BISLA** **library (!!!)**
* **Use Google Drive folders** with articles for your case study (you will receive a link via email)
* When googling, use **Google Scholar**
* Search for **annotated bibliographies**
* **Use Questia (BISLA has access)** or other full-text online search engines and databases
* **Get HAN vzdialený prístup from the UK SAV library** (if you have a library card, you can do this online)
* There, search through **ProQuest**, **JSTOR**, **Sage** pulications, **Springer** link
* Utilize journals that sometimes offer free full text articles, such as **Journal of Democracy**
* **Remember: WIKIPEDIA**  **IS N**  **OT AN ACADEMIC SOURCE!**