

COMPARATIVE POLITICS (POLS 1130.001) Fall 2018

Thursdays 10:00-11:15 a.m. (50% online)

Fretwell 121

Professor: Dr. Beth Elise Whitaker Top Hat course code: 917448
Email: bwhitaker@uncc.edu Top Hat course URL: <https://app.tophat.com/e/917448>
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-2:00 p.m. and by appointment (Fretwell 445H)
Preceptor: Scott Christensen (schris32@uncc.edu)
Discussion session (optional): Tuesdays 10:00-11:00 a.m. (Fretwell 445F)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course provides an introduction to the sub-field of political science known as comparative politics. By comparing countries to one another, we seek to understand how various economic, political, and social factors influence the likelihood of everything from civil conflict and military coups d'état to democratization and women's empowerment. The class begins with an overview of the basic methods of comparative political analysis. We then use these tools to explore interactions between politics and economics, the continuum between democracy and authoritarianism, political institutions, patterns of political violence, and the influence of social identities on politics. We illustrate each topic with details from a different country to better understand how general concepts and theories play out in a specific context.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students must complete the following requirements, with points distributed as noted:

15%	Participation
5%	Political Science lab experiments
20%	Homework assignments
20%	First exam
20%	Second exam
20%	Final exam

Participation: Students must use Top Hat on a phone, laptop, or tablet to sign-in for attendance and answer questions about course material. (Go to the link above and select "create account." A subscription is required.) Your participation grade will be the average of two items in the Top Hat gradebook: Course Average and Attendance Record. If you have a compelling reason for missing class (hospitalization, family death, etc.), you can provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office and they will contact your instructors. You can earn additional participation points by speaking in class, attending the weekly discussion session, contributing to online discussions, and doing extra credit (guidelines on Canvas). We begin each class with a discussion of current international events (check <http://bbc.com/news/world/> and <http://nytimes.com/world>).

Political Science lab experiments: Each student is required to participate in the department's lab experiments administered in the middle of the semester. Earning three SONA credits through the online profile and in-lab or online experiments will count as full participation. More information will be posted on Canvas.

Homework assignments: Each student must complete three out of four homework assignments during the semester. The assignments will be submitted via Canvas and will involve both analyzing data and applying the concepts learned in class to real-world contexts. Instructions will be available on Canvas.

Exams: The first exam covers units 1-2, the second exam covers units 3-4, and the final exam covers units 5-6. Comparative methods and concepts will be discussed throughout the semester and thus could be on any exam. The exams will be administered on Canvas during the designated time windows; you will have 60 minutes to answer 50 questions. No make-ups are allowed unless arranged with me in advance.

READING MATERIALS:

The textbook is available at the bookstore and online. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are posted on Canvas (<http://canvas.uncc.edu>). The site also includes lecture slides, grades, useful links, and other course information. For assignment changes and other updates, check your UNC Charlotte email account.

Dickovick, J. Tyler, and Jonathan Eastwood. 2016. *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases. Second Edition.* Oxford University Press.

*Collier, Paul. 2003. “The Market for Civil War.” *Foreign Policy* 136: 38-45.

*Allen, Christopher S. 2007. “The Case for a Multi-Party U.S. Parliament?” In Christian Soe, ed. *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 2007-2008*, McGraw Hill.

*Art, David. 2013. “Why 2013 Is Not 1933: The Radical Right in Europe.” *Current History* 112(752): 88-93.

*Reimann, Jakob. 2016. “[Saudi Arabia vs. Iran: Predominance in the Middle East.](#)” *Foreign Policy Journal* (February 5).

LECTURE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (subject to change):

Topic	Date	Read/watch <u>before</u> class	Homework assignment
Unit 1: Comparative Method and the Modern State	8/23	*Collier article (on Canvas)	Subscribe to Top Hat
	8/30	Textbook: Chapters 1 & 2	
	9/6	Textbook: Chapter 3 Case: United Kingdom (pp. 539-552) Video: British parliament (4 mins)	
Unit 2: Political Economy	9/13	Textbook: Chapter 4 Case: Japan (pp. 482-495)	Homework #1 due Friday, Sept. 14, 5 p.m.
	9/20	Textbook: Chapter 5 Case: China (pp. 412-426) Video: “ The Tank Man ” (85 mins)	
FIRST EXAM on Canvas: Tuesday, September 25, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.			
Unit 3: Democracy & Authoritarianism	9/27	Textbook: Chapter 6 Case: India (pp. 455-467) Video: “ The Other Side of Outsourcing ” (44 mins)	
	10/4	Textbook: Chapter 7 Case: Russia (pp. 525-538)	Homework #2 due Friday, Oct. 5, 5 p.m.
Unit 4: Political Institutions	10/11	Textbook: Chapter 8 Case: United States (pp. 553-568) *Allen article (on Canvas)	
	10/18	Textbook: Chapter 9 Case: Germany (pp. 441-454)	Homework #3 due Friday, Oct. 19, 5 p.m.
	10/25	Textbook: Chapter 10 Case: France (pp. 427-440) *Art article (on Canvas)	
SECOND EXAM on Canvas: Tuesday, October 30, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.			

Unit 5: Contention and Political Violence	11/1	Textbook: Chapter 11 Case: Mexico (pp. 496-509)	
	11/8	Textbook: Chapters 12 & 13 Case: Nigeria (pp. 510-524) Video: " Firestone and the Warlord " (84 mins)	
Unit 6: Politics of Identity: Ethnicity, Gender, Religion	11/15	Textbook: Chapter 14 Case: Brazil (pp. 399-411)	Homework #4 due Friday, Nov. 16, 5 p.m.
	11/22	No class: Happy Thanksgiving!	
	11/29	Textbook: Chapter 15 Case: Iran (pp. 468-481) *Reimann article (online)	
FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 13, 8:00-10:30 a.m. (scheduled exam time)			

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:

You are all adults and will be treated as such. In return, you are expected to behave as adults and to conduct yourself in a professional manner. This includes addressing the professor appropriately, using proper grammar and punctuation in your emails, and treating one another with respect. Examples of unprofessional behavior include but are not limited to: leaving your phone on during class, texting during class, leaving class once it has started (unless it is an absolute emergency), arriving late to class, and emailing the professor as if you were sending a text message to a friend.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students have the responsibility to know and observe the requirements of the [UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity](#). This code forbids cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submissions of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Students who violate the code can be expelled from UNC Charlotte. The normal penalty for a first offense is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to "F." Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty to the course instructor.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

UNC Charlotte is committed to access to education. If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please send me your accommodation letter as early as possible in the semester. You are encouraged to meet with me to discuss the accommodations outlined in your letter. For more information on accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at 704-687-0040 (Fretwell 230).

COUNSELING CENTER:

The Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers individual counseling, group counseling, couples counseling, and consultative services at no charge to students. Students come to counseling to get help for a variety of concerns, including anxiety, symptoms of depression, and relationship issues. To make an initial appointment with a counselor, call 704-687-0311 or stop by CAPS in the building behind the Student Health Center. This first session will help you assess your needs with a counselor and make a plan for how best to address your concerns. CAPS also offers outreach programs including prevention, awareness, and education about mental health treatment.