SUMMARY
This class is an introduction to the study of comparative politics. You will learn about politics in a select group of countries as well as some of the major concepts used in the study of comparative politics. The course covers a range of topics, including the formation of the nation-state, democratization, authoritarianism, the role of religion in politics, political institutions, and economic development. We also will discuss some issues in comparative politics that have been important in the policy-making community in recent years, such as state-building, the resource curse, and income inequality.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
In this class, you will:
- Learn basic concepts in political science and comparative politics;
- Apply these concepts in a wide array of countries;
- Compare countries so as to better understand why they differ in their political and economic trajectories;
- Analyze and evaluate core concepts in comparative politics;
- Critically evaluate writings on a range of topics and countries;
- Demonstrate your knowledge through two exams.

CREDIT HOURS AND TIME USE
This is a three credit class: 150 minutes a week will be spent in lecture and discussion section, and you should plan to spend an average of 5 hours per week reading, preparing for discussion section, and studying for the two exams.

READING
There are two required texts for this class that you can purchase at the GWU bookstore.
- David J. Samuels, *Comparative Politics* (Pearson).

The other required readings (marked with an *) are available as pdf files through e-reserves on the Blackboard system.

BLACKBOARD
In addition to the required reading, you will find other useful information on Blackboard, such as a copy of the syllabus, information about exams, and your grades. I also will post tables, graphs, or maps shown in lecture. I will not be posting the full slide presentations from class.

To access Blackboard, you must have a Colonial e-mail account and be registered for this course. To log in, go to http://blackboard.gwu.edu and type in your NetID and email password. If you have problems or questions, try going to http://it.gwu.edu/. Please try to access Blackboard as soon as possible to make sure that you are in the system and that you understand its various features.
NOTE: you may have trouble accessing the articles posted on Blackboard if you are not using a university-networked computer. In that instance, you should download the articles on a university-networked computer and print or save them to read at home.

TECHNOLOGY

Laptop computers, iPads and related devices are not allowed during the lecture. During exams, students may not use any electronic devices, such as cell phones, PDAs, I-pods, dictionaries, or any other electronic equipment. Students found using any such device will fail the exam.

CURRENT EVENTS

One goal of the class is to make you a more sophisticated consumer of current events. To keep up with current events, I suggest you regularly read one of the major national newspapers (The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal) or international newspapers (Financial Times). Some useful magazines and journals that are available through Gelman library include The Economist, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, and the Journal of Democracy.

I will post articles of interest on the course blog, “News You Can Use,” which is located under the tools tab. You are welcome to post articles of interest there, or to comment on any of the existing posts. There is a separate tab, Weblinks, under which you can find some websites of relevance to the course material.

REQUIREMENTS

Your grade will be based on the following:

Midterm/Final: Both exams will consist of multiple choice questions, identifications, and essays. The first exam, on March 8, will cover all course material through March 1. The final will cover the entire class and will be given during exam week. Both exams are closed book: you are not allowed to consult books, notes, or any other class material during the exams.

Discussion sections: the weekly sections are extremely important for this class, as it is at these sessions that you have a chance to discuss the assigned readings. Attendance is mandatory and you will be evaluated on your contributions to the discussion. You must do the assigned reading prior to the discussion section. You will be allowed to miss one discussion section, no questions asked, and this will not affect your grade. Any further, unexcused absences will count against your participation grade.

Teaching Assistants:

- Mondays: Stas Gorelik (stasgorelik@gwmail.gwu.edu)
- Tuesdays: Fabiana Perera (fabiana@gwmail.gwu.edu)
- Wednesdays: Samer Anabtawi (anabtawi@gwmail.gwu.edu)
- Thursdays: Hilary Collins (hcollins@gwmail.gwu.edu)

GRADING

Class participation (discussion section): 25%
Midterm exam: 30%
Final exam: 45%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will
be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-student-conduct.

**SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Additional information is available at https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu. Please speak with me in the first week of class to discuss what kinds of accommodations can be made for you.

**OTHER CLASS POLICIES**

*University Policy on Religious Holidays:*
Students should notify me during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.

*Emergencies during Class:*
If we experience some kind of an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave the classroom, we will meet at the park across the street from ESIA to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.

**INTRODUCTION & THE COMPARATIVE METHOD**

**January 18: Introduction**

**January 20: NO CLASS (INAUGURATION DAY)**

**January 25: How, and Why, We Compare Politics**


* “After the Political Science Relevance Revolution.”

**STATES AND SOCIETIES**

**January 27: The State and Its Formation**


* Fukuyama, “The Imperative of State-Building.”
* Herbst, “War and the State in Africa.”

**February 1: Weak, Failing, and Phantom States**


* Byman and King, “The Mystery of Phantom States.”

**February 3: Social Forces and Collective Action**
* Putnam, “Bowling Alone.”
* Foley and Edwards, “The Paradox of Civil Society.”

**February 8: Nationalism, creator and destroyer of states**

* Mayall, “Irredentist and Secessionist Challenges.”
* De Las Casas, “Is Nationalism Good for You?”
* Matthijs, “Europe After Brexit.”

**REGIMES AND REGIME CHANGE**

**February 10: The Rise and Demise of the Arab Spring**

Film showing in class: Egypt in Crisis
* Brown, “Egypt’s wide state reassembles itself.”

**February 15: Democracy and Democratization**

* Sen, “Is Democracy a Universal Value?”
* Inglehart and Welzel, “How Development Leads to Democracy.”

**February 17: Authoritarianism**

* Guriev and Treisman, “The New Dictators Rule by Velvet Fist.”
* Diamond and Mosbacher, “Petroleum to the People.”

**February 22: Democratic Institutions**


**POLITICAL ECONOMY**

**February 24: Political Economy of Development**

Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, chp. 11, “Political Economy of Development.”
* Acemoglu and Robinson, “The Making of Prosperity and Poverty.”
* Sachs, “Government, Geography and Growth.”

**March 1: Political Economy of Redistribution**

Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, chp. 12, “Political Economy of Redistribution.”
* Dadush and Dervis, “The Inequality Challenge.”
March 3: Globalization; review for midterm.

Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, chp. 13, “Globalization.”
* Irwin, “The Truth about Trade.”
* Kupchan, “The Democratic Malaise.”
* “Drawbridges Up: Globalization and Politics.”

**POLITICAL IDENTITIES**

March 8: Midterm

March 10: NO CLASS

SPRING BREAK

March 22: Globalization; political identities.

* Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations.”

March 24: Religion and politics


March 29: Gender, Ethnicity, and Sexual Identities

* Htun, “Is Gender Like Ethnicity?”
* “The Global Divide on Homosexuality.”

March 31: Populism

* Mudde, “Europe’s Populist Surge.”
* O’Neil “Latin America’s Populist Hangover.”

**CASE STUDIES**

April 5: Russia: Deepening Authoritarianism

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 8, “Russia.”
* Dawisha, “Kleptocracy in Russia: Its Past and Future.”
* Lipman, “How Putin Silences Dissent.”

April 7: China: An Economic Powerhouse under Dictatorship

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 10, “China.”
* Zhao, “Xi Jinping’s Maoist Revival.”
* Nathan, “The Puzzle of the Chinese Middle Class.”
April 12: UK: Enduring Institutions, Changing Political Identities

* Ford and Goodwin, “A Nation Divided.”
* Applebaum, “A Transformed Political Landscape.”

April 14: France: Gender, Ethnicity, and Populist Politics

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 4, France
* Murray, “French Lesson: What the United Kingdom Can Learn from the French Experiment with Gender Parity.”
* “Apartheid or Just Apart: France and Its Muslims.”
* “Ill-Suited: France’s Identity Politics.”

April 19: Mexico: Challenges to the State, Changes in Rights

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 7, “Mexico.”
* Magaloni and Razu, “Mexico in the Grip of Violence.”
* Encarnación, “Beyond Machismo: How Latin America Came to Embrace Gay Rights.”

April 21: Nigeria: Oil, Conflict, and Corruption

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 9, “Nigeria.”
* Kendhammer “Nigeria’s New Democratic Dawn?”
* “The Niger Delta’s Oil Wealth Has Made Inhabitants’ Lives Worse.”
* “Here’s Why So Many People Join Boko Haram.”
* “Harsh Laws and Hatred Thwart Fight for Gay Equality in Nigeria.”

April 26: Puzzles of Indian Democracy

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 6, “India.”
* Chandra, “Patronage, Democracy and Ethnic Politics in India.”
* Varadarajan, “Can Modi Deliver a New India?”

April 28: Iran

Samuels, *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, chp. 11, “Iran.”
* Milani, “Iran’s paradoxical regime.”
* *Iran’s 2016 Elections*: read these two pieces:
  “How women, the Green Movement and an app shaped Iran’s elections.”
  “How Iran’s elections marginalized radicals and consolidated a new political center.”

May 2 (Tuesday): Summing it all up; review for final.