

Department	International College of Liberal Arts		
Semester	Spring 2025	Year Offered (Odd/Even/Every Year)	Every Year
Course Number	PSCI220		
Course Title	Comparative Politics		
Prerequisites	PSCI100 Introduction to Political Science		
Course Instructor	RAJANARISON Haja	Year Available (Grade Level)	1
Subject Area	Political Science	Number of Credits	3
Class Style	Lecture	Language of instruction	English

(NOTE 1) Depending on the class size and the capacity of the facility, we may not be able to accommodate all students who wish to register for the course

Course Description	Comparative Politics is an introductory course designed to explore the diversity of political systems and practices across the world. Employing diverse theoretical frameworks and comparative research methods, students will examine the structures, institutions, processes, and outcomes of different political systems, with an emphasis on case studies. This course delves into democracies, authoritarian regimes, political institutions, governance models, and public policies. Through the analysis of how political systems influence policy outcomes, governance quality, and human well-being, students unlock a deeper understanding of the world around them. In addition, students will engage in critical discussions and debates, fostering their analytical skills and ability to articulate complex political concepts. The course also encourages students to draw connections between theoretical knowledge and real-world political events, enhancing their global awareness and perspective. This course is suited for students who are interested in understanding the complexities of global politics. It's particularly beneficial for those pursuing degrees in Political Science, International Relations, or related fields. Additionally, anyone seeking to enhance their knowledge of world politics, improve their analytical skills, and gain a broader perspective on global events would find this course valuable.
Class plan based on course evaluation from previous academic year	Based on the course evaluation feedback from the previous academic year, which highlighted that students enjoy review sessions and "check your knowledge" activities, a class plan incorporating these elements can significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Students were also asking to increase the word limit for the final paper, which was capped at 2000 words before. So, It would be increased between 3000 to 4000 words.
Course related to the instructor's practical experience (Summary of experience)	N/A
Learning Goals	At the end of this course, students should be able to: 1) Understand foundational concepts: Grasp the core definitions, approaches, and values of comparative politics. Collaboratively discuss these concepts to deepen understanding. (DP1) 2) Apply comparative methods: Utilise research methods to systematically analyse political systems and draw evidence-based conclusions. Work in teams to conduct comparative studies. (DP1, DP2, DP3) 3) Analyse diverse political systems: Differentiate between types of government, their institutions, and their impact on policy and governance. Engage in group discussions to compare and contrast different political systems. (DP2, DP3) 4) Evaluate political actors and influence: Assess how state and non-state actors shape political decision-making and outcomes. Collaborate to analyse real-world case studies. (DP2, DP3) 5) Engage with global issues: Apply comparative analysis to contemporary political challenges and developments. Collaborate on projects that address these global issues. (DP2, DP4, DP3)

iCLA Diploma Policy	DP1/DP2/DP3/DP4
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iCLA Diploma Policy

(DP1) To Value Knowledge – Having high oral and written communication skills to be able to both comprehend and transfer knowledge

(DP2) To Be Able to Adapt to a Changing World – Having critical, creative, problem-solving, intercultural skills, global and independent mindset to adopt to a changing world

(DP3) To Believe in Collaboration – Having a disposition to work effectively and inclusively in teams

(DP4) To Act from a Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility – Having good ethical and moral values to make positive impacts in the world

Active Learning Methods	Problem-Based Learning/Discussion, Debate/Group Work/Presentation				
More details/supplemental information on Active Learning Methods	<p>Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Students will tackle real-world political issues through problem-based learning, enhancing their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to develop practical solutions in a collaborative setting.</p> <p>Discussion and Debate The syllabus includes structured discussions and debates on contemporary political phenomena, encouraging students to critically analyse, articulate, and defend their perspectives on complex issues.</p> <p>Group Work Group projects will require students to collaborate on comparative political analyses, fostering teamwork skills and collective problem-solving on assigned topics.</p> <p>Presentation Students will research and present on various comparative politics topics, enabling them to refine their public speaking and presentation skills while disseminating knowledge to peers.</p>				
Use of ICT	<p>Microsoft Teams: All assignments, quizzes, capstone progress submissions, and feedback will be conducted via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>UNIPA: Will house the syllabus, course materials, and announcements.</p> <p>JASP (https://jasp-stats.org/): For introductory statistical analysis of political datasets.</p> <p>Python: For political data manipulation, analysis, and visualization.</p> <p>AI Tools: Permitted for research assistance, summarization, and editing, but must not replace original thought. Any AI use must be properly cited and comply with academic integrity guidelines.</p>				
Contents of class preparation and review	<p>Before Class (3 Hours/per week):</p> <p>Read Ahead: Review any assigned readings or materials beforehand.</p> <p>Recap: Quickly review notes from the last class session.</p> <p>Ensure you have all necessary materials prepared.</p> <p>After Class (2 Hours/per week):</p> <p>Review Notes: Go through your class notes and highlight key points.</p> <p>Clarify: Research any concepts you didn't understand.</p> <p>Practice: Engage in exercises relevant to the lesson.</p> <p>Prepare for Next Time: Preview upcoming topics and begin necessary preparations.</p>	Hours expected to be spent preparing for class (hours per week)	3 hours	Hours expected to be spent on class review (hours per week)	2 hours
Feedback Methods	Feedback will primarily be provided through Microsoft Teams. Additional commentary or clarification may be provided during office hours or upon request.				

Grading Criteria		
Grading Methods	Grading Weights	Grading Content
Systematic Assessment	30%	Weekly take-home reading quizzes and critical thinking exercise via Ms Teams
Group Presentations	30%	Case Study Presentations (15%) and Capstone Presentation (15%)
Research Process and Final Paper	40%	Capstone paper (3,000–4,000 words)

Required Textbook(s)	Daniele Caramani (Editor) Comparative Politics. Fifth ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at the LAC Library.
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Other Reading Materials/URL	Supplementary Articles and Book Chapters: To complement the core textbook, selected articles and book chapters from leading scholars in the field of comparative politics will be provided.
Plagiarism Policy	Plagiarism is the dishonest presentation of the work of others as if it were one's own. Duplicate submission is also treated as plagiarism. At iCLA, we believe in fostering a culture of academic integrity and responsibility. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited. Any work submitted must be the student's own original work. The use of AI is permitted, but the student must ensure that the work produced is their own and that any sources used are properly cited. Ethical behavior is expected when using AI, and any unethical behavior, such as using AI to generate work for which credit is taken, will result in disciplinary action. Any instance of plagiarism or unethical behavior will result in a failing grade for the assignment and may result in further disciplinary action.
Other Additional Notes (Outline crucial policies and info not mentioned above)	<p>##Responsible Use of AI AI tools must be used ethically and responsibly within academic work. Students are responsible for ensuring the following: Original Effort: All submissions must prioritize the student's own understanding, insights, and analysis. AI-generated content must be carefully integrated into original work and demonstrate substantive revision and editing by the student. Proper Attribution: All sources, including those used in conjunction with AI tools, must be accurately and fully cited according to appropriate academic conventions.</p> <p>##Late Submission Policy: Late papers will incur a 5% deduction per day (including weekends and holidays). Submissions more than five days late will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero. Exceptions may be granted only in the case of documented medical or family emergencies.</p> <p>##Lateness of ten (10) minutes or more will result in an absence for that session. Repeated Lateness: Consistently arriving late can impact your final grade. Emergencies: In the case of a genuine emergency, contact the instructor as soon as possible.</p> <p>## To maximize learning, mobile phones (smartphones), smartwatches, earbuds, headphones and other electronic devices must be turned off or silenced during class. Vibrating notifications are equally disruptive. Disruptions: Answering calls, texting, or using devices for non-class purposes is disrespectful and hinders the learning environment for everyone. Devices causing distractions may be confiscated for the remainder of the class period. This includes social media use, gaming, or other unrelated activities.</p> <p>Please consult the class policy attached to this syllabus.</p>

(NOTE 2) Class schedule is subject to change

Class Schedule	
Class Number	Content
Class 1	Week 1: Course Overview & Introduction to Comparative Politics Class 1: Course Introduction, syllabus review, expectations, and capstone project overview. No reading assignment
Class 2	Week 1: Course Overview & Introduction to Comparative Politics Class 2: Lecture: What is comparative politics? Core concepts, scope, and significance. Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 1 - Introduction to Comparative Politics Quiz: Due by Sunday (Take-home via Microsoft Teams)
Class 3	Week 2: Comparative Research Methods Class 3: Lecture: Comparative methods, case selection, Mill's Methods, Small-N vs. Large-N studies.
Class 4	Week 2: Comparative Research Methods Class 4: Practice: Data analysis using V-Dem & WGI for democratic stability. Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 3 - Comparative Research Methods Quiz: Due by Sunday
Class 5	Week 3: The Nation-State & Its Evolution Class 5: Lecture: State formation theories (Tilly, Weber, Fukuyama), state capacity, strong vs. weak states.

Class 6	<p>Week 3: The Nation-State & Its Evolution</p> <p>Class 6: Practice: Case study - Comparing strong (Germany) vs. weak (Somalia) states.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 4 - The Nation-State</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p> <p>Capstone Progress: Topic Proposal Due</p>
Class 7	<p>Week 4: Democratic & Authoritarian Regimes</p> <p>Class 7: Lecture: Democratic, hybrid, and authoritarian regimes; competitive authoritarianism.</p>
Class 8	<p>Week 4: Democratic & Authoritarian Regimes</p> <p>Class 8: Practice: Measuring democracy with Freedom House & Polity IV indices.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 5 & 6 - Democracies & Authoritarian Regimes</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p>
Class 9	<p>Week 5: Political Institutions - Governments & Legislatures</p> <p>Class 9: Lecture: Presidentialism vs. Parliamentarism, legislatures, bureaucracies.</p>
Class 10	<p>Week 5: Political Institutions - Governments & Legislatures</p> <p>Class 10: Group Presentations: Case studies on different government systems.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 7 & 8 - Political Institutions</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p> <p>Capstone Progress: Annotated Bibliography (at least five sources) Due</p>
Class 11	<p>Week 6: Constitutions, Rights & Judicial Power</p> <p>Class 11: Lecture: Constitutional design, judicial review (US vs. European models).</p>
Class 12	<p>Week 6: Constitutions, Rights & Judicial Power</p> <p>Class 12: Practice: Case analysis - Marbury v. Madison (US) vs. ECHR decisions.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 9 - Constitutions & Judicial Power</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p> <p>Capstone Progress: Research Question & Methodology Outline Due</p>
Class 13	<p>Week 7: Elections, Party Systems & Political Participation</p> <p>Class 13: Lecture: Electoral systems, party systems, voter behavior.</p>
Class 14	<p>Week 7: Elections, Party Systems & Political Participation</p> <p>Class 14: Practice: Voter turnout data analysis using IDEA & ACE Electoral Network.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 10-12 - Electoral Systems & Political Parties</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p> <p>Capstone Progress: Literature Review Due</p>
Class 15	<p>Week 8: Interest Groups & Social Movements</p> <p>Class 15: Lecture: The role of interest groups, lobbying, and civil society.</p>

Class 16	<p>Week 8: Interest Groups & Social Movements</p> <p>Class 16: Case Study: Protest movements and their political impact.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 14–16 - Interest Groups & Civil Society</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p> <p>Capstone Progress: 1,000-word Draft Due</p>
Class 17	<p>Week 9: Policy-Making & Welfare States</p> <p>Class 17: Lecture: How policies are made; welfare state models.</p>
Class 18	<p>Week 9: Policy-Making & Welfare States</p> <p>Class 18: Practice: OECD welfare state comparison.</p> <p>Reading Assignment: Caramani, Ch. 20–21 - Policy-Making & Welfare States</p> <p>Quiz: Due by Sunday</p>
Class 19	<p>Week 10: Globalization & Political Change</p> <p>Class 19: Lecture: Globalization' s impact on sovereignty and governance.</p>
Class 20	<p>Week 10: Globalization & Political Change</p> <p>Class 20: Group Discussion: Future of the nation-state.</p> <p>Reading: Caramani, Ch. 24 - Globalization & the Nation-State</p> <p>Quiz: Reading comprehension quiz on Caramani, Ch. 24 (Microsoft Teams)</p> <p>Capstone Progress: 2,000-word Draft Due</p>
Class 21	<p>Week 11: European Union & Supranational Governance</p> <p>Class 21: Lecture: The EU' s structure, policymaking, and governance.</p>
Class 22	<p>Week 11: European Union & Supranational Governance</p> <p>Class 22: Case Study: Brexit & EU integration.</p> <p>Reading: Caramani, Ch. 23 - The EU as a Political System</p> <p>Quiz: Reading comprehension quiz on Caramani, Ch. 23 (Microsoft Teams)</p>
Class 23	<p>Week 12: Political Communication & Media Influence</p> <p>Class 23: Lecture: Media influence on political opinion, fake news, and polarization.</p>
Class 24	<p>Week 12: Political Communication & Media Influence</p> <p>Class 24: Practice: Analyzing political communication using real-world data.</p> <p>Reading: Caramani, Ch. 19 - Media & Political Influence</p> <p>Quiz: Reading comprehension quiz on Caramani, Ch. 19 (Microsoft Teams)</p>
Class 25	<p>Week 13: Democracy Support & Autocracy Promotion</p> <p>Class 25: Lecture: Democracy promotion, regime change, autocracy support.</p>

Class 26	<p>Week 13: Democracy Support & Autocracy Promotion</p> <p>Class 26: Debate: Should countries intervene in others' political systems?</p> <p>Reading: Caramani, Ch. 25 - Supporting Democracy vs. Autocracy</p> <p>Quiz: Reading comprehension quiz on Caramani, Ch. 25 (Microsoft Teams)</p> <p>Capstone Progress: Final Draft Due for Feedback</p>
Class 27	<p>Week 14: Capstone Presentations & Feedback</p> <p>Class 27: Student Presentations - Round 1</p>
Class 28	<p>Week 14: Capstone Presentations & Feedback</p> <p>Class 28: Student Presentations - Round 2</p>
Class 29	<p>Week 15: Course Wrap-Up & Final Submission</p> <p>Class 29: Final Reflections on Comparative Politics</p>
Class 30	<p>Week 15: Course Wrap-Up & Final Submission</p> <p>Class 30: Capstone Paper Submission & Final Q&A</p> <p>Final Paper Submission Due (Friday of week 15 23:59 JST on MS Teams)</p>