

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Department of Sociology and Political Science

POL2014

Comparative Politics (Specialization)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

POL2014 provides students with an advanced understanding of the field of comparative politics. The focus of the course is on classifying political institutions, especially the differences between democracy and autocracy and understanding why institutions change. The course is focused substantively on the drivers of sustainable democratization but with a strong focus on the comparative method and causal inference. We examine numerous possible causes of democratization from inequality to development, foreign intervention and the rise of social media. Causal inference and the logic underpinning empirical comparisons and causal claims are the methodological foundations of the course and students should be able to critically assess causal claims by the end of the course.

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ON:

- The fundamentals of the comparative method and its relationship to causal inference.
- The structure and logic of democratic and authoritarian institutions.
- The main arguments for why political institutions change over time.
- Argumentation, analytical, writing, collaboration and presentational skills.
- Making theoretically informed and empirically based arguments and relating theoretical models to contemporary issues in comparative politics.

LECTURER:

Associate Professor Charles Butcher

Email: charles.butcher@ntnu.no

Web page: <https://www.ntnu.edu/employees/charles.butcher>

SEMINAR OUTLINE

This course is based on 2 seminars per week which will take place on:

Time: Tuesdays: 10:15 - 12:00
 Thursdays: 8:15-10:00
Location: D156 (Dragvoll) Tuesdays
 D5 (Dragvoll) Thursdays

The seminars will combine seminar-style discussions, exercises, lecture material and interactive activities. Wherever possible, problem-based learning will be employed. **Students are expected to do a significant amount of reading preparation for all seminar sessions (see below).** If you miss a seminar, you should email me to explain your absence.

SESSION TOPICS:

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|---|------------------------|
| 1. Concepts and theories (Lührmann et al 2019, Kellsted and Whitten, Ch 1) | (7 th Jan) |
| 2. Comparison and causal inference (Kellsted and Whitten, Ch 3) | (9 th Jan) |
| 3. Autocracy and Democracy (Weingast 1997) | (14 th Jan) |
| 4. Modernization (Boix and Stokes 2003, Przeworski 1997) | (16 th Jan) |
| 5. Inequality (Houle 2009, Haggard and Kaufmann 2012) | (21 st Jan) |
| 6. Culture (Donno and Russett 2009, Fish 2002) | (23 rd Jan) |
| 7. Historical legacies (Woodberry 2012, Hariri 2012) | (28 th Jan) |
| 8. The International System (Downes and Monkel 2013, Gunitsky 2014) | (30 th Jan) |
| 9. Institutional Legacies (Svolik 2008, Geddes 1999) | (4 th Feb) |
| 10. Nonviolent Protest (Celestino and Gleditsch 2013, Dahlum et al 2019) | (6 th Feb) |
| 11. Natural Resource Wealth (Thea Johansen) (Ross 2001, Haber and Menaldo 2011) | (11 th Feb) |
| 12. NO CLASS | (13 th Feb) |
| 13. Social Media (Rød and Weidmann 2015, Bruer et al 2014): | (18 th Feb) |
| 14. Trump (Haggard and Kaufmann 2019, Lieberman et al 2019) | (20 th Feb) |

READINGS AND CLASS PREPARATION

There are generally two readings for each class. Students are expected to have done the readings before class. Discussions in class will be based on the readings. Students should be prepared to explain and critically analyse the key arguments of readings in the class.

Concepts and Theories

Lührmann, Anna et al. 2019. "State of the World 2018: Democracy Facing Global Challenges." *Democratization* 26(6): 895–915.

Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten (2013) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1

Comparison and Causal Inference

Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten (2013) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3

Autocracy and Democracy

Weingast, Barry R. 1997. "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of Law." *The American Political Science Review* 91(2): 245–63.

Modernization

Boix, Carles, and Susan C. Stokes. 2003. "Endogenous Democratization." *World Politics* 55(4): 517–49.

Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. 1997. "Modernization: Theories and Facts." *World Politics* 49(2): 155–83.

Inequality

Haggard, Stephan, and Robert R. Kaufman. 2012. "Inequality and Regime Change: Democratic Transitions and the Stability of Democratic Rule." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 495–516.

Houle, Christian. 2009. "Inequality and Democracy: Why Inequality Harms Consolidation but Does Not Affect Democratization." *World Politics* 61(4): 589–622.

Culture

Fish, M. Steven. 2002. "Islam and Authoritarianism." *World Politics* 55(1): 4–37.

Donno, Daniela, and Bruce Russett. 2004. "Islam, Authoritarianism, and Female Empowerment: What Are the Linkages?" *World Politics* 56(4): 582–607.

Historical legacies

Hariri, Jacob Gerner. 2012. "The Autocratic Legacy of Early Statehood." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 471–94.

Woodberry, Robert D. 2012. "The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy." *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 244–74.

The International System

Downes, Alexander B., and Jonathan Monten. 2013. "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization." *International Security* 37(4): 90–131.

Gunitsky, Seva. 2014. "From Shocks to Waves: Hegemonic Transitions and Democratization in the Twentieth Century." *International Organization* 68(3): 561–97.

Institutional Legacies

Geddes, Barbara. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1): 115–44.

Svolik, Milan. 2008. "Authoritarian Reversals and Democratic Consolidation." *American Political Science Review* 102(2): 153–68.

Natural Resource Wealth

Ross, Michael L. 2001. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53(3): 325–61.

Haber, Stephen, and Victor Menaldo. 2011. "Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism? A Reappraisal of the Resource Curse." *American political science Review* 105(1): 1–26.

Nonviolent Protest

Celestino, Mauricio Rivera, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2013. "Fresh Carnations or All Thorn, No Rose? Nonviolent Campaigns and Transitions in Autocracies." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 385–400.

Dahlum, S., Knutsen, C. H., & Wig, T. (2019). Who revolts? Empirically revisiting the social origins of democracy. *The Journal of Politics*, 81(4), 1494-1499.

Social Media

Rød, Espen Geelmuyden, and Nils B Weidmann. 2015. "Empowering Activists or Autocrats? The Internet in Authoritarian Regimes." *Journal of Peace Research* 52(3): 338–51.

Breuer, Anita, Todd Landman, and Dorothea Farquhar. 2015. "Social Media and Protest Mobilization: Evidence from the Tunisian Revolution." *Democratization* 22(4): 764–92.

Trump

Kaufman, R. R., & Haggard, S. (2018). Democratic Decline in the United States: What Can We Learn from Middle-Income Backsliding? *Perspectives on Politics*, 1-16.

Lieberman, Robert C. et al. 2019. "The Trump Presidency and American Democracy: A Historical and Comparative Analysis." *Perspectives on Politics* 17(2): 470–79.

ASSESSMENT

The student's final grade will be based on completion of the following tasks:

1. Take home exam 100%

There will also be an opportunity to submit a practice take-home exam in week 6.