

## **PS 50: Introduction to Comparative Politics**

Summer 2017, Session C

**Instructor:** Kathryn Wainfan  
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**Lectures:** T,R 10:45-12:50 Pub Aff 2242  
**Office Hours:** T: 1:30- 2:30; Th: 9:30-10:30  
4250 Bunche

The goal of this course is to introduce you to some of the basic concepts and areas of study within the field of comparative politics. The field encompasses a huge variety of topics and questions, so it will be impossible to cover everything. However, you should leave this class with a better understanding of how and why political processes and outcomes vary.

This is an introductory course and therefore assumes no previous knowledge of political science. That being said, given the breadth of the field and the shortened time span of the summer term, *it will be a demanding class*. It is very important that you keep on top of the readings and other assignments and bring up any questions or confusions you have about the material either in class or during my office hours.

### **Learning Objectives**

Students completing PS 50 will be expected to:

- Understand the comparative method and the importance of case selection
- Evaluate the logic of causal arguments critically, and know what sorts of evidence and methods could be assessed to test arguments
- Understand the concepts of political and economic development, and the relationship between the two
- Evaluate the tradeoffs inherent to political institutions and policies
- Consider the sub-national context and influences towards policies, institutions, and outcomes

### **Requirements and Grading**

Your final grade will be determined through four components: a take-home midterm, a comprehensive final, attendance and course participation, and weekly article analyses.

The ***take-home midterm*** will be distributed on Friday, August 26, it is designed to take you no more than two to three hours. The completed exam is due to turnitin no later than

Monday, August 29 at 5pm. You will lose 1% for each five minutes it is late, so I recommend you try to finish the exam and turn it in early.

The ***comprehensive final*** will be held in class on the last regularly scheduled meeting. It will cover both lectures and the readings from throughout the course.

To gain full points for ***attendance and participation*** you will need to show up to class on time, stay attentive throughout the entire class period, and participate with constructive contributions during activities or discussions. Simply showing up to class will not gain points. There are a total of 11 class meetings, excluding the final. Your participation grade will be based on the best 10 out of 11 meetings. This means that if illness, or any kind of personal emergency, keeps you from one class meeting, that score will simply be the one that is dropped. ***Because the lowest score will be dropped, other absences for any reason will not be accepted.***

***Weekly article analyses*** are due **at the beginning of class** each Tuesday. The assignment is to find a newspaper or magazine article about any country or countries *other than America* that relates to the topics of the previous week's lectures. In *absolutely no more than two double-spaced pages* you should briefly summarize the article and explain how it relates to a topic or topics of the lectures and readings from the previous week. Include both your write up and a copy of the article in your submission. The assignment will be graded on a 10 point scale. Late assignments will automatically lose 1 point. If an assignment is more than 24 hours late, an additional point will be deducted for each day the assignment has not been turned in. For example, if you turned in the assignment on Wednesday afternoon, you will be penalized two points. Your grade will be determined based on the best 4 out of 5 submissions.

Your overall grade will be calculated as follows:

**Attendance and Participation (Best 10/11) ..... 15%**

**Weekly Article Analyses (Best 4/5) ..... 15%**

**Midterm ..... 25%**

**Comprehensive Final ..... 45%**

## **University and Course Policies**

**No electronic devices (laptops, cell phones, tablets, etc.) are permitted in class**, even for note taken. If you require an accommodative device in this category, please speak with me.

**Any suspicion of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please review in the link below to review what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

<http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/dos/assets/documents/StudentGuide.pdf>

If you need special accommodations for lectures or exams, it is your responsibility to coordinate this with CAE as soon as possible. You can contact CAE through their website, <http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>.

Under **FERPA**, you have a right to know how you're doing in the course, but **it is a violation of university policy to discuss grades or any private information via email**, because legally, email is not private communication. Any discussion of your performance in the course, including your grade, must take place in person.

Finally, please note that under University policy, all TAs and instructors are mandated Title IX reporters. If I am informed of or witness sexual violence or harassment, I am required to report this to UCLA's Title IX coordinator. The coordinator is committed to maintaining anonymity of victims and I am as well.

- If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the CARE Advocacy Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Wooden Center West, [CAREadvocate@careprogram.ucla.edu](mailto:CAREadvocate@careprogram.ucla.edu), **(310) 206-2465**.
- You can also report sexual violence or sexual harassment directly to the University's Title IX Coordinator, 2241 Murphy Hall, [titleix@conet.ucla.edu](mailto:titleix@conet.ucla.edu), **(310) 206-3417**.
- Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD at **(310) 825-1491**.

## **Course Materials**

We will be using David Samuels's *Comparative Politics* as the main text for the course. Additional readings will be posted on the course website.

Readings may be changed during the course of the class, so please make sure to check the syllabus before completing your reading for the day.

## Course Schedule:

All readings should be completed before the corresponding lecture.

Date	Topic and Readings
T 8/8	<b>Introduction—What do we want out of Government?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 1 (22-26)</li> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 2 (29-38)</li> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 3 (58-67)</li> </ul>
Th 8/10	<b>Government Type and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 11 (286-304)</li> <li>• “Development and Democracy”, Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, <i>Foreign Affairs</i></li> <li>• “Checked and Balanced?” <i>The Economist</i> May 18, 2013</li> </ul>
T 8/15	<b>The Role of Geography and Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 11 (304-312)</li> <li>• “The Paradox of Plenty” <i>The Economist</i> December 20, 2005</li> <li>• “The Rich Cousin” <i>The Economist</i> February 2, 2013</li> <li>• Collier and Gunning “Why has Africa Grown Slowly?” (3-22)</li> <li>• <b>Article Analysis Due</b></li> </ul>
Th 8/17	<b>Development: Corruption and Violence [27 pp]</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 10 (257-282)</li> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 2 (48-50)</li> <li>• Easterly, <i>The Elusive Quest for Growth</i>, ch. 12 (241-252)</li> <li>• “The Bottle Neck” <i>The Economist</i> March 19, 2016</li> <li>• “The Economics of Violence” <i>The Economist</i> April 14, 2011</li> </ul>
T 8/22	<b>Competing Visions of Democracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burke, “Speech to the Electors of Bristol”</li> <li>• Powell, <i>Elections and Instruments of Democracy</i>, chs. 1-2</li> <li>• <b>Article Analysis Due</b></li> <li>• <b>Office Hours Moved to 9:30 -10:30</b></li> </ul>
Th 8/24	<b>Executive Structures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 3 (69-79)</li> </ul>
F 8/26	<b>Take-home midterm posted on course website, 12 noon</b>
M 8/28	<b>Take-home midterm due to turnitin, 5pm</b>

T 8/29	<b>Parties and Election</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b>, Ch 3 (79-89)</li> <li>• <b>CGG 611-619</b></li> <li>• “Make it Better” <i>The Economist</i> April 2, 2009</li> <li>• “With Different Election Rules...” <i>The Economist</i> December 28, 2015</li> <li>• <b>Article Analysis Due</b></li> </ul>
Th 8/31	<b>Government Formation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CGG 465-490</b></li> <li>• “Why is it so hard to form a government in Italy?” <i>The Economist</i> April 24, 2013</li> <li>• “How a minority government does (not) work” <i>The Economist</i> June 9, 2017</li> </ul>
T 9/5	<b>Legislatures and Decentralization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CGG 674-705</b></li> <li>• “Let England Shake” <i>The Economist</i> September 27, 2014</li> <li>• <b>Article Analysis Due</b></li> </ul>
Th 9/7	<b>Democracy in Plural Societies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Samuels</b> Ch 6 (all)</li> <li>• <b>CGG 788-805</b></li> <li>• “Give us freedom, and Kampala” <i>The Economist</i> February 6, 2003</li> <li>• “A tearing sound” <i>The Economist</i> April 2, 2009</li> </ul>
T 9/12	<b>Case Study: Brexit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Readings TBD</b></li> <li>• <b>Article Analysis Due</b></li> </ul>
Th 9/13	<b>FINAL IN CLASS—Closed book</b>

## Resources Available

First, there is me. Please feel free to email me ([kwainfan@ucla.edu](mailto:kwainfan@ucla.edu)), ask questions in class, and visit me in office hours (Tuesday from 1:30 to 2:30 and Thursday from 9:30-10:30). Interaction with curious students is one of the best parts of my job, so please don't be shy!

I'll be posting links to videos, articles, and websites that relate to the concepts we are discussing on the course website. Though the content of these links will not directly be on the

exam, they should help you understand the concepts more, so make sure to check the course website regularly.

If you have any concerns about or difficulty with academic writing, you can visit the writing center. More information is available at:

<http://www.ugeducation.ucla.edu/counseling/contact-us.html>

If you are an enrolled UCLA student, you can contact the college academic counseling office for help with any academic concerns you have via

<http://www.ugeducation.ucla.edu/counseling/contact-us.html>.

If you are a non-UCLA student (only enrolled for the summer term), you can contact the Summer Session staff via <http://www.summer.ucla.edu/contactus>.

If you are having other difficulties and need to speak with a therapist or counselor, you can contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) here:

<http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>