

## Political Science 50: Introduction to Comparative Politics, Fall 2016

<https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/16F-POLSCI50-1>

Professor M. Thies  
Office Hours: Th 1:30-3:30pm, 4335 Bunche

T/R 9:00-10:15am  
Knsy PvlN 1220B

In this course, we will focus on two questions that have long been central to research in comparative politics: (a) the relationship between democratic and economic development, and (b) how countries vary in their *Political Institutions* and why these variations matter. We hope not just to acquaint you with the debates on these issues, but to equip you to do your own research and to reach your own reasoned conclusions.

To understand and evaluate the debates on these questions, you will need some fundamental vocabulary. This includes an understanding of what ***social science*** is all about: what political scientists mean precisely by the terms they use and the kinds of political institutions that exist in different parts of the world. Throughout, we will challenge you to link the “facts” that you learn to the larger questions of comparative politics that the course addresses.

We ask of you an understanding of what comparative political science is ***not***: (a) it is not a continuation of high school “civics” or “social studies” courses; (b) it is not a travelogue—a descriptive meandering through the political landscapes of 2 or 3 or a dozen countries; (c) it is not journalistic commentary on current events, although it will help you to understand current events; (d) it is not the study of war or diplomacy; and (e) it is not mere opinion, no matter how well expressed, when unsupported by theory and evidence.

**THIS IS AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE**, designed to teach you concepts and approaches that should be applicable to any upper division political science courses that you might take in the future. That said, because there is so much to cover, **it is also a very demanding course**, indeed more demanding than most upper division political science courses. You will not finish this course as an expert in the politics of other countries, but you should leave with a set of tools that you can use to further examine the political system and policies of any country anywhere. We won’t give you all the answers, but we will teach you a great many of the right questions.

**Readings:** We will use an e-textbook. Some additional readings are posted on the course website as PDFs. You can download and print these, but only enrolled students will have access. In the reading schedule on the next two pages, the numbers in the {braces} indicate the number of pages. Some weeks have more reading than others. Plan ahead.

- **e-book: David J. Samuels, *Comparative Politics*. New York: Pearson Press.**
- We will post the required readings other than the Samuels book on the course website.

**Course Requirements and Grading:** The course has weekly reading quizzes administered in discussion sections, two in-class examinations, and a short analytic paper. Overall grades will be calculated as follows:

<b>1. <u>Participation (30%)</u></b>	
• In-section reading quizzes (Weeks 1- 8 -- best 7 will count)	14 %
• <u>Active, constructive</u> participation in Discussion Section (merely showing up nets zero points)	10 %
• Posting of Questions on Class Discussion Board for “Application” Days (by 5pm on 10/12 & 11/28)	04 %
• Online course evaluations (we won’t know what you said in the evaluations, just whether you did them)	02 %
<b>2. <u>Exams (50%)</u></b>	
• In-class Midterm exam (Tu, Week 4 – Oct 18)	20 %
• Comprehensive Final exam (Th, Week 11 – Dec 8)	30 %
<b>3. <u>Short Paper (20%)</u></b>	
• 5-pg Analytic paper, assigned Fr 11/11, due (via Turn-It-In) morning of Tu 11/22	20 %

The **Section Participation grade** will be assessed by your **Teaching Assistant**, on the basis of your **active, constructive participation**. **Mere attendance in section, if passive or unproductive, will yield no points.** You must attend the section in which you are formally enrolled.

For the short analytic paper, you will submit via Turn-It-In. Please review the UCLA Guide to Academic Integrity (<http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/dos/assets/documents/StudentGuide.pdf>) as well as the UCLA Library guide on how to avoid plagiarism (<http://guides.library.ucla.edu/content.php?pid=133097&sid=1141391>). Any student suspected of plagiarism will be referred to the Dean of Students, immediately and without exception.

## Learning Outcomes

### 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 might be assessed to test arguments
- understand the concepts of political and economic development, and how they are related
- evaluate the tradeoffs inherent in the design of political institutions, as well as policies
- think "outside the box" of the nation-state, considering both sub-national and supra-national contexts and influences

## Campus Resources

- For any substantive or administrative concerns specific to the class, please come to see one of us – the instructor or a TA. Each of us holds two hours of office hours every week, and we look forward to meeting with you.
- 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>
- 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 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/>

## University and Course Policies

- Please note that under University policy, all TAs and instructors are mandated Title IX reporters. If any of the teaching team is informed of or witnesses sexual violence or harassment, we are required to report this to UCLA's Title IX coordinator. The coordinator is committed to maintaining anonymity of victims and so are we.
- 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.
- For other matters concerning the course, feel free to use email to contact one of us, or even better, come to office hours. We really do welcome hearing from you and meeting with you. Interacting with hard-working, interested students is the very best part of our jobs.
- But please don't fire off emails asking simple questions the answers to which you could easily find yourself (*"Where is your office?" "When is the midterm?" "What is my TA's name?" "Which readings are important?" "I wasn't in class – did I miss anything in particular?" "Is USC the font of all evil?"*)
- Grade appeals are permissible only if you believe that an error was made. You must hand-deliver a typed note, no longer than a single (double-spaced) page, explaining why you believe you deserve more points. Appeals must be submitted within one week of receiving the graded item. If you request a re-grade, we reserve the right to re-grade the entire assignment/question, so it is possible that your score will go down.
- Attendance in Lecture is highly recommended. A good deal of the material on the exams will come solely from lecture. If you cannot arrive on time (i.e., at least 2 minutes early), please do not come at all. If you must leave early, please ask permission before class begins, and sit as close to the door as possible so as to minimize your intrusion on others' attention.
- **No electronic devices are permitted in lecture or discussion section, not even for note-taking.** No laptops, tablets, or cell phones. If you have them with you, please turn them off and stow them out of reach.

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics and Readings: (We suggest you do each day's reading in the order indicated)</b>
<b>0</b>	Th 9/22	<b><u>Class Introduction</u></b>
<b>1</b>	Tu Sep 27  Th Sep 29	<b><u>What Do We Want out of Government? Dilemmas &amp; Tradeoffs {35}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, start of Ch 2 (28-top of 34)</li> <li>Samuels, start of Ch 3 (58-66)</li> <li>Samuels, start of Ch 11 (285-293)</li> <li>"Democracy? Freedom? ...What's all this?" <i>The Economist</i>, Dec 31, 1999 (5.5 pp)</li> <li>"A Question of Freedom" <i>The Economist</i> Mar 8, 2003 (5 pp)</li> </ul> <b><u>The comparative method and Political Culture {33}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 1 (1-26)</li> <li>"Confucius Says: Go East Young Man" <i>Washington Post National Wkly Ed</i>, Nov 27, 1995 (21-23)</li> <li>"The Man in the Baghdad Café" <i>The Economist</i>, Nov 9, 1996 (23-26)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	Tu Oct 04  Th Oct 06	<b><u>Democracy &amp; Development 1: Geography/Technology {40.5}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 11 (304-312)</li> <li>"The Road to Riches," <i>The Economist</i>, Dec 31, 1999 (6.5 pp)</li> <li>"Courage, mon brave," <i>The Economist</i>, Mar 2, 2013 (4 pp)</li> <li>Collier and Gunning "Why has Africa Grown Slowly?" (3-22)</li> <li>"The Two Mexicos" (1)</li> </ul> <b><u>Democracy &amp; Development 2: Corruption/Violence {46}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 2 ("Hypothesis Testing" box on pp 49-50)</li> <li>Samuels, Ch 10 (257-282)</li> <li>"The Road to Hell is Unpaved," <i>The Economist</i>, 21 December 2002 (6 pp)</li> <li>Easterly, <i>The Elusive Quest for Growth</i> (ch 12: 241-252)</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	Tu Oct 11  Th Oct 13	<b><u>Democracy &amp; Development 3: How do they go together? {56}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 5 (119-144)</li> <li>Samuels, Ch 11 (293-304)</li> <li>"Poverty and Property Rights: No Title." <i>The Economist</i>, Mar 31, 2001 (5 pp)</li> <li>"Development and Democracy" <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 84(5): 77-86.</li> <li>Kendall-Taylor and Frantz. "How democratic institutions are making dictatorships more durable" <i>Monkey Cage</i>, <i>Washington Post</i> March 19, 2015 (~4 pp)</li> </ul> <b><u>Application: The Arab Spring {90 min documentary + 23 pp}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Square</i> (best on Netflix, or use <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tmZSKquMRw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tmZSKquMRw</a>)</li> <li>6 articles in "Special Report on the Arab Spring" <i>The Economist</i>, Jul 13, 2013 (pp.2-16)</li> <li>"The Islamic State: Can it govern?" <i>The Economist</i>, <i>Pomegranate Blog</i>, Aug 25, 2014 (1-3)</li> <li>Eisenstadt, LeVan, &amp; Maboudi. "Crafting a new constitution doesn't necessarily lead to democracy. Here's what does." <i>Monkey Cage</i>, <i>Washington Post</i>, Aug 19, 2015. (~ 5 pp)</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	Tu 10/18	<b>In-class MIDTERM EXAMINATION</b>
	Th Oct 20	<b><u>Competing Visions of Democracy {18.5}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burke, Edmund. [1774]. "Speech to the Electors of Bristol" (1 pg)</li> <li>Powell 2000. <i>Elections as Instruments of Democracy</i>, ch 1 (3-17)</li> <li>"X marks the knot" <i>The Economist</i>, July 9, 2016 (2.5 pp)</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	Tu Oct 25  Th Oct 27	<b><u>Elections, Voting, and Political Parties {36}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, end of Ch 3 (79-89) &amp; end of Ch 9 (246-253)</li> <li>Clark, Golder, and Golder, ch 14 (611-619)</li> <li>"With Different Rules..." (1.5 pp) <i>The Economist</i>, Dec 28, 2015 (4 pp)</li> <li>Electoral System Choice – JoD debate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meisburger. [2012], "Getting Majoritarianism Right" <i>Journal of Democracy</i> (5.5 pp)</li> <li>Reynolds &amp; Carey [2012] "Getting Elections Wrong" <i>Journal of Democracy</i> (3 pp)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b><u>Elections, Voting, and Political Parties {16.5}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"How to rig an election" <i>The Economist</i>, Apr 27, 2002 (4 pp)</li> <li>"The Breaking Point" <i>The Economist</i>, Feb 21, 2015 (8 pp)</li> <li>Nivola, [2009] "In Defense of Partisan Politics" (2 pp)</li> </ul>

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics and Readings: (We suggest you do each day's reading in the order indicated)</b>
<b>6</b>	Tu Nov 01	<b><u>Executives and Legislatures: Parliamentary and Presidential Systems {28}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, middle of Ch 3 (69-77)</li> <li>CGG, Ch 16 (805-823)</li> </ul>
	Th Nov 03	<b><u>Executives and Legislatures: Government Formation {37.5}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CGG, Ch 12 (pp. 465-490)</li> <li>"Three Months of Waiting" <i>The Economist</i>, Apr 26, 2003 (1.5 pp)</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	Tu Nov 08	<b><u>Legislatures and Federalism {39}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CGG, Ch 15 (esp. pp. 674-705)</li> <li>"The coalition's millstone" <i>The Economist</i>, July 14, 2012 (3 pp)</li> <li>"Silvio Berlusconi's constitutional exercise" <i>The Economist</i>, Oct 16, 2004 (2 pp)</li> <li>"Italy Senate Votes to Surrender Powers..." <i>Bloomberg</i> Aug 8, 2014 (1.5 pp)</li> </ul>
	Th Nov 10	<b><u>Plural Societies {37}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 6 (147-170)</li> <li>CGG, part of Ch 16 (795-805)</li> <li>"Asking for More" <i>The Economist</i>, Mar 29, 2003 (1 pp)</li> <li>"Language and Nationalism: Catalanian Confusion" <i>The Economist</i>, Nov 27, 2012 (1 pg)</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	Tu Nov 15	<b><u>The Politics of Economic Policy Making – Welfare Policy {39}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 12 (315-342)</li> <li>"It has to happen – but will it?" <i>The Economist</i> Apr 26, 2003 (1.5 pp)</li> <li>"We know what's best for your old age..." <i>The Economist</i> Aug 3, 2002 (2.5 pp)</li> <li>"Asian welfare states," <i>The Economist</i> Sep 8, 2012 (7 pp)</li> </ul>
	Th Nov 17	<b><u>Globalization and Domestic Politics {41 + 2 hr video}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samuels, Ch 13 (345-372)</li> <li>Watch all chapters of "Commanding Heights" Episode 3 online at: <a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/story/ch_menu_03.html">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/story/ch_menu_03.html</a></li> <li>"The headwinds return" <i>The Economist</i> Sept 13, 2014 (9 pp)</li> <li>"Border Follies" <i>The Economist</i> Nov 17, 2012 (4 pp)</li> </ul>
<b>9</b>	Tu 11/ 22	<b>No Lecture. Papers due via TurnItIn no later than 12 noon.</b>
	Th 11/ 24	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
<b>10</b>	Tu Nov 29	<b><u>Application: Brexit, Scexit, and Little England</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBA</li> </ul>
	Th Dec 01	<b><u>Course Wrap-up {23}</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CGG, Ch 16 (743-765)</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	Th Dec 08	<b>FINAL EXAMINATION, 11:30am-2:30pm</b>