

Comparative politics

Code:	P-231
Term:	Fall 2018
ECTS credits:	6
Lessons per week:	90 min + 90 min
Instructor:	Mgr. Dagmar Kusá, PhD.
Form of study:	Lecture + Seminar

Meets: Mon and Wed 8:50 – 10:20 in Writing Lab
Office Hours: Wed 12:00 – 16:00 or by appointment
Contact: kusa@bisla.sk
Tel: 02 59234 303, 0915 373 226
Office No.: 34.5
Course website: www.kabinet.bisla.sk/moodle



Prerequisites

Intro to Political Science I and Theories of Political Parties and Systems

Course Objectives

- Introduce the subject of comparative politics; key concepts, principles, theories, thinkers;
- Introduce the methods of comparative politics;
- Apply studied theories and methods to case studies of individual countries and regions;
- Apply studied theories and methods in a term paper.

Contents:

What makes for a democracy? Why have some states evolved towards democracy while others towards authoritarianism and totalitarianism? How does democracy compare in advanced regions? What shapes political culture of a country? Is nature of democratic governance and citizenship changing? How should citizens behave? Are protests, strikes, petitions a sign of a robust democracy, or a democratic failure?

This course is an introductory look at the field of comparative politics. This is a field of systematic approaches towards studying the institutions, processes, actors, structures and cultures of the countries of the world. It is necessarily a selective course and does not intend to cover all of the themes in comparative politics. The focus of this semester is on the development and the state of democracy through the prism of the main approaches in comparative politics since 1950s to the present day.

During the first weeks, we will look briefly at the history of comparative politics as a political science field, at the paradigms and influential thinkers within, and the methods of comparison widely used. The next sections of the course will be devoted to the widespread explanatory approaches within CP. Throughout the semester, students apply the studied theories and methods to a continuing case study.

Required readings:

Comparative Politics Reader

SELECTED TEXTS from:

Wiarda, H. *Comparative Politics: Approaches and Issues*.

Lijphart, A.: *Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method*

Collier, D.: *Comparative Method*

Gerring, J.: *A Case Study*

Moore, B. *Social Origins of Democracy*

Skocpol, T. *States and Social Revolutions*

Tilly, C. *Warmaking and Statemaking as Organized Crime*

Easton, D. *A Framework for Political Analysis*

Easton, D.: *Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support*

Norris, P. *Critical Citizens*

Almond, G. and Verba, S. *Civic Culture*

Putnam, R. 1996 *Making Democracy Work*

Inglehart, R. and Welzel, C.: *Modernization and Postmodernization*

Sen, A.K. *Development as Freedom*

Nussbaum, M.: *Creating Capabilities*

Dalton, R. *Civic Culture Transformed: From allegiant to assertive citizens*

Brown, W. *Apocalyptic populism*

Diamond, L. *The Coming Wave and Why Are There No Arab Democracies*

All required and a multitude of recommended readings are also available on the course MOODLE page. Furthermore, on Google Drive, there will be extra resources available for individual studied countries.

Evaluation criteria

Attendance and participation in discussions are crucial in this course. You will learn most from the interactions in the class itself. It is important to read all required texts for the class in advance. It is also expected that you will **follow domestic and international news** and be ready to discuss them and to put them into the context of studied theoretical frameworks. Each of you will have a **presentation** of your country project (within a narrower topic that is discussed in the class at the time).

Course requirements:

NOTE: All written assignments are to be submitted via the course website. **Late submission of assignments is not possible via Moodle** – after the deadline for each assignment passes, you won't be able to upload the assignment and will automatically receive 0 points for that assignment. **Late submission (via email) are penalized**

- 10% off the paper grade for submissions that are one day late,
- 20% for submissions that are 2 to 3 days late,
- 50% for up to one week late, and
- 100% for more than one week late.

1. Active Participation 20%
2. Short assignments 25%. Short 1-2 page assignments, each detailed on MOODLE.
3. Short text presentations 10%
4. Country project presentation 15% (Must include a printed handout)
5. Country project final paper 30%

[See the back of the syllabus for more detailed instructions on the assignments](#)

Plagiarism will result in Fx and will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for review. Consult the Plagiarism FAQ guidelines on the course Moodle page.

Course Evaluation (%)

- A – excellent: 100-93%,
- B – very good: 92-84%,
- C – good: 83-74%,
- D – satisfactory: 73-63%,
- E – sufficient: 62-51%,
- Fx – fail: 50-0%.

Passing a course assumes that student was not absent at more than 4 class sessions.

Topics and readings

WEEK 1

INTRO

Monday September 17: **WELCOME TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS!**

Overview of the course, division of tasks, course requirements for the semester ahead.

WHY COMPARE?

- What is and what is not comparative politics?
- Main paradigms and shifts in the field,
- prevalent approaches and influences in the current CP literature.

HOW to COMPARE?

- What is the added value of comparative methodology?
- Comparing few cases, many cases, comparing most similar or most different cases?
- What is the *science* in political science?
- Quantitative or a qualitative approach to comparing political systems?

No assignment this week

Read: Howard Wiarda: New Directions in CP

Start reading: Lijphart, Collier, Gerring -- excerpts on comparative method

WEEK 2

CONTENT AND METHOD

Monday September 24 **COMPARATIVE METHODS**

Wed: comparative method workshop

Read excerpts from Lijphart, Collier, and Gerring

Weekly assignment on country project and methodology due Saturday

WEEK 3

INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONALISM

Monday October 1: **SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS AND STATES**

- What are institutions and institutionalism?
- How do they shape political and social life?
- How have the current political systems evolved from an institutional perspective?
- Historical path dependence and macro-social inquiry

Reading: Barrington Moore: Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy

Mon presentation: Moore

Weekly assignment on Moore due Saturday

WEEK 4

Mon October 8: **BRINGING THE STATE BACK IN**

- Why does state receive attention as a separate subject in comparative politics?
- What makes a modern state?
- Attributes of "stateness"
- Stateness and democratization -- which comes first?
- State-building and nation-building
- Democracy, nation-state, and state-nation

Presentations

Mon: C. Tilly: Warmaking and Statemaking as Organized Crime

Linz, Stepan, and Yadav: The Rise of a State-nation

Wed: Presentation: India and/or South Africa

Readings: Charles Tilly: War Making and State Making as Organized Crime

Recommended reading: Stepan, Linz, and Yadav: The Rise of State-Nations

Short assignment on Tilly is due on Saturday

WEEK 5

POLITICAL SYSTEM

Monday October 15: POLITICAL SYSTEM and SUPPORT

- Background and context- political science in the post-WWII era;
- Quest for a universal theory of decision-making;
- Systems Analysis;
- Communication studies;
- Defining a political system;
- Uses of a model.

Reading: David Easton: Framework of Political Analysis,

Mon Presentation: David Easton, Framework of Political Analysis

Work on your country project

WEEK 6

Monday October 22 POLITICAL SUPPORT

- Operationalization of the Eastonian political system elements
- Conceptualization of political support: trust and legitimacy, diffuse and specific support
- Relevance of Easton's model four decades later

Reading David Easton: Reassessment of the Concept of Political Support (1975),

Pippa Norris: Critical Citizens, Introduction (2009)

Mon: Presentation Easton and Norris

Wed: Political Culture Intro

Country Project Part I due on Saturday

WEEK 7 Oct. 31- Nov.4

READING WEEK

Submit assignment on political support by Saturday

Carry out research – gather data on civic culture in researched country

WEEK 8

POLITICAL CULTURE

Monday November 5 CIVIC CULTURE

- The concept of a *civic culture*;
- Culture, economy, and institutions;
- Historical legacy of political culture;
- Political culture in variety of contexts;

Reading: Almond and Verba: *Civic Culture*, ch. 1

Mon: Presentation Almond and Verba ch. 1

Wed: country project presentation (e.g. USA, Britain, Slovakia...)

Workshop: measuring institutional performance and political culture

Weekly assignment on Civic culture due on Saturday

WEEK 9

Monday, November 12 CIVIC CULTURE CONTINUED

- What is democratic elitism?
- What is the role of civic activism in a democratic society?
- What is the relationship between civic culture and stability?

Reading: Almond and Verba, chapter XIII: The Civic Culture and Democratic Stability

Mon Presentation: Almond and Verba on democratic stability

Wed: country project presentation

WEEK 10

Monday November 19: POLITICAL CULTURE AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- Does political culture determine economic success?
- Or is culture shaped by political institutions and economic development?
- How to measure political culture?
- Political culture explored through a multitude of cases

READINGS: Putnam: Making Democracy Work chapter 4

Mon presentation: Putnam ch 4, Social Capital

Christian Haerpfer: Support for Democracy in Postcommunist Europe and Post-Soviet Eurasia

THE LIBERAL HERALD CONFERENCE

WEEK 11

Monday November 26: SOCIAL CAPITAL

- What makes a society is more prone towards civiness?
- How can trust evolve in societies where it is lacking?
- What lessons can be drawn from Italy's trajectory for countries building up democracies?
- Is there a wider regional political culture?
- How is political culture evolving in advanced democracies?

Reading: Robert Putnam: Making Democracy Work, ch. 6: Social Capital and Institutional Success

Presentation: Robert Putnam ch. 6: Social Capital

Short assignment on Putnam due on Saturday

WEEK 12

Monday December 3: VALUE CHANGE, GENERATIONAL CHANGE

- Lipset-Rokkan and the two revolutions that shaped the political culture
- Inglehart and the third revolution

- From materialism to post-materialism
- Concept of generation and generational change
- Implications for democracy?

Reading: Ronald Inglehart: Modernization and Postmodernization

Mon Presentation: Inglehart Modernization and Postmodernization

Wed: Presentation: The rise of postmaterial culture (Denmark,...)

SUBMIT COUNTRY PROJECT REPORT PART II

WEEK 13

QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY

Monday December 10 HAPPINESS, SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

- from measuring economic development to human development to subjective well-being
- ...and happiness
- How happy are citizens of various countries?
- Is happiness related to economy? Social welfare services? Culture? Religion?

Reading Amartya Sen

Mon Presentation: Sen: Development as Freedom/The Idea of Justice

Nussbaum: Creating Capabilities

Wed Presentation:

WEEK 14

Monday December 17 CHANGES IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION : DEMOCRATIC PROSPECTS?

- Conventional and unconventional political participation
- From allegiant to assertive citizens
- Civic culture in a developing world

READING Russell Dalton, Christian Welzer: The Civic Culture Transformed: From allegiant to assertive citizens

Mon Presentation: Dalton and Welzel: The Civic Culture Transformed

Wendy Brown: Apocalyptic Populism

Wed Presentation: The rise of assertive citizens (South Africa, Slovakia...)

WEEK 15

Monday JANUARY 7 NEXT FRONTIERS OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

- Is a fourth wave of democratization taking place globally or are we witnessing a democratic backsliding?
- What are the limits and prospects of democracy?

MON, WED: CONSULTATIONS OF COUNTRY PROJECTS. Make an appointment during this week. Final consultation is a condition of passing this course.

FINAL PAPER DUE BY JANUARY 5

The Country project

Throughout the semester, you will be researching one particular country, its political system, institutions, culture, agents of social change... You will be writing weekly assignments on these topics (all of the instructions are on the Moodle and submissions are also done via Moodle). Assignments will be “stitched” together three times during the semester, making up three parts of the final product, the country project.

Thus, the whole research project will be conducted **in four steps**, resulting in the Country project Report I, Country project Report II, Country Project Report III, and, of course, the Country project final paper.

You will also present your findings in one presentation to the class during the semester.

Here are some recommendations for approaching the assignments:

- Country project reports are expected to be short essays. Do not merely write up a “shopping list” of facts and information in answering the guiding questions. Interpret and analyze them, structure the paper using introduction, main body, and a conclusion. Utilize sub-headings to mark important passages.
- Use the asked questions in the weekly assignments to delimit your essay – do not try to cover areas outside of the asked questions because you found the information, and, on the other hand, do make sure you find relevant information for the questions asked.
- **Explain the data** you use, and include **definitions of concepts** you operate with,
- **Use multiple academic sources, utilizing remote access to scholarly journals (UK SAV or CVTI) and cite them properly**, using APA style and citation guide. **Always include a bibliography. Papers not containing basic elements of academic essay structure, formatting, and referencing will not be accepted.**

Country project: Report I

The first country project research will provide you with information and data that will serve as a background for your final paper, analyzing the historical roots of the political system currently in place in your country. This assignment synthesizes and expands on the work you have done for the previous short assignments. **You can use what you wrote so far**, bring it together into one narrative, and elaborate on your arguments using new academic literature relevant to your case study (country project).

Use five or more scholarly articles or book chapters using accessible online databases (use Questia and vzdialeny pristup HAN at UK SAV library or CVTI) that will provide you with answers to the following questions:

- what was the social structure of the pre-modern society and how did the classes come out of modernization struggles into modernity?
- what was the nature of this transition - (what role did violence or oppression or accommodation and cooperation play in this process?)
- how did the modern state evolve historically as an independent political actor? *Who* was and is the state?

Use Moore and Tilly's texts as the main theoretical foundation for your analysis. **NOTE: Moore and Tilly count as academic sources as well.** That means you have to find at least three more sources to work with, pertaining to your country context.

Country project: Report II

1000-1500 words

The country project report II focuses on the character of society in your country and to identify the determinants of its political culture. Utilize the models presented in the course readings to apply to your country by seeking the data that will fit those models. Stitch together the weekly assignments on Almond and Verba and Putnam, find three or more additional scholarly articles, and utilize accessible online databases that will provide you with data

- Describe the mixture of political culture in your country
 - classify your country using the typology of subject, parochial, and participatory culture provided by Almond and Verba
- Describe in greater detail a selected sub-topic within political culture of your country, qualitative and quantitative analysis (see handout with detailed instructions)
- you may utilize the concept of civicness and find data for the indicators of civicness index presented by Putnam
- use accessible data (World Values Survey, European Values Survey, Gallup Poll, Eurobarometer, Afrobarometer etc.) to provide data on selected element of political culture in the studied country.

Country project: Report III

This part of the country project maps the shifts in democratic governance and citizenship in the past decades. Utilize the readings by Inglehart, Sen/Nussbaum, and Dalton to provide an image of political participation in your country of research today.

Some questions to be guided by:

- How do Sen/Nussbaum define democracy? What are the end goals and what instrumental prerequisites for its full attainment?
- How has economic development and generational change impact political culture in your country? Can we talk about a shift towards postmaterialism?
- How do these changes impact the nature of political participation? Is an observable rise of assertive citizens and unconventional, elite-challenging political participation?

Apply data from online databases (Transparency Int'l, World Governance Indicators, Freedom House, Polity Index, Human Development Index, ...) to provide data on human rights and freedoms / corruption / health and education (choose focus which fits best with the overall argument of your country project as a whole)

Include a hypothesis in the introduction about the changing (or unchanging) nature of political participation in your country and its causes. Use the required readings to provide definitions, and additional academic sources and data from online databases to provide evidence supporting your claims.

Country project: Final paper

10-15 norm pages

The term paper is expected to examine one issue in greater depth through the application of one particular theoretical approach within a selected country. Students are encouraged to develop their argument by

application of a theory to a case study or leaning on the debate between two theories. The paper should be c. 12 - 15 norm pages long. It will be graded according to the consistent application of a particular theory to the issue under observation, thorough argumentation and use of evidence, analytical value and contribution to the field, the coherence of logic, use of sources and organization.

The paper should directly utilize all of the previously written assignments and country project reports and string them together in one coherent narrative that seeks to answer the main posed research question.

Suggested work sequence:

Your final paper will be an **in-depth look at a topic within the country** you were researching throughout the semester.

1. Choose a **narrower theoretical model/topic** you want to explore in your paper (e.g. Putnam's social capital model, or unconventional type of political participation). The narrower topic may be determined by the theme of the week in which you present, as you will gather most literature on that theme (you may chose a different topic if preferred);
2. For example, you might like to apply theory or a model from one of the texts we have been reading to your country, testing that theory or model on a different context and/or time. Or you may choose to combine approaches and raise new research questions. **See topic examples directly below.**
3. Formulate the main **hypothesis** and **arguments** to support it.
4. Utilize the **sources** collected within the three **country project reports**, utilize **texts from the course** for theoretical foundations of the paper, and seek out specific sources on your topic. **TALK TO ME** about the sources for your final paper, I will likely have suggestions for sources.
5. Write a **draft of the paper**. Feel free to consult the draft with me. (By the end of the semester).
6. Write the **paper...** make sure to format it properly and cite sources **in APA format and include a bibliography.**

Topic examples:

Social revolutions: example: Roots of fascism and the current neo-Nazi groupings in Germany; Evolution of democracy in India- an anomaly?; Race, language, and religion -- South Africa's route to apartheid

State: Special position of small states in the world market: Slovakia's choice of economic policies; Statemaking and Warming: Relationship of the military and the state in India ...; Captured state: empire, state, and nation in Russia ;

Political culture: The development of *civiness* in Slovakia after 1993; Changing political participation in USA, Impact of religion on political participation of women in India, Through immigration to happier multicultural cities? The case of Norway; The emergence of national populism and secessionism in Great Britain; Crisis of identity and apocalyptic populism in the USA.

Institutions and institutional change: Making Democracy Work?: Territorial administration reform in Slovakia – design and consequences; How does the Indian institutional design impact ethnic conflicts and tensions between regions?; Gerrymandering: race and elections in the USA; Russia's route to presidential monarchy, Societal corporatism and democratic civic culture in Norway; Power-sharing or power-dividing? Governance in divided societies (South Africa, Slovakia, India...)

Happiness: Why is Denmark consistently among the happiest countries in the world?

Value change: Are Slovaks still mostly conservative? Postmaterialism and generational change...

Participation: Is the fact that the young generation is taking part through protests, boycotts, strikes, a good omen for democracy in South Africa? Are the millennials less democratic than their parents in the USA?

COUNTRY PROJECT PRESENTATION

During the first week, you will select a country that will be the topic for your research for the duration of the semester. Your presentation will be **linked to this research**, presenting what you have found so far. It is also to be primarily **focused on the topic of the week** (political culture, political participation,...)

During your presentation, you are in charge of leading the discussion section. **Relate your presentation to the topic we are studying (you must read the text for that week and use it as the foundation for your presentation), explain the relevant theory, and use your country as an example**, an illustration of the theoretical problem at hand. Engage your colleagues in discussion.

For seminar presentation, **you are also to write a one page handout containing the summary of the main arguments, points of critique, and questions for discussion**. Bring copies of the handout for your colleagues.

The presentation **handout** is **not a copy and paste** exercise. Try to succinctly select and map the main ideas, present them in a scheme, rely on the **sources you found in your research** as well as **readings in the course reader**.

Structure your presentation handout with sub-headings, work with bullet points and illustrations (tables, graphs, schemes...).

DO NOT READ OUT YOUR PRESENTATION from a paper or from the PPT.

If using a PPT, use it as an accompaniment, not replacement of your input. Do not crowd slides with text. PPT is mostly a VISUAL support

Prepare questions for discussion, or short quizzes,... for other students and be prepared to answer questions in return.

Yes, there is an opportunity to gain extra 2 credits just for reading these instructions. Email me your favorite joke anytime during the semester upon reading this, and you shall be granted two bonus credits.

Do use presentation software (PPT, Prezi) if you see it adds value to your talk. However, do not crowd slides with text, or prepare more slides than you can cover in c. 30 minutes or less.

Searching for academic sources online:

For the purposes of country project reports and final paper, you will need to find academic sources that will provide you with information

- Use **BISLA library (!!!)**
- Use **Google Drive folders** with articles for your case study (you will receive a link via email)
- When googling, use **Google Scholar**
- Search for **annotated bibliographies**
- Use **Questia (BISLA has lifetime access)** or other full-text online search engines and databases
- **Get HAN remote access from the UK SAV library** (if you have a library card, you can do this online) or use **CVTI access** (I emailed you username and password last year)
- There, search through **ProQuest, JSTOR, Sage** publications, **Springer** link
- Utilize journals that sometimes offer free full text articles, such as **Journal of Democracy**
- **Remember: WIKIPEDIA IS NOT AN ACADEMIC SOURCE!**

