

# Political Science 160: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Fall 2016

Kelly M. McMann  
Case Western Reserve University  
Department of Political Science  
Office Address: 218 Mather House

Email Address: [kelly.mcmann@case.edu](mailto:kelly.mcmann@case.edu)  
Phone Number: 216-368-5565  
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays  
1:00 to 2:00 p.m. and by appointment

Why were some leaders, but not others, overthrown in the Arab Spring? Why is Britain more democratic than Russia? Why did Hutus kill an estimated half a million Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994? Puzzles such as these are the focus of comparative politics. Comparative politics is the study of processes and institutions within countries, whereas international relations is the study of interactions *among* countries. Prompted by real-world puzzles, comparativists investigate broader, more theoretical questions: How stable are different forms of government? How does one country become more democratic than another? Why do relations between some ethnic groups turn violent? This course introduces students to some of the central puzzles and theories of comparative politics in order to help them better understand world events.

We will explore the following political phenomena: types of governance, revolutionary movements and revolutions, democratization, participation and activism, poverty and its alleviation, ethnic conflict and peace, and state failure. For each of the topics we will typically spend one week examining explanations of the phenomenon and a second week evaluating the explanations against real-world examples. Are the existing explanations satisfactory, and, if not, what alternative explanations can we suggest? The examples are drawn from most regions of the world, including the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe, the former Soviet Union, North America, and South America.

## Course Materials

To evaluate the explanations, we will read scholarly works as well as journalistic accounts, travelogues, and policy pieces. Political novels are suggested for further reading. The course also incorporates film clips, slides, and policy exercises.

**Books and Articles:** Five works are available for purchase at the bookstore: *The Magic Lantern*, *Power in Movement*, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families*, and *When Things Fell Apart*. The books are also on reserve at Kelvin Smith Library. Required materials for week one will be distributed in class; required materials for subsequent weeks will be available on the course Blackboard site under Course Documents, unless otherwise noted. Paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned.

**News:** Students are strongly encouraged to follow world events. These sources offer some of the best foreign coverage:

- *The New York Times* can be accessed for free on a Case computer or through VPN at <http://library.case.edu/ksl/researchtools/newspapers/>. Select Factiva. For a subscription, see the bottom of the *NYT* home page.
- *The Economist* is available in the periodicals section on the first floor of Kelvin Smith Library. For a subscription, see <https://www.economistsubscriptions.com/ecom26/global/index.php>
- National Public Radio (WCPN 90.3 FM) broadcasts news updates at the top of the hour and news analyses throughout the day. See <http://www.wcpn.org> for the schedule and podcasts.
- Monkey Cage offers brief news analysis on timely topics. See <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/>

## Course Requirements

**Participation:** The class is discussion-based, and students are strongly encouraged to take notes on the readings in order to be prepared to integrate and critique the materials and to pose questions for discussion. Readings should be completed by the first day of the week they are assigned, and paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned. Because participation is critical to understanding the material, students are expected to attend all classes. Except under extraordinary circumstances, absenteeism will negatively affect students' final grades.

**Reading Responses and Short Essays:** In addition to reading course materials and participating in class, students will write a reading response for three of the seven "Explanations" weeks and a short essay for three of the seven "Examples" weeks. The purpose of these papers is to help students understand, critique, and integrate the readings and prepare to pose questions for discussion in class. In these papers, students should develop an argument related to an analytical question, such as what role do masses and elites play in democratization, for a reading response, or how did international factors influence the transformation of Eastern Europe in 1989, for a short essay. The strongest papers typically introduce the argument in the first paragraph and then use evidence from the readings throughout the remainder of the paper to defend the argument. They also usually incorporate ideas from each reading for that week and perhaps draw on ideas from previous readings as well. The strongest short essays typically draw on the theories from the week before.

Students may choose which weeks to write the reading responses and short essays; however, they may not write a reading response and a short essay on the same topic. For example, if a student writes a reading response on democratization, he or she cannot write a short essay on democratization. Reading responses should be between one and a half to two pages double-spaced; short essays should be between two and two and a half pages double-spaced. Papers must be submitted at the beginning of the first class of the week the analyzed materials are assigned. Evaluation of the papers will take into account the degree of independent thinking, use of assigned materials, and quality of writing.

**Final Assignment:** Students will complete a final, take-home assignment, for which they can use notes and readings but cannot confer with others. The assignment will include a series of essay questions, requiring integration of the seven political phenomena. Assignments will be distributed at the end of class Thursday, December 8 and must be turned in Monday, December 12 at 10:00 am in Mather House 218. Students should plan their schedules accordingly and organize and review their notes in advance.

All written work should be carefully structured and grammatically correct. Informal citations—phrases like "as Goodwin argues"—are acceptable. To avoid plagiarism, students should review "Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It," distributed in class. Cases of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be investigated by university judicial bodies.

Class participation and attendance will constitute 15 percent of the course grade, the three reading responses and the three short essays for 55 percent, and the final assignment for 30 percent. Students will lose a half a grade on any assignment for each day it is late.

## Course Schedule and Readings

### Day 1 (August 30): Introduction to Course and Comparative Politics

#### TYPES OF GOVERNANCE

#### NO CLASS September 1

#### Week 1 (September 6, 8): Explanations

Max Weber. "Politics as a Vocation." In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited by Hans Heinrich Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 77-128. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946. Read 77-79. Distributed in class August 30.

Robert Alan Dahl. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971. Read "Concepts" [part], 1-6. Distributed in class August 30.

Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski. "The General Characteristics of Totalitarian Dictatorship." In *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, edited by Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, 3-13. New York: Praeger, 1956. Distributed in class August 30.

Juan J. Linz. "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain." In *Mass Politics: Studies in Political Sociology*, edited by Erik Allardt and Stein Rokkan, 251-283. New York: Free Press, 1970. Read 251-267. Distributed in class August 30.

Larry Diamond. "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002), 21-35. Distributed in class August 30.

#### NO CLASS September 13, 15

#### Week 2 (September 20, 22): Examples

Hedrick Smith. *The Russians*. revised edition. New York: Ballantine Books, 1976. Read "The Party: Communist Rituals and Communist Jokes" [part], 363-385.

Howard Handelman. "'Waiting for Democracy' in Mexico: Cultural Change and Institutional Reform," 218-241. In *Democracy and Its Limits: Lessons for Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East*, edited by Howard Handelman and Mark Tessler. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999.

Philip Gourevitch. "'Letter from Korea: Alone in the Dark.'" *The New Yorker* (September 8, 2003): 54-60, 62-66, 68-75.

Eva Bellin. "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring." *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 2012), 127-149.

Review materials from Week 1.

SUGGESTED: Chinua Achebe. *Anthills of the Savannah*. New York: Doubleday, 1987. A satirical novel about political corruption and oppression in postcolonial Africa. On reserve at Kelvin Smith Library.

## REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS and REVOLUTIONS

### Week 3 (September 27, 29): Explanations

Jeff Goodwin. *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Read “Comparing Revolutionary Movements” [part], “The State-Centered Perspective on Revolutions: Strengths and Limitations” [part], 3-31, 35-50.

### Week 4 (October 4, 6): Examples

Goodwin. *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991*. Read “The Formation of Revolutionary Movements in Central America” [part], 145-176.

Timothy Garton Ash. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. 1st Vintage books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1999. Read “Witness and History” [part], “Berlin: Wall’s End,” “Prague: Inside the Magic Lantern,” “Ten Years After: Afterword to the Vintage Edition” [part], 11-20, 61-130, 162-167.

SUGGESTED: Naguib Mahfouz. *Autumn Quail*. Translator Roger Allen. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1985. A short novel, set in Egypt, about how revolutions affect daily life. You may borrow a copy of this out-of-print book from the instructor.

## DEMOCRATIZATION

### Week 5 (October 11, 13): Explanations

Seymour Martin Lipset. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," 69-105. *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (1959). Read 75-85.

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. Read "Opening (and Undermining) Authoritarian Regimes," "Negotiating (and Renegotiating) Pacts, "Resurrecting Civil Society (and Restructuring Public Space)," 15-36, 37-39, 48-56, 57-64, 74-78.

### Week 6 (October 18, 20): Examples

Barrington Moore. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966. Read "England and the Contributions of Violence to Gradualism" [part], 3-20, 29-39.

Timothy Garton Ash. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. 1st Vintage books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Read "Warsaw: The First Election, "Budapest: The Last Funeral," "Ten Years After: Afterword to the Vintage Edition" [part], 25-60, 157-162.

Elisabeth Jean Wood. *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Read "Apartheid, Conservative Modernization, and Mobilization" [part], "The Challenge to Economic Elite Interests" [part], "From Recalcitrance to Compromise," 111-125, 140-144, 169-193.

SUGGESTED: Timothy Garton Ash. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. 1st Vintage books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. "The Year of Truth," 131-156.

## PARTICIPATION and ACTIVISM

**NO CLASS October 25**

### **Week 7 (October 27) Explanations**

Sidney G. Tarrow. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. 3rd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Read “Introduction” [part], “Contentious Politics and Social Movements,” “Networks and Organizations,” “Making Meanings,” “Threats, Opportunities, and Regimes,” 16-34, 119-139, 140-156, 157-180.

### **Week 8 (November 1): Examples**

Javier C. Hernández. “Labor Protests Multiply in China as Economy Slows, Worrying Leaders.” *The New York Times* (March 14, 2016).  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/15/world/asia/china-labor-strike-protest.html>

Clare Foran. “A Year of Black Lives Matter” *The Atlantic* (December 31, 2015). <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/black-lives-matter/421839/>

Pippa Norris. “It’s Not Just Trump. Authoritarian Populism is Rising Across the West. Here’s Why.” *Monkey Cage*. (March 11, 2016). <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/11/its-not-just-trump-authoritarian-populism-is-rising-across-the-west-heres-why/>

Rukmini Callimachi. “How ISIS Built the Machinery of Terror under Europe’s Gaze.” *The New York Times* (March 29, 2016).  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/29/world/europe/isis-attacks-paris-brussels.html>.

**November 3:** Students will sign up to meet individually with the instructor to review the papers they have written. Meetings will take place during class and other times this week in Mather House 218. We will not meet as a class November 3.

## POVERTY and ITS ALLEVIATION

### **Week 9 (November 8, 10): Explanations AND Examples**

Katherine Boo. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. New York: Random House, 2012. Read 1-98 or the entire book if you have time.

**Students may write either a reading response or a short essay for this week. Each type of paper is due November 8.**

## ETHNIC CONFLICT and PEACE

### Week 10 (November 15, 17): Explanations

Henry E. Hale. *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Read 1-9, 13-56.

**NO CLASS November 22, 24**

### Week 11 (November 29, December 1): Examples

Philip Gourevitch. *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. 1st ed. New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1998. Read 1-171. (This book is a journalist's excellent, but disturbing, account of the Rwandan genocide. If you prefer not to read descriptions of graphic violence, skip pages 15-16, 19-20, 30, and 31.)

## STATE FAILURE

### Week 12 (December 6) Explanations AND Examples

Robert H. Bates. *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Read "Introduction," "From Fable to Fact," "Political Legacies," "Policy Choices," "Subnational Tensions," "Things Fall Apart," 3-14, 15-29, 33-53, 55-74, 75-93, 97-128.

**Students may write either a reading response or a short essay for this week. Each type of paper is due December 6**

### Conclusion (December 8) Integrating the Phenomena

Students are expected to review their notes and be prepared to integrate the topics we studied.

**DUE: Final Assignment—Due Monday, December 12 at 10:00 am at 218 Mather House**