

GOVERNMENT AND COMPARATIVE POLITICS

IE University

Professor: **GUILLERMO TORAL**

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Academic year: 22-23

Degree course: FIRST

Semester: 2^o

Category: COMPULSORY

Number of credits: 6.0

Language: English

PREREQUISITES

There are no formal prerequisites to take this course.

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

How do political systems around the world differ? What are the origins of such differences? What consequences do political systems and institutions have for economic, social, and human development? How can we make sense of historical and contemporary patterns of political development? And how can leverage all that knowledge to intervene in the world and make it a better place to live?

This course introduces students to comparative politics, a broad subfield of political science preoccupied with providing answers to these and many other questions related to politics and its impact on human livelihoods.

The semester is organized in 5 blocks:

- First, a block of 5 sessions focuses on the field of comparative politics and the nature, emergence and development of the most important arena of contemporary politics -- the state.
- A second block of 4 sessions is dedicated to political regimes (democracy and authoritarianism, with their respective subtypes) and their survival.
- Next, a block of 4 sessions turns to varieties of political representation (parliamentarism versus presidentialism, different types of elections, and electoral systems).
- Fourth, an 8-session block considers major political actors, including voters, parties, courts, subnational authorities, interest groups, social movements, and the media.
- Finally, a block of 4 sessions focuses on two broad domains of political competition, namely redistribution and culture and identity.

Through a combination of lectures, readings, discussions, workshops, and individual research, this course will build students' ability to leverage the concepts, theories, and methods of comparative politics to think systematically through complex political and social problems, and to advance original, evidence-based arguments about them. The skills we build in this class will be useful for those seeking careers in sectors where analyzing complex social problems is valuable, be it in business, government, international organizations, or research.

OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Describe the key dimensions of variation in political systems around the world and how major countries in all continents differ along them.
2. Reflect critically about the origins and consequences of differences in political systems, with reference to established theories in political science.
3. Apply key concepts and theories of political science to debates about politics around the world.
4. Demonstrate social scientific literacy, including basic quantitative literacy, and apply it to the study and discussion of politics.
5. Use critical reading, autonomous research, and academic writing skills to build and present cogent and evidence-based arguments about politics.

METHODOLOGY

Learning in this course will advance through lectures, in-class discussions, workshops, required readings, preparation for quizzes and exams, and individual research and writing of a paper.

Teaching methodology	Weighting	Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in
Lectures	30.0 %	45 hours
Discussions	10.0 %	15 hours
Exercises	20.0 %	30 hours
Group work	10.0 %	15 hours
Other individual studying	30.0 %	45 hours
TOTAL	100.0 %	150 hours

PROGRAM

SESSION 1 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Introduction to the course's objectives, requirements, rationale, and participants

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (Introduction) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 2 - 3 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

The approach and methods of comparative politics

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapters 1, 2 and 3) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 4 - 5 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

The nature, formation, and development of states

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 4) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 4) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 6 - 7 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Regimes: Authoritarianism, types, and survival

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 6) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 8 - 9 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Regimes: Democracy, democratization, and survival

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (Chapter 7) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (Chapter 5) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 10 - 11 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Representation: Parliamentarism and presidentialism

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 10) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 7) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 12 - 13 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Representation: Elections and electoral systems

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 11) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 10) (See Bibliography)

SESSION 14 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Review session for the mid-term exam

SESSION 15 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Mid-term exam

SESSIONS 16 - 17 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Actors: Voters and political behavior

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapters 18 and 25) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 18 - 19 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Actors: Political parties and party systems

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 12) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 12) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 20 - 21 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Actors: Courts, subnational authorities, and other avenues of non-electoral accountability

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 13) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 9) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 22 - 23 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Actors: Interest groups, social movements, and the media

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapters 14, 16 and 19) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 24 - 25 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Domains: Redistribution and social policy

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapters 21 and 22) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 26 - 27 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Domains: Culture, identity, and ideas

Book Chapters: Foundations of Comparative Politics (chapter 13) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Comparative Politics (chapter 17) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 28 - 29 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Review session for the final exam

SESSION 30 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Final exam

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compulsory

- Caramani, Daniele. (2020). *Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0198820607 (Digital)

- Clark, William Roberts; Golder, Matt; and Golder, Sona Nadenicheck. (2019). *Foundations of Comparative Politics*. CQ Press. ISBN 1544326866 (Digital)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Students' final grade will be a function of their performance in (i) a final exam covering all the semester's material, including readings, lectures, workshops and in-class discussions (40% of the grade), (ii) a midterm exam covering all material covered to date (15% of the grade), (iii) quizzes covering the week's reading and the material covered in the previous session (15% of the grade); (iv) a research paper (20% of the grade); and (v) participation in class discussions (10% of the grade).

More information on each of these components will be provided in the first session of the semester and before the corresponding deadlines.

Criteria	Percentage	Comments
Final exam	40 %	In-class, covers all the material covered throughout the semester (including readings, lectures, workshops, and exercises)
Mid-term exam	15 %	In-class, covers all the material covered up to session 15

Quizzes	15 %	In-class, covering the readings assigned for the week and the previous week's lecture
Research paper	20 %	Original research paper on a topic and case chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor
Class Participation	10 %	Graded based on depth, quality, and frequency of contributions to in-class discussions

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Each student has four attempts over two consecutive academic years to pass this course.

Students are required to obtain the minimum grade of 5 required to pass the course. Students whose grade in the Final Exam (or the largest assignment) is below 5 will fail the course. The rule applies to whichever assignment carries the greatest weight to the final grade. Dates and location of the final exam will be posted in advance and will not be changed.

Students must attend at least 70% of the sessions. Students who do not comply with the 70% attendance rule will receive a 0.0 on their first and second attempts and go directly to the third one (they will need to enroll in this course again the following academic year).

Students who are in the third or fourth attempt must contact the professor during the first two weeks of the course.

ATTENDANCE

In-person attendance is mandatory at IE University, as it is an essential factor of IE's learning methodology. While we do closely monitor attendance in each course, we also consider our students responsible for their own agenda and commitments, as adult university students. With that in mind, each student may miss up to 30% of the sessions within a given course and still maintain the possibility of passing that given course. This 30% "buffer" is to be used for any absences, such as: illnesses, personal emergencies, commitments, official/governmental matters, business and/or medical appointments, family situations, etc. Students should manage their various needs, and situations that may arise, within that 30% buffer. If a student is absent to more than the allowed 30% of the sessions (regardless of the reason), s/he will obtain a 0.0 grade for that course in both the ordinary and extraordinary calls of the current academic year, and s/he will have to retake the course during the following academic year.

Please pay close attention to your attendance. The program strongly encourages attending 100% of the sessions as it will improve your learning outcomes, it will increase the class performance and it will benefit your participation grade. Noncompliance with deadlines for Non-Classroom Learning activities or assignments will result in an absence for the session.

Extreme cases involving emergencies such as; extended hospitalizations, accidents, serious illnesses and other cases of force majeure; are to be consulted with the Program Management (bir.biemadrid@ie.edu / bir.biesegovia@ie.edu) for assessment of the situation and corresponding documentation, in order to support and guide each student optimally.

For more information about the university attendance policy, please check; <https://www.ie.edu/student-guide/bir/policies-and-guidelines/attendance/>

THIRD CALL RETAKE POLICY

Any student in their third call of a course, also known as a "Retaker", is obliged to observe the following rules:

- Third call students must contact their professors before or during the first session to ask which work and or *sessions will be required to obtain a passing grade. The professor will determine which work will be required in their course.

*(e.g. when presenting group work, sitting for examinations or other work done in class)

- Retakers are exempt from failing the call due to absences; however, they are not exempt from work the professor designates as necessary to obtain a passing grade. This means some sessions may be mandatory to attend in order to complete the work within.
- Students in their third call are responsible for managing the conflicts in their schedule, should students need advice on how to manage their conflicts they should visit the program office.

EXTRAORDINARY EXAMINATION POLICY:

Any student whose weighted final grade is below 5 will be required to sit for the extraordinary exam to pass the course (except those not complying with the attendance rules, whom are banned from this possibility).

Grading for retakes will be subject to the following rules:

- The extraordinary call will consist of a comprehensive exam or equivalent assignment. The grade will depend only on the performance on this exam; continuous evaluation over the semester will not be taken into account.
- Dates and location of the retakes will be posted in advance and will not be changed.
- The exam/assignment will be designed bearing in mind that the passing grade is 5 and the maximum grade that can be attained is 8 out of 10.

PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC HONESTY

Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting another person's ideas, texts or words as your own. This includes in order of seriousness of the offense:

- providing faulty sources;
- copy-pasting material from your own past assignments (self-plagiarism) without the instructor's permission;
- copy-pasting material from external sources even while citing them;
- using verbatim translations from sources in other languages without citing them; - copy-pasting material from external sources without citing them;
- buying or commissioning essays from other parties.

IEU students must contact the professor if they don't know whether the use of a document constitutes plagiarism. For help with your academic writing, contact the Writing Center (writingcenter@faculty.ie.edu). All written assignments must be submitted through Turn-it-in, which produces a similarity report and detects cases of plagiarism. Professors are required to check each student's academic work in order to guarantee its originality. If the originality of the academic work is not clear, the professor will contact the student in order to clarify any doubts. Students using external tutorial support should report it to the professor and the Program from the moment they began receiving this support. In the event that the meeting with the student fails to clarify the originality of the academic work, the professor will inform the Program Director about the case, who will then decide whether to bring the case forward to the Academic Review Panel. Very high similarity scores will be automatically flagged and forwarded to the Academic Review Panel. Plagiarism constitutes a very serious offense and may carry penalties ranging from getting a zero for the assignment to expulsion from the university depending on the severity of the case and the number of times the student has committed plagiarism in the past.

PROFESSOR BIO

Professor: **GUILLERMO TORAL**

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Guillermo Toral is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the IE School of Global and Public Affairs, and a Faculty Affiliate at MIT GOV/LAB. He obtained his PhD in Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2020, and an MPhil in Comparative Government at the University of Oxford (with distinction) in 2011. Prior to joining IE, Guillermo worked as Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University. Before doing his PhD, he spent several years working on human development policy and programs at the World Bank, in Washington DC and across Latin America.

Guillermo works in the fields of comparative politics and political economy, with a regional focus on Latin America and Southern Europe, and a substantive focus on issues of development, governance, and corruption. His research focuses on relationships among state actors (politicians, bureaucrats, and anti-corruption agents) and how they shape public service delivery and human development. In his work, Guillermo uses big administrative datasets, surveys, and extensive qualitative fieldwork to shed light on dynamics of government accountability. His dissertation (now book project) received the 2021 Harold D. Lasswell Award for the best dissertation in the field of public policy from the American Political Science Association.

Some of Guillermo's research has been published or is forthcoming in leading journals, including the American Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Politics, and the Annual Review of Political Science. He has also published a number of policy reports and book chapters.

More information on Guillermo's research and experience can be found at www.guillermotoral.com

OTHER INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS

Students who want to meet the instructor for office hours should sign up using this link: <https://calendly.com/guillermo-toral/office-hours>. If the available slots do not work for them, students should feel free to email the instructor for an alternative meeting time.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND EMAIL POLICY

Students should feel free to email the instructor with any questions at gtoral@faculty.ie.edu. E-mails are typically responded to within 2 working days.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The instructor is committed to making this course a safe and productive learning environment for all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, abilities, or religion. In this course, people's diverse backgrounds and worldviews are not merely differences to tolerate but valuable assets to recognize and celebrate. When in the classroom, students are expected to treat each other with kindness, openness, and respect.

Any student who feels they need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should e-mail the instructor as soon as possible to discuss their needs.

CODE OF CONDUCT IN CLASS

1. Be on time. Students arriving more than 5 minutes late will be marked as "Absent". Only students that notify in advance in writing that they will be late for a specific session may be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor). Students attending online must always have their cameras on during the session or risk being marked absent.
2. If applicable, bring your name card and strictly follow the seating chart. It helps faculty members and fellow students learn your names.

3. Do not leave the room during the lecture. Students are not allowed to leave the room during lectures. If a student leaves the room during lectures, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter and, therefore, will be marked as "Absent". Only students that notify that they have a special reason to leave the session early will be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).
4. Do not engage in side conversation. As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed. If you have a question, raise your hand and ask it. If you do not want to ask it during the lecture, feel free to approach your teacher after class. If a student is disrupting the flow of the lecture, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and, consequently, will be marked as "Absent".
5. Use your laptop for course-related purposes only. The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor. The use of Social Media or accessing any type of content not related to the lecture is penalized. The student will be asked to leave the room and, consequently, will be marked as "Absent".
6. No cellular phones. IE University implements a "Phone-free Classroom" policy and, therefore, the use of phones, tablets, etc. is forbidden inside the classroom. Failing to abide by this rule entails expulsion from the room and will be counted as one absence.
7. Escalation policy: 1/3/5. Items 4, 5, and 6 above entail expulsion from the classroom and the consequent marking of the student as "Absent." IE University implements an "escalation policy": The first time a student is asked to leave the room for disciplinary reasons (as per items 4, 5, and 6 above), the student will incur one absence, the second time it will count as three absences, and from the third time onward, any expulsion from the classroom due to disciplinary issues will entail 5 absences.

UNIVERSITY