

Comparative Political Institutions

Course Day & Times:

- T | Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM), Anderson Hall rm. 0019
- R | Period 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM) Anderson Hall rm. 0019
- Asynchronous | 1 hour/week for Perusall and other assignments.
- Office Hours: TBD, Anderson Hall Rm. 211 or Turlington 3324

Course objectives, description and goals:

The primary goal of this course is to assist students in better understanding the origin, influence and interconnectedness of political institutions in modern political systems and especially within the context of policymaking. This understanding will help students understand the functioning of diverse political systems and the potential costs and benefits and often-unanticipated consequences of institutional change. The course begins by examining a set of diverse analytical frameworks that can help to interpret the origins and influence of institutions. This is followed by a careful review of most major formal political institutions (although a few are not covered due to time constraints) as well as some informal institutions. The readings include both theoretical analyses and applied case studies. The goal is for the information covered in the course to be understood as generally applicable regardless of country or context. As a result, there is no specific geographic focus to the course.

Prerequisites

A basic “Introduction to Comparative Politics” course (such as CPO 2001) is required, experience in other upper division political science courses is recommended.

Attendance

Note that class attendance is required for this course. Attendance will be monitored as necessary during lectures (roll) and through participation in in-class discussions, pop quizzes etc. During lectures, the professor may also occasionally provide insider information for exams and otherwise incentivize regular attendance.

Repeated absences will unquestionably affect your performance on exams since they will be based on class lectures and discussions, as well as readings. Lecture notes and other related course materials discussed or distributed during class will NOT be posted online or otherwise distributed (except in the case of an *excused* absence).

According to the Office of the University Registrar, “acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.”

For further information about the University of Florida’s attendance policy, please see the current Undergraduate Catalogue

(<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>).

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, and what the university policies are. If you have doubts, we please discuss with the professor immediately (after the infringement is too late). Please refer to the current Undergraduate Catalogue for more information on the Student Honor code (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>). Students who have questions about these policies, should contact the undergraduate advisement center for additional information.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office so that special arrangements can be made to accommodate you. It is your responsibility to do so at the beginning of the semester and to communicate directly with the professor during the first week of classes (or as soon as the disability occurs).

Grading & Assessment

Students are responsible for completing all readings for the topic in question *prior* to attending the class.

- **Participation** - including discussion posts of country perspectives (15%)
- **Perusall** - based on scoring within Perusall (15%)
- **Case Study presentation** – in-class presentation of case study article (5%)
- **Midterms** - take home essay-based exams (20% each, 40% total)
- **Final Paper** - to be discussed in class (25%)

Grading Scale (UF standard)

94% - 100% = A 90% - 93% = A- 87% - 89% = B+ 84% - 86% = B 80% - 83% = B-
77% - 79% = C+ 74% - 76% = C 70% - 73% = C- 67% - 69% = D+ 64% - 66% = D
60% - 63% = D- < 60% = F

****Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed during the course of the semester. As much advance warning as possible will be provided to students. Changes can be made to the schedule, assigned reading or other aspects as deemed necessary. No changes will be made to grading scale or core UF policies as noted above.****

REQUIRED BOOK & MATERIALS

- Rhodes, R, Sarah Binder and Bert Rockman, The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions, (OHPI) Oxford University Press, 2006 (paperback or hardback is fine)
- Various articles and book chapters assigned below in detailed syllabus. These will be available online. **Blue** denotes Perusall assigned article, **Green** denotes case study article.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

WEEK 1 (Jan. 6): Introduction to the Class

WEEK 2 (Jan. 11 & 13): Comparative Political Institutions & Approaches to Institutional Analysis

- What is a political institution?
- How and why do we study political institutions?

Readings:

1. Chapter 1 “Elaborating the ‘New Institutionalism’” OHPI
2. Hall, Peter and Rosemary C. R. Taylor “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms,” *Political Studies*, Vol, XLIV, pp: 936-957
3. Offe, Claus “Political Institutions and Social Power – Conceptual Explorations” Chapter 1 in [Rethinking Political Institutions: The Art of the State](#), Ian Shapiro, Stephen Skowronek and Daniel Galvin (Eds) New York University Press, 2006

WEEK 3 (Jan. 18 & 20): (New) Approaches to Institutional Analysis & Change

- New Institutional approaches
- Rational Choice Institutionalism
- Historical Institutionalism

Readings:

1. Chapter 2 “Rational Choice Institutionalism” OHPI
2. Chapter 3 “Historical Institutionalism” OHPI
3. Shepsle, Kenneth and Barry Weingast, “Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1994.
4. Thelen, Kathleen, “How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis” Chapter 6 in [Comparative Historical Analysis](#), James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (Eds), Cambridge University Press, 2003

WEEK 4 (Jan. 25 & 27): (Newer) Approaches to Institutional Analysis & Change

- New paradigms – Constructivist approaches to political institutions

Readings:

1. Chapter 4 “Constructivist Institutionalism” OHPI
2. Bell, Stephen, “Do we Really Need a New ‘Constructivist Institutionalism’ to Explain Institutional Change?” *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 41, No. 4, 2011
3. Schmidt, Vivien, “Discursive Institutionalism: The explanatory power of ideas and discourse,” *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 11, pp. 303-326, 2008.

WEEK 5 (Feb. 1 & 3): The State and State Building

- The origin and impact of the state
- Defining the state
- The legitimacy of the state

Readings:

1. Chapter 7 “The State and State Building” OHPI

2. Clements, Kevin, Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Wendy Foley and Anna Nolan, "State Building Reconsidered: The Role of Hybridity in the Formation of Political Order," *Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 1, 2007
3. Fortin-Rittberger, Jessica, "Exploring the Relationship between Infrastructural and Coercive State Capacity," *Democratization*, Vol. 21, No. 7, 2014
4. Thies, Cameron, "Public Violence and State Building in Central America," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39, No.10, 2006

WEEK 6 (Feb. 8 & 10): Constitutions

- Types of Constitutions
- The impact of constitutions (constitutional rigidity)

Readings:

1. Chapter 11 "Analyzing Constitutions" OHPI
2. Chapter 12 "Comparative Constitutions" OHPI
3. Alberts, Susan, "How Constitutions Constrain," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2009
4. Lijphart, Arend, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 15, No.2, 2004
5. Farrell, H. and Heritier, A, "Formal and Informal Institutions under Codecision: Continuous Constitution-Building in Europe" *Governance*, Vol. 16, No. 4: 577-600, 2003.

WEEK 7 Feb. 15 & 17): Federalism and Territorial Institutions

- What is federalism
- Types of federal political systems
- Territorial Political institutions

Readings:

1. Chapter 14 "Comparative Federalism" OHPI
2. Braun, Dietmar, "Making Federalism More Efficient: A Comparative Assessment," *Acta Politica*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 2008
3. Kymlicka, Will, "Federalism, Nationalism and Multiculturalism," Chapter 24 on in Dimitrios Karmis and Wayne Norman (Eds.) *Theories of Federalism: A Reader*, Palgrave Macmillan Press, New York, NY, 2005
4. Suberu, Rotimi, "Federalism in Africa: The Nigerian Experience in Comparative Perspective," *Ethnopolitics*, Vol.8, No. 1, 2009

WEEK 8 (Feb. 22 & 24): Citizens, Civil Society and Other Social Actors

- Citizens and citizenship
- The role of civil society
- Other Social actors

Readings:

1. Chapter 8 "Development of Civil Society" OHPI
2. Anderson, J. and Aida Paskeviciute, "How Ethnic and Linguistic Heterogeneity Influence the Prospects for Civil Society: A Comparative Study of Citizenship Behavior," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 4, 2006.

3. Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way, "Why Democracy Needs a Level Playing Field." *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 2010
4. Kasfir, Nelson, "Civil Society, the State and Democracy in Africa," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1998

WEEK 9 (March 1 & 3): SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 (March 8 & 10): Elections and Electoral systems

- Types of electoral systems
- The impact of electoral systems
- Changing electoral systems

Readings:

1. Chapter 29 "Electoral Systems" OHPI
2. Riker, William, "Duverger's Law Revisited," Chapter 1 in Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences, Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart (Eds.) Agathon Press: NY, 2003
3. Benoit, K., "Electoral Laws as Political Consequences: Explaining the Origins and Change of Electoral Institutions," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 10, 2007
4. Endersby, James and Jonathan Kriekhaus, "Turnout around the globe- The influence of electoral institutions on national voter participation, 1972–2000," *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 27, Issue 4, 2008

WEEK 11 (March 15 & 17): Political Parties and Party Systems

- Types of political parties
- Roles of political parties
- Structure of political parties and party organizations

Readings:

1. Chapter 28 "Political Parties in and out of Legislatures" OHPI
2. Daalder, Hans, "Parties: Denied, Dismissed, or Redundant? A Critique," Chapter 2 in Richard Gunther, Jose Ramon Montero and Juan Linz (Eds.) Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges, Oxford University Press, UK, 2002
3. Dalton, Russel, "The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems: Party System Polarization, Its Measurement and Its Consequences," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 7, 2008
4. Poguntke, Thomas, "Party Organizational Linkage: Parties without Firm Social Roots," Chapter 3 in Kurt Richard Luther and Ferdinand Muller-Rommel (Eds.) Political Parties in the New Europe, Oxford University Press: UK, 2002

WEEK 12 (March 22 & 24): Legislatures

- Internal organization of legislatures
- Roles of legislatures
- Structural characteristics of legislatures

Readings:

1. Chapter 22 "Legislative Organization" OHPI
2. Chapter 23 "Comparative Legislative Behavior" OHPI
3. Chapter 24 "Bicameralism" OHPI

4. Polsby, Nelson, "Legislatures," Chapter 7 in Philip Norton Legislatures, Oxford University Press: UK, 1990
5. Mezey, Michael, "Classifying Legislatures," Chapter 8 in Philip Norton Legislatures, Oxford University Press: UK, 1990
6. Loewenberg, Gerhard, "Paradoxes of Legislatures," *Daedalus*, Vol. 136, No. 3, 2007

WEEK 13 (March 29 & 31): Executives

- Presidents vs. Prime Ministers
- The "core" Executive
- Types of executives

Readings:

1. Chapter 17 "Executives in Parliamentary Government" OHPI
2. Chapter 18 "Executives – The American Presidency" OHPI
3. Siaroff, Alan, "Comparative Presidencies-The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 42: 287-312, 2003
4. Elgie, Robert, "Models of Executive Politics-A Framework for the Study of Executive Power Relations," *Political Studies*, Vol. 45:217-231, 1997
5. Schleiter, Petra and Edward Morgan-Jones, "Party Government in Europe-Parliamentary and semi-presidential democracies compared," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 48: 665-693, 2009

WEEK 14 (April 5 & 7): Executive-Legislative Relations

- The character of legislative-executive relations (independence vs. M.A.D.)
- Coalitions, divided government and the impact of legislative-executive relations on the political system

Readings:

1. Chapter 18 "Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations" OHPI
2. Gandhi, Jennifer and Adam Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 40, No.11, 2007
3. Strøm, Kaare, "Parliamentary Government and Legislative Organization," Chap. 2 in Parliaments and Majority Rule in Western Europe, Herbert Döring (Ed.), Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES), Germany, 1995
4. King, Anthony, "Modes of Executive-Legislative Relations: Great Britain, France and West Germany," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol.1 No. 1, 1976

WEEK 15 (April 12 & 14): Judiciary

- Types of legal systems
- The role of the Judiciary
- Constitutional courts

Readings:

1. Chapter 26 "Judicial Institutions" OHPI
2. Chapter 27 "The Judicial Process and Public Policy" OHPI
3. Horowitz, Donald, "Constitutional Courts a Primer for Decision Makers," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 2006

4. Sweet-Stone, Alec, "Constitutional Courts and Parliamentary Democracy," *West European Politics*, Vol25, No. 1, 2002

WEEK 16 (April 19 – last day): Conclusions

- Catch-up and Wrap-up