

Department of Political Science
SENIOR SEMINAR IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS
A Dialogue between Foundations and Frontiers

[Note: This is a translated version of the original Spanish-language syllabus, available upon request]

COURSE NUMBER:	CPOL 3100	
COURSE TYPE:	Lecture	
	Theoretical-practical	
	Seminar	X
	Languages	
PROFESSOR:	Juan Diego Prieto Sanabria	
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OFFICE:	G-301	
CLASS SCHEDULE:	Wednesday, 12:30-3:20 PM (Au 104)	
OFFICE HOURS:	Wednesday, 4:00-6:00 PM	

DESCRIPTION

This seminar offers an in-depth analysis of several key problems and debates in the subfield of comparative politics. The course is structured around three thematic as well as analytical axes: political institutions, political economy, and social forces. We address various phenomena within each of these areas of study, including the state, political regimes, and institutional design, economic development and social policy, and social movements, revolutions, and civil war, and we do so by looking both at foundational works as well as more recent, ground-breaking texts. These works cut across diverse methodological perspectives (such as case studies, quantitative analyses, ethnographies, and multi-method approaches).

CONTENTS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
23/1	30/1	6/2	13/2	20/2	27/2	6/3	13/3	20/3	27/3	3/4	10/4	X	24/4	X	8/5
<i>Part I. Political Institutions</i>							<i>Part II. Political Economy</i>				<i>Part III. Social Forces</i>				
Introduction	Concepts and approaches	The state	Democracy and its discontents	Institutional design	MIDTERM	Authoritarianism	Introduction	Development	Social policy	Economic regulation	Social movements	Semester-Break	Civil society and participation	Holiday	Revolutions and armed conflicts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon finishing this course, students will be able to

- analyze the relationship among political institutions, economic processes, and societal forces in a rigorous, well-informed, and nuanced manner,
- identify some of the main political, economic, and social challenges facing governments and non-state actors,
- understand the possible uses of a comparative approach and different methodological approaches to political problems, with their respective advantages and limitations,
- write argumentative essays and deliver oral presentations that discuss different theoretical perspectives, analyze their strengths and flaws, and offer compelling, evidence-based original arguments.

METHODOLOGY

Readings

This is an advanced seminar. It is reading-intensive, and most of the mandatory readings are in English. All the readings are accessible on Sicua [Blackboard]. Students are expected to have completed all the mandatory readings with care and dedication and to have them on hand during class. It is advisable to take detailed notes on the readings. Mandatory readings have a dual purpose. First, they provide an introduction to the most important questions and debates in connection the week's themes. Second, given that this is an advanced seminar, the readings are selected so as to enable students to carry out a critical assessment of their main arguments, the evidence that supports them, the methodology they employ, and their practical implications. The instructor reserves the right to hold unannounced reading quizzes at any time throughout the semester.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation in seminar discussion are mandatory. Students must arrive on time; attendance will be taken each session. Students are entitled to one (1) unexcused absence (as defined in the university's student rulebook) without impacting their attendance and participation grade. Other unexcused absences will impact this grade. Since our class consists only of 14 sessions, if a student accumulates more than three (3) unexcused absences, she or he will fail the course.

However, it is not enough to be physically present in the classroom. Students' participation grades depend on their preparation and their substantive contributions to discussions, which requires having done the mandatory readings. The professor will provide a brief presentation at the start of each class session to contextualize the assigned readings and the theoretical questions they address, and will serve as a discussion facilitator, but it is up to students to create and maintain a fluid, well-informed, critical, and constructive dialogue. Constructive participation requires all of us to contribute to fostering a positive environment for everyone to participate, including those who tend to be less inclined to be highly vocal. Learning when to step back and let others speak is just as important as speaking frequently. Attendance, participation, and unannounced quizzes amount to 15% of the final course grade.

In-class presentation and discussion facilitation

Starting on the second week of classes, different students will be in charge of presenting the material from the mandatory readings and leading seminar discussions. Presentations must connect all the readings through an analysis of their practical relevance for addressing a specific political problem of the student's choosing. They may not spend more than two minutes summarizing the readings. Presentations are an opportunity to exercise and refine students' oral communication skills, which are fundamental throughout their academic and professional careers. The student in charge of each week's presentation will also be responsible for guiding and facilitating discussion and ensure that the most important concepts, questions, debates, and conclusions are addressed. More specific instructions and guidelines on the format and content of presentations and evaluation criteria will be provided on the first week of classes. In-class presentations and discussion facilitations are worth 20% of the final grade.

Two short essays

Students must write two (2) short essays (800-1,000 words). These papers must present an original argument and support it coherently and convincingly throughout the text. The point is not to summarize the readings but to use them as a launching pad for an original analysis. Essays may, for instance, assess the readings' relevance for explaining specific cases or addressing specific public policy questions, or they may assess them on methodological, empirical, or conceptual grounds. Each essay is worth 10% of the final grade.

- Essays must be about different sections of the course, except for the section in which students do their presentation. For example, if a student presents on institutional design on week 5 (Part I, on political

institutions), that student's essays will have to be on a topic from Part II (political economy) and one from Part III (social forces).

- Essays must be turned in on Sicua [Blackboard] by **11:59 PM on the Sunday of the week during which their topic was covered**. For instance, if a student decides to write on economic regulation (week 11), the essay will be due on Sunday, April 6, at 11:59 PM.
- If a student does not submit an essay within the allowed timeframes for the part of course during which she or he must write her essay, he or she will receive a failing grade for this assignment.

Midterm Exam

There will be an in-class midterm examination on the material covered on weeks 1 to 5. Its goal is not to evaluate students' cumulative memorization of information but their comprehension of concepts, approaches, and theories which are fundamental for the rest of the course. The midterm is worth 20% of the final grade.

Final Exam

The final exam will address the entirety of the course contents. The prompt will be made available on Sicua on an agreed-upon date and time, and you will have 48 hours to write an essay of up to 1,500 and turn it in on Sicua. The final exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

ASSESSMENT

- Attendance and participation – 15%
- Presentaton – 20%
- Two short essays – 20% (10% each)
- Midterm exam – 20%
- Final exam – 25%

Grade approximation policy

Final grades will be rounded up to the second decimal.

REGLAS Y EXPECTATIVAS

- The class will begin no more than five minutes after the scheduled starting time. Students who enter the classroom after that moment, as well as those who leave before the end of the class session, will accumulate half an absence.
- Electronic devices:
 - The use of cell phones is not allowed under any circumstance in this class.
 - As for computers and tablets devices, several studies have shown that their use in the classroom has a negative impact on the learning process. I strongly recommend taking notes with pen and paper. If necessary, these can be easily digitized using free apps such as CamScanner or Evernote.
 - On the other hand, learning is in large part a personal choice and responsibility, so the use of electronic devices is not forbidden, as long as it does not affect other students' learning process.
 - In case you decide to use electronic devices, I recommend that you use apps such as Cold Turkey (getcoldturkey.com, freemium, Windows/Mac), SelfControl (selfcontrolapp.com, open-source, Mac only), o Freedom (freedom.to, for purchase, Windows/Mac/Android/iOS) to limit your own access to distractions.
 - I reserve the right to change this policy if needed at any point during the semester.
- *Late-assignment policy*: Late assignments will only be allowed under exceptional circumstances, at the professor's sole discretion, and only under exceptional circumstances. If an emergency arises, please make every effort to contact me before the deadline.

Academic integrity

Any form of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will be met with a failing grade and referral to the university for further discipline. Consult the following page to clarify what constitutes academic dishonesty:

<https://secretariageneral.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/es/component/content/article/11-asuntos-estudiantiles/24-reglamentos-estudiantiles>. The university's Spanish Center offers many resources on how to use citations and references properly: <http://leo.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/menu-escritura/citas-y-referencias>.

ESTRUCTURA DEL CURSO

Introduction

Week 1. Presentation (Wednesday, January 23)

- Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, “Cuatro razones para comparar”, *Boletín de Política Comparada* 1 (2008): 4-8.

Part I. Political Institutions

Week 2. What Are They and Where Do They Come From? (Wednesday, January 30)

- Douglas C. North y Barry Weingast, “Constituciones y compromiso: la evolución de las instituciones públicas gubernamentales en la Inglaterra del siglo XVII”, *THÉMIS-Revista de Derecho* 36 (1997): 213-231.
- Ato Kwamena Onoma, “The Contradictory Potential of Institutions: The Rise and Decline of Land Documentation in Kenya”, en *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, editado por James Mahoney y Kathleen Thelen, 63-93 (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Recommended:

- James G. March y Johan P. Olsen, “Elaborating the ‘New Institutionalism’”, en *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, editado por R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah Binder y Bert Rockman, 3-20 (Oxford University Press, 2006).
- James Mahoney y Kathleen Thelen, “A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change”, en *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, editado por James Mahoney y Kathleen Thelen, 1-37 (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Week 3. The State (Wednesday, February 6)

- Charles Tilly, “Guerra y construcción del Estado como crimen organizado”, en *Revista Académica de Relaciones Internacionales* 5 (2006): 1-26.
- Yanilda González, “The Social Origins of Institutional Weakness and Change: Preferences, Power, and Police Reform in Latin America”, *World Politics* 71, no. 1 (2019): 44-87.

Recommended:

- Michael Hechter y William Brustein, “Regional Modes of Production and Patterns of State Formation in Western Europe”, *American Journal of Sociology* 85, no. 5 (1980): 1061-1094.

Week 4. Democracy and Democratization (Wednesday, February 13)

- Terry Lynn Karl, “Dilemas de la democratización en América Latina”, *Foro Internacional* 31, no. 3, 123 (1991): 388-417.
- Carles Boix, “Democracy, Development, and the International System”, *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 4 (2011): 809-828.

Recommended:

- Guillermo O'Donnell, “Transitions to Democracy: Some Navigation Instruments,” en *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum*, editado por Robert Pastor, 62-75 (Holmes Meier, 1992).

Week 5. Diseño institucional (Wednesday, February 20)

- Arendt Lijphart, “Sistemas electorales: métodos de mayoría absoluta y mayoría relativa frente a representación proporcional”, en *Modelos de democracia: formas de gobierno y resultados en treinta y seis países* (Editorial Ariel, 2000): 141-164.
- Kent Eaton, “Designing Subnational Institutions: Regional and Municipal Reforms in Postauthoritarian Chile”, *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no. 2 (2004): 218-244.

Recommended:

- Laura Wills Otero, “Electoral Systems in Latin America: Explaining the Adoption of Proportional Representation Systems During the Twentieth Century”, *Latin American Politics and Society* 51 (2009): 33-58.

Week 6. Midterm (Wednesday, February 27)

Week 7. Authoritarianism (Wednesday, March 6)

- Jennifer Gandhi y Adam Przeworski, “Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats”, en *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 11 (2007): 1279-1301.
- Nancy Bermeo, “On Democratic Backsliding”, *Journal of Democracy* 27, no. 1 (2016): 5-19.

Recommended:

- Steven Levitsky, “Democratic Survival and Weakness”, *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 4 (2018): 102-113.

Part II. Political Economy

Week 8. What Is It and What’s It For? (Wednesday, March 13)

- Robert Gilpin con Jean M. Gilpin, “La naturaleza de la economía política” (selecciones), en *La economía política de las relaciones internacionales* (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1990): 19-22.
- Peter A. Gourevitch, “The Politics of Economic Policy”, en *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Cornell University Press, 1986): 17-34.
- James Mahoney, “Explaining Levels of Colonialism and Postcolonial Development”, en *Colonialism and Postcolonial Development: Spanish America in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2010): 1-34.

Recommended

- Daron Acemoglu y James A. Robinson, “Tan cerca y, sin embargo, tan diferentes”, en *Por qué fracasan los países* (Deusto, 2014): 21-62.

Week 9. Desarrollo (Wednesday 20 de marzo)

- Peter Evans, “Depredadores, desarrollistas y otros aparatos estatales: una perspectiva comparativa político-económica sobre el Estado en el Tercer Mundo”, en *Teorías del desarrollo nacional*, editado por Alejandro Portes (EDUCA, 1991): 134-173.
- Yuen Yuen Ang, “Do Weberian Bureaucracies Lead to Markets or Vice Versa? A Coevolutionary Approach to Development”, en *States in the Developing World*, editado por Miguel Ángel Centeno, Atul Kohli y Deborah Yashar (Cambridge University Press, 2017): 280-305.

Recommended

- Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, “The Myths of the Market and the Common History of Late Developers”, *Politics & Society* 21, no. 3 (1993): 245-274.

Week 10. Social Policy (Wednesday, March 27)

- Evelyne Huber y John D. Stephens, “The Development of Welfare States: Quantitative Evidence”, en *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State: Parties and Policies in Global Markets* (The University of Chicago Press, 2001): 39-84.

- Sara Niedzwiecki, “Social Policies, Attribution of Responsibility, and Political Alignments: A Subnational Analysis of Argentina and Brazil”, *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 4 (2016): 457-498.

Recommended

- Gosta Esping-Andersen, “The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism”, en *The Welfare State Reader*, editado por Christopher Pierson y Francis G. Castles (Polity, 2006): 160-174.

Week 11. Economic Regulation (Wednesday, April 3)

- Richard Snyder, “After Neoliberalism: The Politics of Reregulation in Mexico”, *World Politics* 51, no. 2 (1999): 173-204
- Kathleen Thelen, “Regulating Uber: The Politics of the Platform Economy in Europe and the United States.” *Perspectives on Politics* 16, no. 4 (2018): 938-953.

Recommended

- Kathryn Hochstetler, “Democracy and the Environment in Latin America and Eastern Europe”, en *Comparative Environmental Politics: Theory, Practice, and Prospects* (The MIT Press, 2012): 199-229.

Part III. Social Forces

Week 12. Social Movements (Wednesday 10 de abril)

- Doug McAdam et al., “‘Site Fights’: Explaining Opposition to Pipeline Projects in the Developing World”, *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 3 (2010): 401-427.
- Deborah Gould, “Rock the Boat, Don’t Rock the Boat, Baby: Ambivalence and the Emergence of Militant AIDS Activism”, en *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*, editado por Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper, and Francesca Polletta (University of Chicago Press, 2001): 135-157.

Recommended

- Sidney G. Tarrow, “Contentious Politics and Social Movements”, en *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2011): 16-34.

Semester Break (April 15-19)

Week 14. Civil Society and Participation (Wednesday, April 24)

- Jonathan Fox, “How Does Civil Society Thicken? The Political Construction of Social Capital in Rural Mexico.” *World Development* 24, no. 6 (1996): 1089-1103.
- Tulia G. Falletti y Thea N. Riofrancos, “Endogenous Participation: Strengthening Prior Consultation in Extractive Economies.” *World Politics* 70, no. 1 (2018): 86–121.

Recommended

- Robert Putnam, “Democracy, Development, and the Civic Community: Evidence from an Italian Experiment”, en *Culture and Development in Africa*, editado por Ismail Serageldi y June Taboroff (World Bank, 1994): 29-76.

Week 15. No Class Due to May Day Holiday

Week 16. Revolutions and Armed Conflicts (Wednesday, May 8)

- Jeff Goodwin y Theda Skocpol, “Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World”, *Politics & Society* 17, no. 4 (1989): 489–509.
- Ana Arjona, “Institutions, Civilian Resistance, and Wartime Social Order: A Process-driven Natural Experiment in the Colombian Civil War”, *Latin American Politics and Society* 58, no. 3 (2016): 99-122.

Recommended

- Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 2 (1976): 175-210.
- Stathis N. Kalyvas, "La violencia en medio de la guerra civil: esbozo de una teoría", *Análisis Político* 42 (2001): 1-25.