

**Political Science 2**  
**Introduction to Comparative Politics**  
**Winter 2016**  
**Tuesday & Thursday 1:40-3pm (Wellman 2)**

Instructor: Professor Ethan Scheiner

<http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/ethan-scheiners-home-page.html>

581 Kerr Hall

[escheiner@ucdavis.edu](mailto:escheiner@ucdavis.edu)

Phone (530) 207-3205

Fax (530) 752-8666

\*\*\*More likely to reach me by email than by phone

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-1:30, 3-4:30

<http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/office-hours.html>

**Course webpage:** <http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/courses/pol2.html>  
(this page is also linkable from the course page at <http://smartsite.ucdavis.edu/>)

**Course Summary:**

Comparative politics has often been a misunderstood field.

Traditionally, political science has been divided into four subfields: Political Theory, International Relations, American Politics, and Comparative Politics. Given the distinction between American Politics and Comparative Politics, many have assumed that comparative politics simply refers to the study of countries other than the U.S. Early work in comparative politics tended to focus on “comparative constitutions,” describing the formal political rules in different countries. Many students today carry forward a similar conception about what comparative politics is, assuming that comparative politics focuses on describing politics in various countries: “Russia has a president but Japan has a prime minister.” Or “a higher proportion of the electorate votes in elections in Israel than in Canada.”

*Such assumptions about comparative politics are quite simply wrong.*

More than anything else, comparative politics is an approach to studying political behavior that focuses on comparing the impact of different features of government, society, and economy to allow us to make generalizations about how the political world operates. Comparative politics usually involves countries that are not the U.S., but it can easily include the American case. Indeed, comparisons of politics in the American states can be terrific comparative politics.

Also, comparative politics focuses on *explanation* – what are the *causes and/or consequences* of particular features of the political world? It is not enough to know that a country has a president or a prime minister or has high or low turnout. When engaging in comparative politics, we are concerned with understanding *why* these things are true and/or *what the consequences are*.

Most of all, though, comparative politics involves studying political events in ways that give us greater confidence that the explanations we offer are right. In this way, *how* you study the phenomenon is especially important. We look at the question of how to study politics in Part I of the class.

However, the question of how to study things is not something that fascinates most people. For this reason, in this class, as we talk about *how* to study politics, we will do so within the context of *truly important* political phenomena. In Part II of the class, we look at factors shaping key components of democracy – most notably, the rules by which people get elected. No example offers a clearer picture of the importance of electoral rules than the 2000 U.S. presidential election, which we discuss in some detail.

In Part III of the class, we turn to perhaps the most chilling issue in all politics: genocide and ethnic cleansing, with particular focus on the 1990s genocide in Rwanda. This part of the class will leave many people feeling uncomfortable, angry, helpless, lost, and possibly even depressed. However, there can be no more important an aim for students of comparative politics than trying to understand the causes of systematic mass murder.

**TAs:**

Carlos Algara: [calgara@ucdavis.edu](mailto:calgara@ucdavis.edu)

Office Location: Kerr 663

Office Hours: Wednesdays: 9am-11am and by appointment

Section A03 39021: Olson Hall 105, W: 4:10 -5:00

Section A04 39022: Olson Hall 105, W: 5:10-6:00

Ross Butters: [rbutters@ucdavis.edu](mailto:rbutters@ucdavis.edu)

Office Location: Kerr 667

Office Hours: Thursdays: 3:10 pm - 5:10 pm and by appointment

Section A05 39023: Wellman Hall 2, F: 9:00 - 9:50

Section A06 39024: Wellman Hall 2, F: 10:00 - 10:50

Nathan Rexford: [njrexford@ucdavis.edu](mailto:njrexford@ucdavis.edu)

Office Location: Kerr 662

Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:30am - 1:30pm, and by appointment

Section A01 39019: Tuesday, 4:10-5:00pm, STORER 1342

Section A02 39020: Tuesday, 5:10-6:00pm, STORER 1342

**Please Note:**

- I am happy to answer questions by email about the substance of course material (e.g., why are there two parties often in a single-member district electoral system?).
  - But if you want to use email to ask questions about the course logistics (e.g., information about assignments or where to go for an exam), please contact your TA.
- Note that all references to “course website” refer to my faculty website – not Smartsite.
- All Power Point slides, assignments, grades, email archive, and online reading will be posted at Smartsite.
- In Smartsite, Power Point slides are listed with a lecture/class number and the date – these match the lecture/class number and date of the class listed in the syllabus.
  - If I don’t lecture on a day, there will be no Power Point slides that go with that day’s lecture number and date.

**Required Texts:**

- Reynolds, Andrew, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. 2005. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: IDEA
  - I will refer to this as “IDEA” throughout the syllabus.
  - Unfortunately, the bookstore could not acquire a copy, but a free copy is available in PDF form at [http://www.idea.int/publications/esd/upload/Idea\\_ESD\\_full.pdf](http://www.idea.int/publications/esd/upload/Idea_ESD_full.pdf).
  - Please note that I have no control over the IDEA site, so I can’t do anything about it if it is not loading.
- Online reading available in a “Reading” folder under Resources at the Smartsite page for the course – noted as **Online**.
- **Coursepack** – see Smartsite
- All reading listed for the course is required, unless otherwise noted.

## Assignments/Grades:

Students' final grades will be based on the following assignments. I recommend turning in the Homework and the Papers early, so as to avoid late penalties. Outside of in-class exams, you will turn in all assignments to the "Assignments" tab at Smartsite.

### (1) Participation in lecture (5%).

- The TAs will be seated in various places throughout the room. Everyone in the class receives an automatic 100% for their lecture participation score. However, **anyone engaging in any of the following behaviors in class will have their lecture participation grade lowered:**
  - **TEXTING, USING THE INTERNET, EMAILING (ETC.), CHATTING, sleeping, horsing around, cell phone use, reading the newspaper, and regularly arriving late or leaving early will lead to a low participation grade.**
  - **I am likely to give a 0 for participation to any student that I (or the TAs) see texting, internet or Facebook browsing, chatting, emailing, etc. in class.** I am unlikely to give you any warning on this.
- Attendance in lecture is *not* mandatory, so if you need to do any of these things, please do them outside of the class.
- There is no need to let the instructors know when you are going to miss class. (In fact, please don't email us to let us know unless it is really, really important.)
  - If you miss classes (lecture or section), you will need to get notes or find out what you missed from another student in the class (and not from the instructors). However, as with any class, the instructors will be happy to answer any specific questions about the material.
- If it appears that students are surfing/viewing the internet/emailing (etc.) in class, I may ban the use of laptops/smartphones/etc. in the classroom.
- Also, actions that generally ignore the "Course Behavior and Expectations" may lead to a lowered Lecture Participation grade.

### (2) Attendance in section (5%)

- The TAs will begin holding section as soon as the quarter begins (even if we have not yet held the first lecture).
- You receive a score of 100% for section attendance as long as you miss no more than 2 section meetings.
- Each class that you miss after the first 2 will lead to a drop of 20 percentage points (e.g., from 100% to 80% for absence number 3).
- We will accept documentation (e.g., doctors' notes) to excuse absences, but anyone missing more than 2 section sessions for any reason (even excused absences) can receive no higher than a score of 80% for the section attendance grade.
- You cannot make up missed sessions by attending the section of any TA other than your own.

- (3) **Participation in section (5%):** Determined by your TA based on the quality and amount of your participation in section
- (4) **Extra credit photo (Bonus 1%):** I am eliminating this assignment, but it would be unfair for me to undo the extra credit after previously offering it. Everyone in the class gets an automatic 1% added on to their overall score in the class.
- (5) **Paper on Law School (5%) – due at Smartsite (at the “Law School Essay” prompt under the “Assignments” tab) by 1pm on the day of Lecture #4 (1/14).** Information on the essay is available at the “Assignments” tab at Smartsite and at my (faculty) course webpage.
- You may turn the paper in late if your TA approves an extension by end of Lecture #3 or if you have documentation (e.g., doctor’s note).
  - Any late paper that has not been given an extension or has no documentation will lose 10 percentage points per day. (Note that we will not prorate points off. 1 second late is equal to 1 day late.)
- (6) **Homework (10%) – due at Smartsite (at the “Homework” prompt under the “Assignments tab) by 1pm on the day of Lecture #9 (2/2, Tuesday).** Additional information to come.
- The HW will be assigned at Smartsite (under “Assignments”) after Lecture #7.
  - You may turn it in late if your TA approves an extension by noon the day before the assignment is due, or if you have documentation (e.g., doctor’s note). In either case, we do not promise to have the homework graded prior to the Midterm.
  - We will not accept any homework turned in after 1pm on the day of Lecture #11.
  - Late homework that has not been given an extension or has no documentation will lose 10 percentage points per day. (Note that we will not prorate points off. 1 second late is equal to 1 day late.)
- (7) **Midterm (30%) – Lecture #14 (2/18, Thursday).** (Please bring a blue book – not the one with smaller number of pages.)
- The Study Guide will be posted at my course website by **Friday, 2/5**
- (8) **Paper on a political organization you would like to join (5%) – due at Smartsite (at the “Political Organization Essay” prompt under the “Assignments” tab) by 1pm on the day of Lecture #20 (3/10, Thursday).** Additional information to come.
- The paper assignment will be posted at Smartsite (under “Assignments”) after Lecture #15 (**2/23, Tuesday**).
  - You may turn the paper in late if your TA approves an extension by end of Lecture #19 (**3/8, Tuesday**) or if you have documentation (e.g., doctor’s note).
  - Any late paper that has not been given an extension or has no documentation will lose 10 percentage points per day. (Note that we will not prorate points off. 1 second late is equal to 1 day late.)
- (9) **Final (35%) will be Wednesday, March 16 at 8:00am in our regular classroom.** The exam will be based on the entire course but will emphasize material from after the midterm.

- Be sure to bring two blank blue books (not the thin ones) to the final.
  - You know the date and time of the final well in advance. Short of a serious personal emergency (serious illness, death in the family, military service – for all these things, you must provide documentation) or religious observance (in which case you must let me know at the start of the quarter), **I will not offer alternative final exam dates.**
  - For in-class exams, you will turn in your blue books at the start of the exam period and then be given new ones. Blue books with pages torn out of them will not be accepted.
- (10) **Test on course expectations:** If it becomes clear that students are ignoring the course expectations and/or syllabus, I reserve the right to give a test that measures students' knowledge/awareness of the course expectations/syllabus. This test will not raise any student's score in the class, but it may lower your lecture participation grade.

*Numerical grades translate into letter grades as follows:*

100 = A+  
93.6-99.9 = A  
90-93.5 = A-  
86.6-89.9 = B+  
83.6-86.5 = B  
80 – 83.5 = B-  
Etc.

For additional information on grading, please see:

**Regrading Policy**

<http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/courses/Regrading.pdf>

**Course Expectations**

<http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/courses/Course%20Expectations.pdf>

## Class Dates, Topics and Assignments

\*\*\*The Instructor Reserves the Right to Change the Assignments as Circumstances Require\*\*\*

\*\*Changes will be mentioned in class, through email, and placed on the syllabus\*\*

**The reading listed for a given class session is the reading you should do prior to that day.**

**ASSIGNMENT FOR EVERY DAY: CHECK YOUR UCD EMAIL EVERY DAY SO THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE ANY UPDATES TO THE COURSE.**

## PART I: SOCIAL SCIENCE & COMPARATIVE POLITICS

### 1. 1/5 (Tuesday): Introduction

- **Please bring a dark/bold/big Name Tag to put on your desk throughout the class.**
- Prior to class today, please read over the syllabus and course expectations closely. <http://polisci.ucdavis.edu/people/scheiner/escheiner/courses/Course%20Expectations.pdf>
  - In class today, please ask any questions you have about the course logistics or the course in general.
- I also strongly recommend that you read the following, which is available in the **Coursepack**. This book represents my learning philosophy, and I urge you to read it and take the ideas within it seriously. **You will discuss it in your first section meeting.**
  - “The Mindsets” (Ch1, pp. 3-14), “Inside the Mindsets” (Ch2, pp. 15-44, 52-54), and p. 245 Diagram. This chapter is from: Dweck, Carol S. 2006. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Balantine Books.

Assignment: Note that you have a short essay regarding law school due by 1pm on the day of Lecture #4 (1/14). See the “Assignments” tab under Smartsite for more information.

### 2. 1/7 (Thursday): Social Science

- Lave, Charles, and James G. March. 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences*. New York: HarperCollins, Ch1: pp. 2-42. **Course pack**
  - Keep in mind that this book is quite out of date (1975). It is very good for teaching the concepts we discuss here, but please do not take as the opinions of anyone associated with our class here the comments suggested about women or athletes. Actually, those ideas are intended by the book authors to be provocative and get people thinking. (There is no reason to believe that the authors actually do think anything like these comments themselves.) It is important to push ideas to their logical conclusion, but you should also be careful to avoid offensive remarks (as some of the comments made by the authors could be construed). We hope that you will see the comments by the authors as simply aiming to get people thinking. But we are truly sorry if anyone is offended by the authors’ speculative remarks.

**3. 1/12 (Tuesday): Cool approaches to using social science to uncover hidden information**

- Levitt, Steven D., and Stephen J. Dubner. 2005. *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc. Chapter 1, “What Do Schoolteachers and Sumo Wrestlers Have in Common?” (pp. 19-51). **Course pack**
- In class, will show some of the movie, *Freakonomics* (Ch4, from 22:45 to 35:07). **Please note that we will not make the DVDs available outside of class.** It is your responsibility to watch them in class or make arrangements – independent of the course instructors – to watch them on your own.
- **Note that the Law School Essay is due by 1pm on the day of Lecture #4. The assignment is listed at the “Assignments” tab at Smartsite and at my course webpage.**

**4. 1/14 (Thursday): System We Use to Nominate and Elect the U.S. President**

- **Assignment:** The Law School Essay is due by 1pm at the “Assignments” tab at Smartsite the today.
- No reading – just a lecture by me
- I do not always include this lecture, but do when we start to approach the presidential primaries (which will begin in 2016).
- Will show the following videos in class: **TBD**

**5. 1/19 (Tuesday): 2000 U.S. Presidential Election Video**

- No reading – in class will watch *CNN Election 2000* (a video that we cannot share outside of class)

**6. 1/21 (Thursday): Social Science & Comparative politics**

- Henry E. Brady, Michael C. Herron, Walter R. Mebane Jr., Jasjeet S. Sekhon, Kenneth W. Shotts, and Jonathan N. Wand. 2001. “Law and Data: The Butterfly Ballot Episode.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 34:59-69. **Online (at Smartsite Resources)**
  - This is a good example of really good social science.

## PART II: DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION – PARTIES AND ELECTIONS

### 7. 1/26 (Tuesday): Electoral Systems I – Introduction to Electoral Rules & Duverger’s Law

- From Reynolds, Andrew, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. 2005. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: IDEA:
  - Ch. 2 (pp. 27-33), “The World of Electoral Systems,” Ch. 3 (pp. 35-44), “The Systems and their Consequences” (plurality/majority), Proportional Representation (pp. 57-71).
  - The Homework Assignment will be posted at Smartsite (“Assignments” tab) and at my course website after class today.
    - In the past, students have had difficulty with the Homework, but rarely ask for help with it. **I recommend going to see your TA if you have any questions at all about the Homework.**

### 8. 1/28 (Thursday): Electoral Systems II – Differences in Effects of Electoral Rules

- From Reynolds, Andrew, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. 2005. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: IDEA:
  - PR-Related Issues (pp. 77, 82-90), Table 7: Five Electoral System Options: Advantages and Disadvantages (pp. 119-120), Considerations on Representation (pp. 121-125).

**Week of 2/1:** In section, TAs will briefly go over how to read quantitative work (in preparation for next week’s Huber and Powell reading).

### 9. 2/2 (Tuesday): Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems I – Mechanics

- **Assignment:** Homework is due at Smartsite (“Assignments” tab) by 1pm today.
- From Reynolds, Andrew, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. 2005. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: IDEA:
  - “Electoral Systems, Institutional Frameworks and Governance” (pp. 129-138).
- Parliament & Government: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmGCwiQvhH0>
- Will also watch a short video showing “Question Time” in the UK (2006)
  - From <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpVycRpa2L8>

### 10. 2/4 (Thursday): Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems II – Problems and Issues

- Mainwaring, Scott, and Matthew Shugart. 1997. “Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal.” *Comparative Politics* 29: 449-472. **Online (at Smartsite Resources)**

**Friday 2/5:**

- Study Guide for the Midterm goes up on my website today
- During section in the week of 2/8, TAs will answer any questions that you have about the study guide.

**11. 2/9 (Tuesday): Parties and Party Systems I**

- From Reynolds, Andrew, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis. 2005. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. Stockholm: IDEA:
  - Criteria for Design (pp. 9-16), Electoral Systems and Political Parties (pp. 149-150).

**12. 2/11 (Thursday): Parties and Party Systems II**

- Huber, John D., and G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 1994. "Congruence Between Citizens and Policymakers in Two Visions of Liberal Democracy." *World Politics* 46(3): 291-326.  
**Online (at smartsite/Resources)**

**13. 2/16 (Tuesday): Review Session**

- The review session will be run by the TAs and based ENTIRELY on your questions. Bring in any and all questions that you have about the class to this point.

**\*\*\*14. 2/18 (Thursday): Midterm\*\*\***

- Covers all material since the start of class
- Bring blue books to class!
- All post-midterm sections on 2/18 & 2/19 are cancelled. All sections in the week of 2/22 are cancelled as well.

## PART III: VERY BAD THINGS – GENOCIDE & CIVIL WAR VIOLENCE

**Week of 2/22: No section this week.**

### 15. 2/23 (Tuesday): Rwanda I – Lecture on Background

- Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*. New York: Picador. Chapters 4-7, pp. 47-100. **Course pack**
- The final paper assignment (on a political organization that you would like to work for) will be available at Smartsite (at the “Political Organization Essay” prompt under the “Assignments” tab) and at my course webpage after class today.

### 16. 2/25 (Thursday): Rwanda II – We will watch the first half of *Ghosts of Rwanda* (which is also available at the library)

- Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*. New York: Picador. Chapters 8-10, pp. 101-144. **Course pack**

### 17. 3/1 (Tuesday): Rwanda III – We will watch the second half of *Ghosts of Rwanda* (which is also available at the library)

- No Reading

### 18. 3/3 (Thursday): Rwanda IV – Lecture on Analysis

- Straus, Scott. 2006. Preface (pp. ix-xii) and Introduction (pp. 1-16) in *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. **Course pack**
- Study Guide for the Final goes up on my course website after class today
- In your final section, TAs will answer any questions that you have about the study guide.

### 19. 3/8 (Tuesday): Civil War Violence

- Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2007. “Introduction. Varieties of Rebellion.” Pp. 1-22 in *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. **Course pack**

### 20. 3/10 (Thursday): Finish Civil War Violence, Course Conclusion

- **Assignment:** The Political Organization Paper is due at Smartsite (at the “Political Organization Essay” prompt under the “Assignments” tab) by 1pm today.
- No reading for today

**\*\*\*Final Exam\*\*\***

**Wednesday, March 16 at 8:00 am in our regular classroom**

Exam will be based on entire course but emphasis on material since the Midterm.