

## COMPARATIVE POLITICS

<b>Course code</b>	<i>POL103</i>
<b>Course title</b>	<i>Comparative Politics</i>
<b>Type of course</b>	<i>Compulsory</i>
<b>Study level</b>	<i>Undergraduate</i>
<b>Year of study</b>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup></i>
<b>Semester</b>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> semester</i>
<b>ECTS</b>	<i>6, 48 contact hours, 112 self-study hours, 2 hours of consultations</i>
<b>Lecturer</b>	<i>Pijus Krūminas, <a href="mailto:pijkru@faculty.ism.lt">pijkru@faculty.ism.lt</a></i>
<b>Study form</b>	<i>Regular, daytime</i>
<b>Prerequisites</b>	<i>Introduction to Politics</i>
<b>Course language</b>	<i>English</i>

This course introduces students to the key concepts and theories of comparative politics. The general topics covered range from concepts of the state to main political institutions of both democratic regimes and dictatorships. The adopted approach uses modern tools of political analysis that provide methodological basis for successfully studying comparative politics and other subjects related to political science and economics.

### Aim of the Course

This course aims at providing the analytical framework for studying the workings of specific political institutions. Therefore, students will be provided with modern theoretical framework for doing research in comparative politics, will learn to apply their skills in practice and have rigorous understanding of main concepts of politics.

<b>Subject learning outcomes (SLO)</b>	<b>Study methods</b>	<b>Assessment methods</b>
SLO1. Understand and define scientific method and scientific study of politics.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Midterm test, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO2. Define and use the main analytic concepts of comparative politics and political analysis, solve game-theoretic problems, apply theoretical models to actual cases.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Midterm test, final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO3. Define the concepts of state and politics, understand basic elements of political processes.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Midterm test, final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO4. Understand the structure of different political regimes and their workings and institutions, their main distinctions and similarities.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Midterm test, final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO5. Define and analyze the impact of economic and cultural factors on political processes and policies.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Midterm test, final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO6. Understand and analyze issues of collective decision making, social choice theory, principle-agent problem and their implications for democratic politics.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper
SLO7. Explain and evaluate the influence of political institutions on economic policy, economic performance and business environment.	Lectures, seminars, self-study	Final exam, case studies (seminars), term paper

### Quality issues

The lecturer assures a variety of teaching methods as well as modes of self-assessment. The feedback from students will always be highly valued and appreciated.

### Cheating issues

The teaching and testing methods are chosen taking into account the purpose of the minimization of cheating opportunities. The ISM regulations on academic ethics are fully applied in the course.

## Topics

Week	Topic	Contact Hours		Assignments and readings
		Lecture	Seminar	
1	<b>Introduction</b> Introductory comments. What is science and what is politics? Scientific method, induction vs. deduction. Verification or falsification? The concept of politics. Review of the main concepts of game theory. Exit, voice, loyalty game.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 19 – 44, 49 – 79 Workshop: game theory in political science
2	<b>The concept of state</b> What is a state? Contractory and predatory views of the state. Failed states. State of nature and civil society games.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 87 – 125 Workshop: state of nature and civil society games
3	<b>Political survival. Dictatorship and democracy: measures.</b> What do politicians seek? Main concepts of the selectorate theory (selectorate, winning coalition, leader, challengers). Political survival. Public vs. private goods. Measuring dictatorship and democracy. Minimal conception of democracy vs. broader definitions. Consolidation of democracy. Regime type measures.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 143 – 168, 384 – 402 Case study
4	<b>Economic and cultural determinants of regime type</b> Does economics influence type of political regime? How? Modernization theory. Natural resources, foreign aid, social equality. Civic culture and democracy. Religion and democracy.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 171 – 209 Case study
5	<b>Dictatorships</b> Types of dictatorships. Cult of personality. Elections in dictatorships. Survival of dictatorships. Dictatorship party game.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 349 – 403 Seminar: selectorate theory and dictatorships, life in dictatorships
6	<b>Transitions to democracy</b> Why do some states undergo regime changes and become democratic instead of remaining authoritarian? Why other countries remain authoritarian? Bottom-up transitions. Collective action theory and tipping models. Top-down transitions.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 265 – 308 <i>Review for the midterm</i>
7	<b>Midterm</b>	2	2	
8	<b>Forms of democratic government</b> What are the main types of democracies? Relationship between government and legislature. Parliamentary democracies. Model of government formation in parliamentary democracies. Presidential democracies. Semi-presidential governments. Principal-agent problem.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 457 – 525 Case study
9	<b>Group decision making and democratic elections</b> Group decision making. What is the best way to pick the outcome? Arrow's Impossibility theorem. Majoritarian and proportional representation systems. Mixed electoral systems. Median voter theorem. Spatial model of voting.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 413 – 446, 535 – 598 Case study

10	<b>Party systems</b> What are parties? Party systems and their origins: economic and social cleavages theories. What are social cleavages? Number of parties.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 603 – 668 Seminar assignment: Iversen, Cusack and Soskice (2007) Case study
11	<b>Veto players</b> What are veto players? Veto player theory. Federal states. Bicameralism, its types. Constitutionalism.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 673 – 729 Case study
12	<b>Political regimes and their effects. Effects of democratic institutions.</b> Performance of dictatorships and democracies. Majoritarian and consensus democracy. Determinants of fiscal policy. Institutions and fiscal policy. Ethnic conflict. Survival in presidential systems.	2	2	Clark, Golder & Golder pp. 325 – 347, 741 – 826 <i>Review for the final examination</i>
	Total	24	24	

### Individual work and assessment

TYPE OF WORK	TOPICS	TOTAL SELF STUDY HOURS	EVALUATION
Case studies (for seminars)	1 – 12	23	20%
Midterm examination	1 – 5	27	25%
Final examination	6, 8 – 12	39	35%
Term paper	1 – 12	23	20%
<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Course assignments and evaluation

Assessment consists of three different elements:

- **Case studies (20%)** preparing for a topic-related case study analysis during the seminar, and contributing during it.
- **Midterm examination (25%)** covering material learned during the first 5 weeks of the course.
- **Final examination (35%)** covering material learned during the sixth and the final five weeks of the entire course.
- **Term paper (20%)** covering topics and methods learned in class.

Case studies will be based on analytical tools discussed during the course and their use in political science. Students will have to demonstrate their understanding of issues that scientists study in topics covered during the course. Students will also develop understanding and how these comparative politics questions can be studied.

Term paper will relate current political events to theoretical knowledge acquired during the course, and will include empirical analysis of chosen cases.

The midterm as well as the final examination will consist of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and problem-solving tasks.

If the final grade is negative, the student may be allowed to retake the final examination during the re-sit exam session. The retake will cover all course material, and comprise 60% of the final grade. Case studies and term paper cannot be retaken, but their evaluation is not annulled.

### Main reading:

Clark, W. R., Golder M., Golder S.N., *Principles of Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition, Sage Publications, 2013

### Additional readings:

TBA