

THE ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF INTERSTATE CONFLICT

Course code	<i>POL145</i>
Compulsory in the programmes	<i>Elective course</i>
Level of studies	<i>Undergraduate</i>
Number of credits	<i>6 ECTS (48 in-class hours + 6 consultation hours + 2 exam hours, 104 individual work hours)</i>
Course coordinator (title and name)	<i>Assist. Prof. Dr. Simonas Čepėnas</i>
Prerequisites	<i>None</i>
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

This course will focus on authoritarian politics, interstate conflict, and empirical testing of existing theories. The course aims to (1) familiarize students with empirical methods used in Comparative Politics and International Relations literature, (2) learn about the most consequential work in the areas of comparative authoritarianism and interstate conflict, (3) attempt at replicating results from these existing studies, and (4) conduct original empirical tests that might be used in students' future bachelor theses. By the end of the course students will have empirical tools and theoretical knowledge at their disposal to analyze real world events.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Learning objectives for BSc in Business Management	Learning objectives for BSc in Social Sciences	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. To understand the basics of panel models.	BLO1.1., BLO1.2.	ELO1.1, ELO2.1	Midterm, final exam, seminars, research project	Lecture, Seminars
CLO2. To learn about the innerworkings and classification of authoritarian regimes	BLO1.1., BLO2.1	ELO1.1, ELO1.2	Midterm, final exam, research project	Lectures, Seminars
CLO3. Analyze the economics and politics of authoritarian regimes	BLO1.1., BLO2.1	ELO1.1, ELO1.2	Midterm, final exam, seminars, research project	Lectures, Seminars
CLO4. To study recent work on authoritarian politics and interstate conflict.	BLO1.1., BLO1.2.	ELO1.1, ELO1.2	Final exam, seminars, research project	Lectures, Seminars
CLO5. Learn how to compare various economic and political outcomes between countries	BLO4.1	ELO4.1	Final exam, seminars, research project	Lectures, Seminars
CLO6. Learn how to do individual research and run empirical tests	BLO3.1., BLO3.2., BLO4.1., BLO4.3	ELO4.1, ELO4.2, ELO4.3	Seminars, research project.	Lectures, Seminars

CLO7. To learn about R programming and tools that make it more efficient, such as R Studio, and R Markdown.	BLO1.2., BLO3.1., BLO3.2.	ELO1.1, ELO3.1, ELO3.2	Seminars, problem set, final exam	Lectures, Seminars
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ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
1. Introduction to R programming and review of the main statistical concepts	6	Grolemund, G., & Wickham, H [Ch. 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 26]
2. Panel data models: Pooled OLS, PCSE, case-, time-, and two-way fixed-effects	6	TBA
3. GGPLOT and visualization of data	2	Grolemund, G., & Wickham, H [Ch. 3]
4. The origins of authoritarian rule	4	(Lachapelle et al. 2020; Meng 2021; Meng and Paine 2022)
5. The classification of authoritarian regimes	4	(Lai and Slater 2006; Slater 2003; Weeks 2012)
6. The economics of authoritarian regimes	4	TBA
7. Midterm examination	4	
8. Authoritarian stability: How do dictators protect themselves against coups and civil wars?	4	(Singh 2014; Svulik 2009)
9. Coups and civil wars	4	(Campante and Chor 2012)
10. Do authoritarian regimes pursue more aggressive foreign policies than democracies?	4	(Owen 1994; Weeks 2012)
11. Leaders and interstate conflict	4	(Chiozza and Goemans 2011)
12. How to constrain Authoritarian leaders? Do sanctions work?	2	(Pape 1997)
	Total: 48 hours	
CONSULTATIONS	6	
FINAL EXAM	2	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
Participation and attendance	10%
Research Project	30%
Midterm examination	25%
Final examination	35%
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

(Provide short descriptions and grading criteria of each assignment)

Attendance is extremely important for this class: we will study fundamental concepts of comparative authoritarianism, international relations, and statistics, and R programming, which means that even a single missed class will likely result in a significant knowledge gap. To incentivize your attendance, participation and attendance together make up 10% of your grade.

Research project will facilitate your learning of R programming, topics related to comparative authoritarianism and interstate conflict, might help you with your future bachelor thesis, and constitute 30% of your final grade. This will be a semester long assignment.

Midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. It will comprise 25% of the final grade. The midterm will be based on topics 1-6.

During the final exam you will use R programming language to answer open-ended questions and do some minimal empirical work, e.g., replicating a study. It will make-up 35% of the final grade. The exam will be based on topics 1-3, 8-12.

RETAKE POLICY

(Provide short description and percentage of the final grade)

In case of a negative final grade, students can sit for a retake exam. Such an exam will cover all course material. The weight of a retake is 60%. Grades from attendance and problem sets are not subject to a retake but their evaluation (if positive) will count towards the final grade with the retake exam.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

The syllabus is subject to small changes. Specific chapters from the books are TBA. All readings will be available online on the course website.

READINGS

Grolemund, G., & Wickham, H. (2017). *R for Data Science*. O'Reilly Media.

Campante, Filipe R., and Davin Chor. 2012. "Why Was the Arab World Poised for Revolution? Schooling, Economic Opportunities, and the Arab Spring." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 26(2): 167–88.

Chiozza, G., and H.E. Goemans. 2011. *Leaders and International Conflict*. Cambridge University Press.
<https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/politics-international-relations/international-relations-and-international-organisations/leaders-and-international-conflict?format=PB>.

Lachapelle, Jean, Steven Levitsky, Lucan A. Way, and Adam E. Casey. 2020. "Social Revolution and Authoritarian Durability." *World Politics* 72(4): 557–600.

Lai, Brian, and Dan Slater. 2006. "Institutions of the Offensive: Domestic Sources of Dispute Initiation in Authoritarian Regimes, 1950-1992." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(1): 113–26.

- Meng, Anne. 2021. "Winning the Game of Thrones: Leadership Succession in Modern Autocracies." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65(5): 950–81.
- Meng, Anne, and Jack Paine. 2022. "Power Sharing and Authoritarian Stability: How Rebel Regimes Solve the Guardianship Dilemma." *American Political Science Review*: 1–18.
- Owen, John M. 1994. "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* 19(2): 87–125.
- Pape, Robert A. 1997. "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work." *International Security* 22(2): 90–136.
- Singh, N. 2014. *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
<https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/title/seizing-power>.
- Slater, Dan. 2003. "Iron Cage in an Iron Fist: Authoritarian Institutions and the Personalization of Power in Malaysia." *Comparative Politics* 36(1): 81–101.
- Svolik, Milan W. 2009. "Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 477–94.
- Weeks, Jessica L. 2012. "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict." *The American Political Science Review* 106(2): 326–47.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

TBA

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Business Management

*Programmes:
International Business and Communication,
Business Management and Marketing, Finance,
Industrial Technology Management*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about ethics and social responsibility
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Social Science

*Programmes:
Economics and Data Analytics,
Economics and Politics*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	ELO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the key economics disciplines
	ELO1.2. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions and logical consistency of causal statements
Students will have skills to employ economic thought for the common good	ELO2.1. Students will have a keen sense of ethical criteria for practical problem-solving
Students will be technology agile	ELO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	ELO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	ELO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	ELO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	ELO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper