



Course Description

This course is an introduction to the comparative study of politics. It aims at familiarizing students with the main concepts of political science with a focus on the concepts of public sphere, democracy, authoritarianism, democracy, representation, deliberation and participation. With special emphasis on the evolution and the diversity of political situations and attention to not only national but also local and global scales, we will compare and contrast the political regimes of various countries of the world, the roles of key political actors, political institutions, political processes and patterns of political competition. We will be particularly interested in Asian countries (including China, India, Japan, Taiwan). The main objective for this course is to provide students with the broad context needed for analyzing the political phenomena of any country and understand the main criteria and tools used to compare and rank countries in the world, as well as what we mean by democracy, the role media and social media play in democracy, what makes a non-democracy become more democratic, what makes a stable democracy and so on.

Teaching Method

The course is based on lectures introducing students with major political concepts, institutions, processes, theories, and detailing case studies taken both from consolidated Western democracies, more recent democracies (India, Japan, Brazil) and non-democratic countries like Russia and China. Active participation is demanded on the part of students. Lectures will be supplemented with practical study based on class discussions, text commentaries in class and at home, as well as collective projects comparing specific countries.

Schedule of Topics

Topic 1	What is politics? What is comparative politics?
Topic 2	What is the public sphere? What role do media and social media play in democracies?
Topic 3	How to classify political systems?
Topic 4	How to define a good society?
Topic 5	Democracy and authoritarian systems
Topic 6	Representative, participatory, deliberative democracy
Topic 7	“Southern” systems: China, Brazil, India
Topic 8	Social networks, populism and hacktivism

Textbook and Materials

Alan Draper, Ansil Ramsay, *The Good society: an introduction to comparative politics*, 2nd edition, Pearson, 2012

Patrick O’Neil, *Essentials of Comparative politics*, 5th edition, Norton, 2015

Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger & William A. Joseph, *Introduction to comparative politics, Political Challenges and Changing Agendas*, 6th edition, Cengage Learning, 2013, Chapter 1

G. Bingham Powell, Russel J. Dalton and Kaare Strom, *Comparative politics Today, a world view*, 11th edition, Pearson, 2015, chapters 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 and 18

Pierre Rosanvallon, *Democracy, Past and Future*, Columbia University Press, 2007

Robert A. Dahl, Ian Shapiro and José Antonio Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, MIT, 2003, chapter 1

Émilie Frenkiel (ed.), « Democracy: Bridging the Representation Gap » (special issue), *Books and Ideas*, 28 December 2011, <http://www.booksandideas.net/Democracy-Bridging-the.html>

Jill Lepore, “Are polls ruining democracy?”, *The New Yorker*, 16 November 2015, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/11/16/politics-and-the-new-machine>

Émilie Frenkiel, « Civic Hacking and our Political Future. An Interview with Audrey Tang », *Books and Ideas*, 25 February 2016, <http://www.booksandideas.net/Civic-Hacking-and-our-Political-Future.html>

Assessment

Students will be assessed through a mid-term oral exam (30%). The final exam is a written text commentary (40%). Finally, collective groups will focus on case studies and produce a collective presentation (30%). Students are demanded to study class material assiduously and actively take part in class discussions, notably as they prepare their presentations and text commentaries throughout the course. Their final mark will also be rounded off so as to reflect their homework and participation in the class discussions.

Students who do not pass the mid-term written text commentary or who reject the mark of both the mid-term exam and the collective report will take an additional written exam added to the final written exam.

Students who miss any of the assignments without any valid justification will be asked to read extra reading material. Their mark will be based 100% on another written exam. The same applies to students who plagiarize.

Non-attending students are required to take the final exam test with an additional written part based on additional readings they will be assigned. The mark will be based 100% on the final.

Students who have attended less than 80% of the classes will be considered non-attending students and will have to take the exam accordingly.

Office hours

Contact email address: anmingli@gmail.com

Appointments with the professor must be taken before or after the class, or by email.

NOTE: Erasmus or non Global Governance students who would like to attend one or more courses and take one or more exams need to contact the Secretariat of Global Governance by e-mail global.governance@uniroma2.it for registration and inform the Professor of the course. They are required to sign a code of conduct like all Global Governance students, accepting all values and rules. Please read it carefully before enrolling.

Notice that attendance is required from the very first lesson and you need to attend at least 80% of the course to be considered an attending student.
