

PO132-15 Contemporary Themes in Comparative Politics

26/27

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Andreas Murr

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module offers an introduction to the exploration of politics through the perspective of comparative politics scholars. It presents a comprehensive overview of topics such as states and political regimes, democracy, authoritarianism, development, revolutions, nationalism, climate change and migration. Furthermore, it analyses how these macro-phenomena influence the micro-political landscape of state institutions, including governments and parliaments, parties and elections, and grassroots movements, among others. While comparative politics traditionally focuses on domestic politics within states, this course also examines international dimensions such as democracy promotion and climate change. Beyond examining these substantial questions, the module acquaints students with methodologies for empirically analyzing real-world political challenges. Ultimately, the module strives to equip students for advanced political science courses in two key ways. Firstly, it develops skills in constructing and evaluating political arguments. Secondly, it introduces some of the methodologies employed by political scientists in their research.

Module aims

The module aims to:

1. analyse key issues in the study of comparative politics, including its international and transnational dimensions;
2. expose students to a number of contemporary examples of democratic and non-democratic politics and to encourage comparison across countries;
3. develop generic skills such as the research and interpretation of political science literature, the analysis of empirical material, the preparation and presentation of the results of comparative political analysis.
4. integrate international and transnational aspects of comparative politics in a novel endeavor.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The following is an indicative list of topics; the precise seminar content and order may change slightly from year to year.

Week 1: Introduction: The Course, Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method

Week 2: States and Political Regimes

Week 3: Political Institutions

Week 4: Elections, Political Parties, Populism

Week 5: Political Economy and Development

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

Week 8: Social Movements and Revolutions

Week 9: Migration and the Far Right

Week 10: Globalisation and Climate Change

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of how comparative politics contributes to the study of politics as a whole.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of different approaches to the study of comparative politics, including a critical awareness of the role claimed by quantitative methods.
- Be able to relate scholarly literature theorising comparative politics and actual contemporary political developments including very topical events.
- Be able to make informed comparisons of various strengths and weaknesses of different political systems or regimes.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Research element

Students write a research essay in this module.

International

The topics covered in this module are all international in scope.

Subject specific skills

Theoretical and empirical understanding of comparative politics

Transferable skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key skills:

- Written communication skills
- Oral communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Skills in the use of information technology
- Skills of interpretation and the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources
- Awareness and sensitivity to diversity (in terms of people, cultures) and the ability to understand unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking
- Ability to digest, retain and apply complex information and ideas
- Ability to conduct research and reference their work appropriately
- Time management skills and the ability to meet deadlines
- The ability to reflect critically on the extent and limitations of how and what they have learned, discovered and understood.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Total	150 hours

Type	Required
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

TBC

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Assessed essay 2500 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Essay feedback will be returned within 20 working days of essay submission. Formative and summative feedback will be provided in accordance with standard PAIS practice.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at

Brussels School of Governance, VUB)

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 1 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Core option list B for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V5L2 Undergraduate Philosophy and Politics

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
 - Year 1 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
 - Year 1 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
 - Year 1 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods
 - Year 1 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy