

# POLI 220-002: An Introduction to Domestic Politics around the World<sup>1</sup>

Updated: 23 February 2024

Term:

Classroom:

Day/Time:

Instructor: Professor Christopher Kam ([chris.kam@ubc.ca](mailto:chris.kam@ubc.ca))

(In-person) Office Hours:

Teaching Assistant:

Tutorials (Zoom link on Canvas)<sup>2</sup>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Countries vary in many ways, but their domestic politics invariably revolves around two questions: “how do we make collective choices?” and “how do we manage conflict?” Societies that cannot make collective choices often experience policy paralysis, regime instability, and state failure. By contrast, stable democracies are able to make collective choices via elections and legislatures, and contain conflict within the bounds of party politics and the legal system. The course examines how *comparativists* (i.e., political scientists who study comparative politics) try to explain these variations in domestic politics.

## TEXTS

There is one required text,

Clark, William R., Matt Golder, Sona Nadenichek Golder. 2012. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. 3rd Edition. Sage/CQ Press.

The text can be purchased online via Vital Source or via SAGE

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/principles-of-comparative-politics/book243842>. (It is fine to use a second edition – but I teach from the third, and there are some differences.) Other readings will be provided online via Canvas or the UBC library.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course has three objectives:

1. To expose students to the principal questions, concepts, and theories in comparative politics, in particular those related to state formation, democratization and modernization, and political competition.

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<sup>2</sup> Tutorials are held on-line, and will be recorded. The relevant Zoom links are on Canvas. Students are free to attend the tutorial section of their choice.

2. To expose students to research methods that comparativists use to develop and test hypotheses, and the criteria that they use to evaluate those hypotheses.
3. To prepare students to take advanced (i.e., 300 & 400-level) courses in comparative politics. This is achieved by exposing students to the theoretical questions that drive comparative politics, the main arguments and answers that authors have been advanced in response to those questions, and the data and methodological techniques that have underpinned those answers.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

The course involves two lectures per week, and in certain weeks, a tutorial section. Lectures are in-person, but **attendance at lectures is optional**. Indeed, **if you are sick, please do not attend lectures** until you are better. Tutorials are delivered remotely, and as with lectures, **attendance is optional**

This course is structured to facilitate the *Data and Models in Political Science certificate*. To that end, the course operates on two tracks, a *Standard* track and a *Data and Models (DM)* track. Common to both tracks are three (non-cumulative) exams and weekly online quizzes. The key difference between the two tracks is in the nature of the three homework assignments. DM-track homeworks involve the analysis of statistical data and game theoretic models; standard-track homeworks involve tracking current and historical events in a given country. The contribution of the course elements to one's course grade varies by track as follows:

### *Track 1: Standard*

1. Online quizzes:  $10 \times 1\% = 10\%$
2. Exams:  $3 \times 25\% = 75\%$
3. Homework Assignments:  $3 \times 5\% = 15\%$

### *Track 2: Data & Models*

1. Online quizzes:  $10 \times 1\% = 10\%$
2. Exams:  $3 \times 20\% = 60\%$
3. Homework Assignments:  $3 \times 10\% = 30\%$

Information on the content, grading and due dates of these assignments appears below.

## **IMPORTANT: Eligibility for and admission to the Data & Models Track**

Students who earned at least 80% in POLI 110 are eligible for the DM track. (Many of those eligible were emailed previously.) **Of those eligible, the top-20 students on the DM track based on this course's grades are admitted to the DM Certificate.** *Let me repeat this and make it very clear: eligibility does not imply admission!* Admission assures the student of a seat in the Data & Models capstone seminar (POLI 482) on completion of POLI 380 and 381. There will be a *short* wait-list for admission into the DM Certificate. That wait-list is ordered by grades in this course (i.e., POLI 220-002).

## **Office Hours & Communication**

My office hours are W 10:00-12:00 in BUCH C-410. Email (chris.kam@ubc.ca) is our main means of communication. I will also use Canvas to respond to frequently asked questions, and please give me

48 hours to reply to your emails and check Canvas for a response; if after that time you have still not received a response or seen an answer posted to Canvas, please email me again.

### Amendments

I reserve the right to make amendments to this syllabus as required for the smooth operation of the course (e.g., change the nature or order of readings, alter deadlines, etc.). You will have advance notice of any such changes, and an opportunity to voice any concerns, but I remain the final authority on these matters.

### CLASS SCHEDULE

The schedule below explains how each section of the course is connected to the learning objectives listed above, lists the relevant readings for each lecture, and provides dates for tutorial meetings and exam and assignment deadlines.

#### Week 1-2: 9-18 January

- Course Introduction
- Chapter 1: The Scope of Comparative Politics
- Chapter 4: The State
- Charles Tilly. 1985. "War Making & State Making as Organized Crime." In Rueschemeyer, Evans, & Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In*. CUP: 44-75.

#### Week 3: 23 & 25 January

- Chapter 5: Democracy & Dictatorship
- Przeworski, Adam. 1999. "Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense." In *Democracy's Value*, ed. Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 23-55.

#### Week 4: 30 January & 1 February

- Chapter 6: The Economic Determinants of Democracy (omit pp. 181-187)
- North, Douglass C. & Barry R. Weingast. 1989. "Constitutions & Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England." *Journal of Economic History*, 49: 803-832.
- DM-track tutorials on regime data (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 29 January, 11:00-12:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 29 January, 17:00-18:00
- Standard-track tutorials on regime data (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 29 January, 16:00-17:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 31 January, 10:00-11:00

#### Week 5: 6-13 February

- Chapter 7: The Cultural Determinants of Democracy
- Putnam, R.D., Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R.Y., 1992. Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy. Princeton University Press. Selected pages.

- Inglehart, Ronald. 2009. "Postmaterialist Values and the Shift from Survival to Self-Expression Values." Chapter 12 in Klingemann and Dalton, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 223-39.

- **Homework #1 (regime data) due 10:00 AM Friday 9 February**

- DM Tutorials on regression (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 5 February, 11:00-12:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 5 February, 17:00-18:00
- Standard-track tutorials on current events (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 5 February, 16:00-17:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 7 February, 10:00-11:00

Week 6: 13 & 15 February

- Chapter 7: The Cultural Determinants of Democracy
- Exam Review Tutorials (see Canvas for Zoom links)
  - Tutorial 1 – 12 February, 11:00-12:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 12 February, 17:00-18:00
  - Tutorial 3 – 12 February, 16:00-17:00
  - Tutorial 4 – 14 February, 10:00-11:00

- **Midterm Exam 1 – 15 February**

Week 7: 20 & 22 February – READING WEEK

- **DM-track homework #2 (on regression) due 10:00 AM Friday, 23 February**
- **Standard-track homework #2 (on current events) due 10:00 AM Friday, 23 February**

Week 8: 27-29 February

- Chapter 8: Democratic Transitions

Week 9: 5 & 7 March

- Chapter 10: Varieties of Dictatorships
- Gandhi, J. and Przeworski, A., 2007. Authoritarian institutions and the survival of autocrats. *Comparative political studies*, 40(11), pp.1279-1301.

Week 10: 12 & 14 March

- Chapter 12: Parliamentary, Presidential and Semi-Presidential Systems (pp. 453-58, 499-511)
- Stepan, A. and Skatch, C., 1993. "Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism." *World Politics*, 46, pp.1-22.
- Boix, C., 1999. "Setting the rules of the game: the choice of electoral systems in advanced democracies." *American Political Science Review*, 93(3), pp.609-624.
- DM-track tutorials on game theory (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 11 March, 11:00-12:00

- Tutorial 2 – 11 March, 17:00-18:00
- Standard-track tutorials on current events (see Zoom for link)
  - Tutorial 1 – 11 March, 16:00-17:00
  - **Tutorial 2 – 13 March, 10:00-11:00**

Week 11: 19-21 March

- Chapter 13: Electoral Systems (pp. 521-22, skim 534-69 such that you grasp Fig. 13.3, 569-77)
- Exam Review Tutorials (see Canvas for Zoom links)
  - Tutorial 1 – 18 March, 11:00-12:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 18 March, 17:00-18:00
  - Tutorial 3 – 18 March, 16:00-17:00
  - Tutorial 4 – 20 March, 10:00-11:00
- **Midterm 2 – 21 March**

Week 12 March: 26-28 March

- Chapter 14: Social Cleavages & Party Systems
- Rogowski, R., 1987. Political cleavages and changing exposure to trade. *American Political Science Review*, 81(4), pp.1121-1137.
- **DM-track homework #3 (on game theory) due 10:00 AM Friday, 29 March**
- **Standard-track homework #3 (on current events) due 10:00 AM Friday, 29 March**

Week 13-14: 2-11 April

- Chapter 16: Consequences of Democratic Institutions (pp. 701-745)
- Kostelka, F., & Blais, A. 2021. "The Generational and Institutional Sources of the Global Decline in Voter Turnout." *World Politics*, 73(4): 629-667.
- Iversen, T. and Soskice, D., 2006. Electoral institutions and the politics of coalitions: Why some democracies redistribute more than others. *American Political Science Review*, 100(2), pp.165-181.
- Exam Review Tutorials (see Canvas for Zoom links)
  - Tutorial 1 – 8 April, 11:00-12:00
  - Tutorial 2 – 8 April, 17:00-18:00
  - Tutorial 3 – 8 April, 16:00-17:00
  - Tutorial 4 – 10 April, 10:00-11:00
- **Final exam – 19 April 12-2PM**
- Make-up exam – time & date TBD

COURSE POLICIES

**Grade Appeals:** Students who wish to appeal grades assigned to their work may do so in writing, explaining the grounds on which their appeal is based. *The deadline for appeals is two weeks after the assignment is returned.* The initial appeal should be made to me, the course instructor. However, if the

student remains unsatisfied with this process, they may proceed to the head of the department or further to a formal committee established in accordance with University policies.

**Grading, Deadlines & Late Penalties:**

**Homework Assignments:** Homework assignments are graded out of 10 points.

Homework due dates are posted in the class schedule above. These deadlines for homework assignments are soft in that there is no penalty for missing them. *However, assignments submitted after these deadlines 1) may not receive timely feedback, and 2) have the same appeal deadline for on-time assignments.* By contrast, projects submitted by the recommended deadlines will be graded and returned with feedback within 2 weeks.

All outstanding homeworks must be submitted by **17:00, Monday, 15 April 2024. No course materials will be accepted after this deadline, and any such material will be assigned a grade of 0.** Note well: a homework submitted at 17:01 of Monday, 15 April 2024 did not miss the deadline by 1 minute; it missed the deadline by months, weeks, or days depending on the relevant recommended deadline. Note that because of this deadline policy, I do not release answer keys to the homeworks (else a student could just wait until the key is released to hand in their homework).

**Quizzes:** I post 1 multiple choice question weekly on Canvas from Week 2 onward, with the exception of weeks where there is a semester break or a scheduled exam in the class. The aim of these quiz questions is to give students an incentive to visit the course's Canvas web page at least once per week. Students obtain 1 point for registering an answer (i.e., participation) and 1 point for getting the correct answer.

Questions are posted by 10:00 AM Pacific time on Mondays and the opportunity to answer them expires the following Monday at 10:00 AM Pacific time. Thus, students always have a full 7 days to answer the quiz question.

**There is no opportunity to answer extra questions to make up for questions that one fails to answer.** However, if you are so ill or indisposed that you cannot log into Canvas for a whole week to answer a single multiple choice question, then contact Arts Advising ([arts.advisor@ubc.ca](mailto:arts.advisor@ubc.ca)) to explain your situation. If you convince them, I will re-weight your quiz grade to exclude the missed questions.

**Exams:** There are three exams, two midterms and a final exam. Each exam contributes an equal percentage to the student's course grade—25% under the Standard track, 20% under the DM track. Each exam is related to a specific section of the course, and hence the final exam is not cumulative. The exams have the same structure, approximately 50 percent multiple choice and 50 percent short answer.

**I re-weight the exam grade of any student who does not write all three exams so that students can miss one exam (for any reason) without worry.** For example, if a student misses one exam, the grade value of the remaining two exams will be increased by a factor of 1.5. However, **students must write 2 of 3 exams to obtain a course grade.** A make-up exam will be scheduled within 5 days of the final exam for students who need to complete this course requirement.

**Attendance & Absences:** While I strongly recommend that you attend class regularly, *there is no*

*penalty for absence* and recorded videos of the lectures will be placed on Canvas on a delayed basis. Certainly, 1) please do not come to class if you are sick; and 2) do not email me to apologize or explain 1-2 absences. By contrast, if health etc. matters make it hard for you to regularly attend class, please 1) contact me, and 2) Arts Advising.

All tutorial sections will be delivered online so that students who are unable to attend in-person may nonetheless attend virtual tutorials.

**Accommodations:** Please notify me either directly, or via Arts Advising or Access & Diversity if you require accommodations for matters of illness or disability.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

A number of relevant University policies and guidelines apply to and cover this course. Summaries of these policies are noted below for your convenience. These policies are not conveyed in their full detail and nothing in this syllabus is intended to contradict the University's policies.

## ACADEMIC CONCESSION

The university policy on academic concession is available at:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,329,0,0>. Policies on absences due to cultural or religious reasons can be found here at: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,330,0,0>. Policies on accommodations due to disability can be found at: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,34,0,0>.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

The UBC Faculty of Arts' policies on academic honesty can be found on-line at

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,286,0,0>. I encourage all students to visit this website and familiarize themselves with the university's policies on academic honesty.

## VALUES & POLICIES

The University requires that the following statement of its values and policies be included in every UBC course syllabus:

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>)

## RESPECTFUL UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

The University is committed to a Respectful University Environment:

UBC recognizes that “the best possible environment for working, learning and living is one in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued.” The full UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff can be found at <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/files/UBC-Statement-on-Respectful-Environment-2014.pdf>. Students should read this statement carefully and take note of both the protections and the responsibilities that it outlines for all members of the UBC community. Students should also review the Student Code of Conduct, at: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0>

#### DISCRIMINATION, EQUITY & HARASSMENT

UBC's policy on discrimination can be found at

[https://universitycounsel-2015.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/08/Discrimination-Policy\\_SC7.pdf?file=2018/09/policy3.pdf](https://universitycounsel-2015.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/08/Discrimination-Policy_SC7.pdf?file=2018/09/policy3.pdf). UBC is committed to equity (including but not limited to gender equity) and

fostering a safe learning environment for everyone. All peoples should be able to study, work, and learn in a supportive environment that is free from sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination. If you or someone you know has encountered sexual violence or harassment, you can find confidential support and resources at the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre (SASC) (<http://amssasc.ca>), and the Equity and Inclusion Office (<http://equity.ubc.ca>).

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Contact Arts Advising regarding issues related to your ability to attend class and complete course work: [arts.advisor@ubc.ca](mailto:arts.advisor@ubc.ca).
- To contact a UBC counselor or doctor regarding mental or physical health concerns, see: <https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness>