

**INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics**  
**University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs**

**Course Instructor Information:**

Dr. Erin Little

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Office hours by appointment in-person (304 Candler Hall) or Zoom (link available on eLC)

**Course Meeting Information:**

Fall 2023

Leconte Hall 221

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Broadly, this course asks: What explains variation in institutional and economic development across countries? Scholars have proposed paths toward democracy and suggested that democracy facilitates economic development within states. The end of the Cold War seemed to affirm for some that Democracy would usher in order and peace, both within and across states. Yet, autocratic and mixed regimes have been surprisingly durable, with few new, stable democracies entering the international system.

We will use cross-national case studies and qualitative methods to evaluate these claims, deepening our understanding of the factors which motivate particular forms of state development. We will explore institutional and economic efforts to maintain order, while also examining challenges to this order and how resulting civil conflict, human rights violations, and repression alter lasting prospects for domestic and international peace.

**EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

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**COUNTRY COMPARISON PROJECT**

The capstone of the course is a semester-long study study of two countries. Students may select from one of the pairs below or coordinate with their instructor in selecting a pair of their choice. Pairs selected from the list will have the benefit of articles posted to eLC to jump-start students' research on these countries. This is an individual project. Suggested Pairs [with materials on eLC]:

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Chile and Peru               | 5. Rwanda and Burundi      |
| 2. Haiti and Dominican Republic | 6. Egypt and Tunisia       |
| 3. India and Sri Lanka          | 7. Saudi Arabia and Jordan |
| 4. France and Italy             | 8. Pakistan and Bangladesh |

Students will select the states they would like to follow through the semester during “Module 8,” worth 5% just for the country pair selection. From that point, there will be four more assignments related to this project. Submit all assignments through eLC.

1. *A research question:* Students will be expected to propose a research question about the country pairs they have been assigned during Module 9 this point in the semester, students should have a broad understanding of some basic similarities/differences between your country pairs, or interesting historical continuities which help explain their respective developments. You will (a) propose a research question, and (b) explain why you chose that question (i.e., why is it important to you and/or the broader study of comparative politics). This assignment should be no more than **250 words** in length.
2. *Two “short responses”:* During the course of the semester, students will link module readings to their country pairs by finding two related news stories from each of their countries and describing how information from that module pertains to historical events in the country they are studying. Please note, not every module will be appropriate for your country pair – this is to say that some modules are more relevant than others to each country, so if you find that information is difficult to find for a particular module, don’t do it! Short responses will be **250-300** words in length.
3. *A written or audio-visual research proposal:* There will be very specific criteria on eLC to make the project more streamlined for each student, and I am very willing to meet with you in-person or through Zoom to discuss your project. We will also have workshop days throughout the semester to discuss any concerns on your drafts in class. You can find broad, initial criteria below:
  - a. The *written* research proposal will be 1,500-2000 words in length. It will outline (a) your hypothesis, (b) a theory for why your hypothesis makes sense [i.e. that would illustrate what kind of evidence would support/not support your hypothesis], and (c) how you would gather and analyze that evidence (i.e. a “methods” section).
  - b. An *audio-visual* research proposal complete with a) your hypothesis, (b) a theory for why your hypothesis makes sense [i.e. that would illustrate what kind of evidence would support/not support your hypothesis], and (c) how you would gather and analyze that evidence (i.e. a “methods” section). You may upload this through a media outlet of your choice, with the instructor's approval. Accompanying materials must be uploaded to eLC (e.g. powerpoint slides, an annotated bibliography, etc.). Your presentation should be 5-7 minutes long.

## **EXAM AND QUIZZES**

Students will take one open-note midterm exam through eLC on **October 13th**. The midterm will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions and taken at-home, so we will not have class that day. More guidelines will be provided on eLC prior to the exam. Additionally, each module will have a quiz. You must do 10 quizzes for full credit (each worth 2%). I will take the 10 highest-graded quizzes and any additional quizzes beyond the 10 that earn 100% will get 1 point of bonus added to your final grade.

## **GROUP ACTIVITY AND SIMULATION**

During Module 7 and Module 15 we will have an ongoing simulation. Module 7 will focus primarily on state-level development, as you will have the opportunity in your designated groups to design a state according to criteria I will provide the week prior to the activity. Between Module 7 and Module 15, we will have one or two class sessions that will allow you to regroup with your states and develop regional relationships with the other groups. Module 15 will allow you to send these states and regional dynamics into a global crisis scenario, where you will be asked to participate in at least one resolution to resolve the issue. Again, you will be provided specific criteria for this resolution the week prior to the simulation.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. Absences will only be excused for the following, discussed with me in advance: observance of a religious practice, documented (by a doctor or health clinic/hospital) sickness, or death of a relative or close friend. More than three cumulative absences without an above listed excuse will affect students' attendance and participation grades. Three unexcused absences are permitted without penalty. However, the fast-paced nature of this course and the use of supplemental materials in class, which will also appear on exams, will make it more difficult for students to do well in this course without being present.

## **GRADING POLICY**

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The breakdown of your grades and the scoring rubric for this course are below (P/F indicates a Pass/Fail grade):

15% - Module 7 Group Activity (P/F)

15% - Module 15 Simulation (P/F)

20% - Module Quizzes

20% - Midterm Exam

30% - Country Comparisons Project

- 5% - Country pair selection (P/F)
- 5% - Research question (P/F)
- 5% - Short response 1 (P/F)
- 5% - Short response 2 (P/F)
- 10% - Final research proposal

94 to 100 – A

80 to 83 – B-

67 to 69 – D+

90 to 93 – A-

77 to 79 – C+

64 to 67 – D

87 to 89 – B+

74 to 77 – C

60 to 63 – D-

84 to 87 – B

70 to 73 – C-

59 and below – F

## OUTLINE OF TOPICS

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<b>Aug. 16, 18</b>	<b>Module 1 – Introduction to course requirements and Methods I</b>
Topics	Asking a research question, pt. 1 - Dependent and independent variables Asking a research question, pt. 2 - Causality
Readings	KKV p 14-19, Pearl (2009)
<i>Due by 8/21</i>	<i>Module 1 quiz</i>

<b>Aug. 21, 23, 25</b>	<b>Module 2 – The State</b>
Topics	What is 'the state' and who are its agents? State sovereignty in a globalized world
Readings	Tilly (1985)
<i>Due by 8/28</i>	<i>Module 2 quiz</i>

<b>Aug. 28, 30, Sept. 1</b>	<b>Module 3 – Citizenship, Nation, and Rights</b>
Topics	Citizenship and civil rights Nationalism and human rights
Readings	McCrone and Kiely (2000)
<i>Due by 9/6</i>	<i>Module 3 quiz</i>

<b>Sept. 6, 8</b>	<b>Module 4 – Democracy</b> <span style="float: right;"><i>9/4 – NO CLASS; LABOR DAY</i></span>
Topics	Conceptualizing democratic governance Measuring democracy in comparative politics
Readings	Polity IV manual (pgs 1-17); Freedom House methodology
<i>Due by 9/11</i>	<i>Module 4 quiz</i>

<b>Sept. 11, 13, 15</b>	<b>Module 5 – Democracy (cont.) and Authoritarianism</b>
Topics	Authoritarianism and democratic decline Governance under authoritarian regimes
Readings	Watch <i>The Edge of Democracy</i> documentary on Netflix (link in eLC)
<i>Due by 9/18</i>	<i>Module 5 quiz</i>

<b>Sept. 18, 20, 22</b>	<b>Module 6 – Authoritarianism (cont.) and Political Economy</b>
Topics	The capitalism-socialism curve Foreign aid and state development
Readings	Aluko and Arowolo (2010)
<i>Due by 9/25</i>	<i>Module 6 quiz</i>

<b>Sept. 25, 27, 29</b>	<b>Module 7 – In-class group activity: State development</b>
	No preparation required prior to class Details to be announced
Readings	No readings required this week
<i>Due by 10/2 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>Submit your countries for the comparison project</i>

<b>Oct. 2, 4, 6</b>	<b>Module 8 – Methods II (Answering your research question)</b>
Topics	Causal mechanisms vs. Correlative-conjunction Case studies vs. Process-tracing
Readings	Lim Ch. 2; Mahony on process-tracing
<i>Due by 10/9 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>Submit your research question</i>
<i>Due by 10/9</i>	<i>Module 8 quiz</i>

<b>Oct. 9, 11</b>	<b>Module 9 – Political Violence I (Domestic conflict)</b> <i>10/13 – NO CLASS; MIDTERM EXAM</i>
Topics	Defining coups and civil war
Readings	TBD
<i>Due by 10/13 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>MIDTERM EXAM (No Module 9 Quiz)</i>

<b>Oct. 16, 18, 20</b>	<b>Module 10 – Political Violence II (Civilian victimization)</b>
Topics	Forms of civilian victimization Civilian victimization during conflict
Readings	Humphreys and Weinstein (2006)
<i>Due by 10/23</i>	<i>Module 10 quiz</i>

<b>Oct. 23, 25</b>	<b>Module 11 – Political Violence III (Forms of protest)</b>	<i>10/27 – NO CLASS; FALL BREAK</i>
Topics	Forms of protest, pt. 1 - Riots vs. Revolution Forms of protest, pt. 2 - Self-immolation vs. Suicide terrorism	
Readings	TBD	
<i>Due by 10/30</i>	<i>Module 11 quiz</i>	

<b>Oct. 30, Nov. 1, 3</b>	<b>Module 12 – Regions I (Effects of colonization)</b>	
Topics	British colonization in Iran French colonization in Vietnam	
Readings	TBD	
<i>Due by 11/6</i>	<i>Module 12 quiz</i>	

<b>Nov. 6, 8, 10</b>	<b>Module 13 – Regions II (Diffusion and security)</b>	
Topics	Policy diffusion Regional security complexes	
Readings	Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll (2010); (Optional) Kampf (2013)	
<i>Due by 11/13 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>Both short responses are due (see Assignments)</i>	
<i>Due by 11/13</i>	<i>Module 13 quiz</i>	



<b>Nov. 13, 15, 17</b>	<b>Module 14 – Globalization</b>
Topics	Global threats and local effects Climate change at the state-level
Readings	TBD
<i>Due by 11/20</i>	<i>Module 14 quiz</i>

<b>Nov. 20</b>	<b><i>Optional Workshop Day      11/22-11/24 – NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING BREAK</i></b>
Topics	Workshop to review or discuss questions concerning the final draft of your country comparison project; <i>Attendance not required</i>

<b>Nov. 27, 29, Dec. 1</b>	<b>Module 15 - SIMULATION</b>
Topics	Create a resolution (details to be announced)
Readings	You will have a dossier of details provided the week prior to the simulation
<i>Due by 12/1 at 11:59pm</i>	<i>All groups must submit participation in at least one resolution</i>

<b>Dec. 4th at 11:59pm</b>	<b>Final Research Proposal for the country comparisons project is due</b>
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## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

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UGA Student Honor Code: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found the website of Office of Instruction. We expect that the Student Honor Code will guide your efforts in this course. A lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy does not explain a violation. Please direct any questions to the instructor.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the University Council: “The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

The following is taken verbatim from LINK: “In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.”

## **FERPA STATEMENT**

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The following is taken verbatim from the Syllabus Checklist:

“The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar’s explanation. FERPA allows disclosure of directory information (name, address, telephone, email, date of birth, place of birth, major, activities, degrees, awards, prior schools), unless requested in a written letter to the registrar.”

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the Disability Resource Center:

“If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting the Disability Resource Center”

The following is taken verbatim from the document of Syllabus Creation:

“Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.”

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES**

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The following is taken verbatim from the University Council:

“If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit the website of Student Care and Outreach. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services or crisis support. If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.”