

Prof. Juan Wang (juan.wang2@mcgill.ca)

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 1:15-3:15pm. Appointment through this link

<http://www.supersaas.com/schedule/WJ-OFFICEHOUR/LEA524>

## **POLI 628: Graduate Seminar in Comparative Politics**

Fall 2024\*

\* The course materials have been updated based on the latest comprehensive exam reading list.

\* On this syllabus, I only include five required readings for each of the 12 themes. For recommended readings, please see the list from our department website.

This course surveys important, but not exhaustive, theoretical themes in comparative politics. The choice of required readings is based on the following considerations. First, it aims to balance both the classic and the latest work in each thematic area. Second, it seeks to include both mainstream and critical perspectives, and experiences in both developed and developing areas. Third, it looks at both positivist and interpretive approaches.

This course serves two purposes. The first is to help graduate students map out the major themes and debates in the field of comparative politics. The second is to assist PhD students to prepare for comprehensive exams in the Thematic Focus section of comparative politics. Course obligations and assignments reflect the two goals.

### **Course Obligations**

This course emphasizes reading and digesting materials in order to give you a basic background in comparative politics. Your grade is based on active seminar participation (10%), three reading summaries (10%\*3), two in-class presentations (15%\*2), and one review essay (30%).

#### Active Seminar Participation (10%)

One unexcused absence is allowed during the semester without penalties. For additional absences, you would need provide proof, medical or other types. Otherwise, one point is deducted from your final course grade for each additional unexcused absence.

You should participate actively and regularly in class discussions. Part of this participation will be up to you (offering informed comments and questions during our discussions), and part will be determined by the luck of the draw. When we begin to discuss each reading, one student will be chosen at random to start the discussion by giving a short (about one minute) summary of the specific work in question. You should be able to remind the class of the author(s) main argument and methodology (i.e., how do they support the work's claims?), and provide a few initial comments.

#### In-class Presentations (15%\*2)

Each student will have two presentations throughout the semester (15% each). The presenter will provide his/her thoughts and comments (20 min) on readings of a particular week, and lead discussions. *In your presentation, it is important not to treat each work as an isolated reading, but to make analytical connections between readings assigned in the same week or across weeks and raise questions accordingly.* The presenter needs to post on MyCourses discussion board a max 3-

page (double-spaced) outline, indicating the main points of the presentation at noon on the day before the seminar to facilitate discussion in class. **The selected weeks for presentation cannot be the same week(s) that you write your comparative summaries.**

Group presentations: If you decide to form a group, each person's presentation needs to make meaningful connections among different, if not all, readings of the same week. Clearly state who is responsible for which segment of the group presentation so respective grades can be given.

Grading: clarity of the presentation; understanding of the readings; clarity of discussion questions; meaningful comparison and analytical connections between readings.

### Reading Summary (10% \*3)

Beginning with Week TWO, you will **select 3 weeks** to write three reading summaries. For each of the summary, you are expected to *summarize* and *compare* readings of a particular week. For each summary, there are two steps to complete the assignment: (1) submit an initial reading comparison and (2) submit an update and correction.

- (1) For the initial submission, you need to analytically connect all those assigned readings that you consider comparable. In terms of conceptions, methods, units of analysis, arguments, empirical cases, etc, how are they similar or different? You could use a table, bullet points, or write out your answers. If it is not applicable, you do not need to include a review article in this exercise. The reading comparison is due **by midnight the day before the seminar**, via MyCourses. This initial submission is *not* graded and counts for 4% of the final grade.
- (2) After the seminar discussion, you will need to submit a *separate* and *updated* summary, based on what you have learned from seminar discussions. Highlight your updates/changes through track changes. **This update/correction is due by midnight on the Sunday of the same week** as the seminar. This update will be graded and counts for 6% of the final grade.
- (3) \*\*Ph.D. students may choose to replace *up to two* comparative summaries with a written answer exercise for comparative comprehensive exam. Old exams are available on the departmental website under "Graduate Students Restricted Content." *The written exercise is due by midnight the day before the seminar when the topic of your choice is discussed.* You will have the opportunity to revise your answers after my grading, if you receive a Fail.

### Review Essay (30%)

You will write one review essays over the course of the semester that discuss issues of your choice that are raised by the required readings or come out during seminar discussions. In terms of the format of review essays, I suggest three models to choose from: Ziblat (2006), Caraway (2004), and Pepinsky(2014). Consider this an exercise to submit your first scholarly work for potential publication or prepare the literature review section of your thesis.

Make sure that your papers have a minimum of summary, are clearly argued, and do not wander from one unrelated point to the next. Most importantly, let me know in the introductory paragraph what your chosen focus is, how you are going to analyze it, and what your main argument will be. Spelling, grammar, and style count. Use the author-date in-text reference system and include a complete bibliography.

Your papers should be 25-30 double-spaced pages or 6,000-8,000 words (not counting the bibliography), with reasonable margins and in 12-point font. Outside reading is welcomed, but not required or expected in writing these papers.

Submit your final review essay *via MyCourses*. The review essay is due **by midnight on the following Sunday of the last seminar**. Late papers are penalized by one letter-grade step per day (e.g., an A paper submitted one day late becomes an A- paper, etc.). **TAs receive a two-week extension**. Please send me the course number and the name of the instructor for my record.

### **Important Notes**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

©All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor's intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor's intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.

The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in contexts such as the following may be cause for disciplinary action: 1. Username (use only your legal or preferred name), 2. Visual backgrounds, 3. "Chat" boxes. To maintain a clear and uninterrupted learning space for all, you should keep your microphone muted throughout your class, unless invited by the instructor to speak. You should follow instructors' directions about the use of the "chat" function on remote learning platforms.

McGill University is on land that has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

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### **Themes:**

1. Institutions and institutional change
2. States and state formation
3. Constitutionalism (constitutional design, presidential vs parliamentary systems, federalism)

4. Law and order (judiciaries, policing, surveillance, militaries, and civil-military relations)
5. Political parties and elections
6. Political culture and civil society
7. Contentious politics, social movements, and political violence
8. Democracies, democratization, and democratic backsliding
9. Authoritarian and hybrid regimes
10. Nations, nationalism, and memory
11. Identity (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexuality, race, religion)
12. Comparative political economy

## **Introduction**

schedule & course syllabus, presentation signup, requirements & evaluation.

## **Theme 1: Institutions and Institutional Change**

Pierson, Paul. 2000. "[The Limits of Design.](#)" *Governance* 13: 475-499.

Blyth, Mark. 2001. "[The Transformation of the Swedish model: Economic Ideas, Distributional Conflict, and Institutional change.](#)" *World Politics* 54: 1-26.

Kenneth Shepsle, 1989. "[Studying Institutions: Some Lessons from the Rational Choice Approach,](#)" *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1(2): 131-147.

Helmke, Gretchen and Steven Levitsky. 2004. "[Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda.](#)" *Perspectives on Politics* 2(4): 725-740.

Steven Levitsky. 1998. "[Institutionalization and Peronism: The Concept, the Case and the Case for Unpacking the Concept.](#)" *Party Politics* 4(1): 77-92.

## **Theme 2: The State and State Formation**

Mann, Michael. 1984. "[The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results.](#)" *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2): 185-213.

Evans, Peter. 1999. "[The Eclipse of the State? Reflections on Stateness in the Era of Comparative Globalization.](#)" *World Politics* 51:62-87

Vu Tuong, 2010. "[Studying the State through State Formation,](#)" *World Politics* 62(1): 148-175.

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. "[The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics.](#)" *ARSR*. Vol. 85, No. 1.

Anna Grzymala-Busse, 2020. "[Beyond War and Contracts: The Medieval and Religious Roots of the European State,](#)" *ARPS* 23: 19-36.

## **Theme 3: Constitutionalism (presidential vs parliamentary, federalism, constitutional design)**

Sartori, Giovanni. 1962. "[Constitutionalism: A Preliminary Discussion.](#)" *APSR* 56(4): 853-864.

Elazar, Daniel J. 1997. "[Contrasting Unitary and Federal Systems](#)", *IPSR*, 18(3): 327-251.

Cheibub, José Antonio, Zachary Elkins, & Tom Ginsburg. 2014. "[Beyond Presidentialism and Parliamentarism](#)." *BJPS* 44 (3): 515-544.

Martin, Lanny & Randolph Stevenson. 2001. "[Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies](#)." *AJPS* 45(1): 33-50.

Julian Go, 2003. "[A Globalizing Constitutionalism? Views from the Postcolony, 1945-2000](#)," *International Sociology*, 71-95.

#### **Theme 4: Law and Order (judiciaries, policing, civil-military relations)**

Merry, Sally Engle. 1991. "[Law and Colonialism](#)." *Law & Society Review*. 25(4): 889-922

Soss, Joe and Vesla Weaver. 2017. "[Police are Our Government: Politics, Political Science, and the Policing of Race-Class Subjugated Communities](#)," *ARPS*, 20: 565-591.

Gretchen Helmke and Frances Rosenbluth, 2009. "[Regimes and the Rule of Law: Judicial Independence in Comparative Perspective](#)," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12:345-366.

Ran Hirschl, 2004. "[The Political Origins of the New Constitutionalism](#)," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 11(1):71-108.

Feaver, P.D. 1999. "[Civil-military relations](#)." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2(1):211-241.

#### **Theme 5: Political Parties and Elections**

Stephanie, Mudge and Anthony S. Chen, 2014. "[Political Parties and the Sociological Imagination: Past, Present, and Future Directions](#)" *ARS* 40: 305-330.

Muirhead, Russel, and Nacy Rosenblum, 2020. "[The Political Theory of Parties and Partisanship: Catching Up](#)." *ARPS* 23: 950110.

Lewis, Paul. 2006. "[Party States and State Parties](#)," in Richard Katz & William Crotty eds, *Handbook of Party Politics*. Sage.

Enyedi, Zsolt. 2006. "[Party Politics in Post-Communist Transition](#)," in Richard Katz & William Crotty eds, *Handbook of Party Politics*. Sage.

Urbinati, Nadia and Mark Warren. 2008. "[The concept of representation in contemporary democratic theory](#)." *ARPS*, 11: 387-412.

#### **Theme 6: Political Culture, Civil Society, and Populism**

Coleman, James. 1988. "[Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital](#)." *AJS* 94: S95-S120.

Berman, Sheri. 1997. "[Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic](#)," *World Politics* 49(3): 401-429.

Putnam, Robert. 1995. "[Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital](#)." *Journal of Democracy* 6(1): 65-78.

Mansbridge, J., & Macedo, S. 2019. "[Populism and democratic theory](#)." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 15, 59-77.

Wedeen, Lisa. 2002. "[Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science](#)." *APSR* 96 (4): 713-728.

### **Theme 7: Contentious Politics, Social Movements, and Political Violence**

Ostrom, Elinor. 1998. "[A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action](#)." *APSR* 92(1): 1-22.

Goldstone, Jack A. 2024. "[The Generations of Revolutionary Theory Revisited: New Works and Evolutions of Theory](#)," *Critical Sociology*.

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2003. "[The Ontology of 'Political Violence': Action and Identity in Civil Wars](#)". *Perspectives on Politics*, 1(3): 475-494.

Snow, David. 2004. "[Social Movements as Challenges to Authority: Resistance to an Emerging Conceptual Hegemony](#)." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts, and Change* 25:3-25.

Kathleen Blee and Kimberley Creasap, 2010. "[Conservative and Right-Wing Movements](#)," *ARS* 36: 269-286.

### **Theme 8: Democracy, Democratization and Democratic Backsliding**

Collier, David and Steven Levitsky. 1997. "[Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation](#)" *World Politics* 49(3): 430-51.

Caraway, Teri. 2004. "[Inclusion and democratization: class, gender, race, and the extension of suffrage](#)." *Comparative Politics* 36(4): 443-460.

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2006. "[How Did Europe Democratize?](#)" *World Politics* 58: 311–38.

Bunce, Valerie. 2003. "[Rethinking recent democratization: Lessons from the postcommunist experience](#)." *World Politics* 55(2): 167-192.

Waldner, David and Ellen Lust. 2018. "[Unwelcome change: Coming to terms with democratic backsliding](#)." *ARPS* 21: 93-113.

### **Theme 9: Authoritarianism**

Diamond, Larry. 2002. "[Thinking about Hybrid Regimes](#)." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 21-35

Svolik, Milan, 2012. [The Politics of Authoritarian Rule](#). Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-50). [Please pay attention to his literature review]

Pepinsky, Thomas, 2014. "[The Institutional Turn in Comparative Authoritarianism](#)." *BJPS* 44(3): 631-653.

Scheppele, Kim Lane. 2018. "[Autocratic legalism](#)." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 85 (2): 545-584.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002, "[The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism](#)", *Journal of Democracy* 13: 51-65

### **Week 10: Nation, Nationalism, and Memory**

Gellner, Ernest. 1994. "Nationalism and Modernization" and "Nationalism and High Cultures." In John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, eds., *Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 9 and 10 (pp. 55-70). *On MyCourses*.

Smith, Anthony. 1998. [Nationalism and Modernism](#). London: Routledge. Chapters 7 and 8.

Anderson, Benedict. 1991 (2006, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). [Imagined Communities](#). New York: Verso, 2nd ed. Chapter 1 (1-7); Chapter 3 (37-46), and Chapter 10 (163-186). ([e-book](#) available)

Posen, Barry (1993). "[Nationalism, the Mass Army and Military Power](#)," *International Security* 18, 2: 80 - 124.

Darden, Keith and Harris Mylonas (2016). "[Threats to Territorial Integrity, National Mass Schooling, and Linguistic Commonality](#)." *Comparative Political Studies* 49: 11, p. 1446 - 1479

### **Theme 11: Identity Politics**

Rogers Smith, 2004. "[Identities, Interests, and the Future of Political Science](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 2(2): 301-312.

Deniz Kandiyoti, 1991 "[Identity and Its Discontents: Women and the Nation](#)", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 20(3): 429-443.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 2001. "[Beyond settler and native as political identities: overcoming the political legacy of colonialism](#)." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43(4): 651-664.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. "[What is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter?](#)" *ARPS* 9: 397-424.

Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2012. "[Why Comparative Politics Needs to take Religion More Seriously](#)," *ARPS*, 2012

### **Theme 12: Comparative Political Economy**

Baccaro, Lucio, and Jonas Pontusson. 2016. "[Rethinking comparative political economy: the growth model perspective](#)." *Politics & Society* 44(2): 175-207.

Iversen and Soskice 2009, "[Distribution and Redistribution: The Shadow of the Nineteenth Century](#)," *World Politics* 61(3): 438–86.

Hardie, Iain, David Howarth, Sylvia Maxfield, & Amy Verdun. 2013. "[Banks and the False Dichotomy in the Comparative Political Economy of Finance.](#)" *World Politics*, 65(4), 691-728.

Atul Kohli, 2009. "[Nationalist versus Dependent Capitalist Development: Alternate Pathways of Asia and Latin America in a Globalized World,](#)" *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 44: 386-410.

Ilias Alami et al. 2022. "[Special Issue Introduction: What is the New State Capitalism?](#)" *Contemporary Politics*, 28 (3): 245-263.