

Descriptif d'enseignement / *Course descriptions*

2^èm année

Semestre 1

Titre du cours - *Course title*

Intitulé du cours: Comparative politics. Democracies under stress.

Type de cours : **elective course**

Langue du cours/Language of instruction : English

Enseignant(s) *Cécile Leconte PhD*

Nom de l'enseignant

Titre ou profession senior lecturer in political science

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Résumé du cours – Objectifs - *Course description – Targets*

Conceived as an introduction to the comparative study of democracy and democratic politics, this course intends to familiarize students with the methodological and theoretical foundations of comparative research. It shows how the comparative method helps address key political science questions and puzzles, such as: Are specific constitutional and institutional arrangements more likely than others to secure the robustness of democratic regimes? Why do some democratic revolutions seem to succeed while others seem to fail? How can we account for cross-national differences in terms of welfare state types and levels of inequalities? How come that, faced with similar situations, countries adopt policies that seem to vary greatly in their ability to “address” “problems”? Etc.

The study of the multiple challenges that contemporary democracies in the so-called “developed” world are presently confronted with provides a common thread for this seminar, which aims at analyzing, in a comparative perspective, the transformation of “consolidated” democracies through the prism of institutions, party politics, electoral trends and public policies. Each class will start with a critical, scientifically grounded assessment of common sense statements on current democratic politics (such as, for instance: “Democracies are now divided between losers and winners of globalization”, “The Left/Right cleavage is now irrelevant”, etc.), in order to show how comparisons help us think “out of the box”.

At a time when cross-national comparisons are increasingly referred to by decision-makers at the domestic and global levels in order to legitimize or veto key political choices, at a time when countries, regimes and societies are increasingly “ranked” according to their democratic “performance”, the course also aims at providing students with the analytical tools that are necessary to deconstruct the political uses that are constantly being made of comparisons in the political arena and in the media.

Evaluation - *Assessment*

An oral presentation of max. 20 minutes (in groups ; numbers tbd) + a mini-paper (same group, same topic), incorporating teacher's feedback (length tbd)

- Class 1. A current, democratic « recession » ?**
- Class 2. Non-institutional components of democracy : revisiting the “civic culture”**
- Class 3. Institutions: the challenge of “hybrid regimes”**
- Class 4. The territorial dimensions of democracy : debating federalism**
- Class 5. Polarized citizens: a globalization of US “culture wars”?**
- Class 6. Populism: beyond Right and Left?**
- Class 7. Democracies, inequalities and welfare states.**
- Class 8. Financing democracies**
- Class 9. Democratic transitions and revolutions.**
- Class 10. Democracies in times of pandemics: facing the Covid crisis**
- Class 11. Democracies, political extremism and terrorism**
- Class 12. Conclusion: how to remedy the democratic “deficit”**

Bibliographie - Bibliography :

- Badie, Bertrand et Guy Hermet (2001), *Politique comparée*, Paris : Armand Colin.
- Caramani, D. (2008) *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Clark, William, Golder, Mark and Golder, Sona (2017), *Principles of comparative politics*, London: Sage.
- Detienne, Marcel (2000), *Comparer l'incomparable*, Paris : Le Seuil.
- Gazibo, Mamoudou et Jane Jenson (2004), *La politique comparée : fondements, enjeux et approches théoriques*, Montréal : Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Lallement, Michel et Jan Spurk Jan, (dir.) (2003), *Stratégies de la comparaison internationale*, Paris : CNRS Éditions.
- Morlino, Leonardo (2013) *Introduction à la politique comparée*, Paris : Armand Colin.
- Newton, Kenneth and Van Deth, Jan (2010), *Foundations of comparative politics*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Peters, Guy B. (1998) *Comparative Politics: theory and methods*. Macmillan Press
- Seiler, Daniel-Louis (2004), *La méthode comparative*, Paris : Armand Colin.
- Thiriot, C, M. Marty et E. Nadal, dirs. (2004), *Penser la politique comparée. Un état des savoirs théoriques et méthodologiques*, Paris, Karthala.
- Tyler Dickovick, Jonathan and Jonathan Eastwood (2015), *Comparative politics: integrating theories, methods and cases*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.