



Universidad de  
**La Sabana**

**UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA**  
**FACULTAD DE DERECHO Y CIENCIAS POLÍTICAS**

**Comparative Political Systems**

**1. ASIGNATURAS PRE-REQUISITOS:**

Introduction to Political Science

**2. INTENSIDAD HORARIA:**

192 hours per semester

**2.1. Horas de trabajo presencial:**

64 hours per semester

**2.2. Horas de trabajo  
independiente:**

128 hours per semester

**3. VALOR EN CREDITOS:**

2



**4. PROFESOR:**

**Jorge Enrique Córdoba Currea**

Political scientist from the Universidad de los Andes with a Master in Global Governance and Cultural Diplomacy from the University of Siena in Italy. He is also a candidate for a master's degree in Analysis of Contemporary Political, Economic and International Problems from the Externado de Colombia University.

- Has teaching experience in issues of Public Agenda, International Situation and Political Science.
- In the private sector, he has worked with the International Institute for Anti-corruption Studies, where he developed issues related to the design of transparency policies in Honduras, Costa Rica, Peru and Argentina, financed by the Inter-American Development Bank.
- With the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had professional experience in the Colombian Embassy in Sweden, the Colombian Embassy in Germany, the Directorate for Border Integration and Development, and the Directorate for Migration, Consular Affairs and Citizen Services.
- Currently, it works in the District in the formulation of action plans with the CONPES methodology of the Public Policies of Family, Habitability in the Street, Adulthood, LGBTI Social Sectors, Social Policy, Human Rights and Integral Management of the Habitat Sector with a horizon to 2030.

**1. COURSE OUTLINE**

The objective of this course is to provide students with basic tools to build their knowledge about political phenomena around the globe. The study of comparative politics deals with political continuity and change. Why some countries have been able to achieve political stability for long periods of time while others are continuously embroiled in political violence? What are the structural forces shaping political institutions in different countries? Does culture matter in making democracy work? What's the role of the middle class as a stabilizing political force? The first part of the course will be dedicated to the study of comparative's main approaches: Institutionalism/Neo-Institutionalism, Structural-functionalism, Political Economy, Rational Theory, and Political Culture. The second part of class will be focused on specific case studies, which will enable students to apply Comparative Politics' main approaches.



## **2. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE**

- To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.
- To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.
- To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.

## **3. CORE SUBJECTS**

- The comparative analysis: concepts, methods, and strategies.
- Political systems and Regimes.
- Electoral Systems and Political Parties Systems.
- Case Studies.

## **4. Course Strategy**

### **4.1 Class Sessions**

- Lecture delivered by the Professor.
- Discussion about the reading material.
- Development of class assignments including Policy Memos.
- Q&A sessions.



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#### **4.2 Independent Work**

- Students are expected to do all the required readings prior to each session.
- They shall fulfil the home assignments bearing in mind the established deadlines.
- They should prepare presentations in groups about public agenda.
- They are strongly encouraged to send questions and comments the e- mail: [jorge.cordoba@unisabana.edu.co](mailto:jorge.cordoba@unisabana.edu.co)

#### **5. Methodology**

The development of the topics will be dictated during the four hours of the week. The sessions will analyze the main types of political regimes that exist in the world and their institutional framework. On the other hand, once a week a group of students will present an issue on the public agenda that presents challenges within the political system presented by the teacher, and, based on these presentations, the other students will write a Policy Memo maximum 500 words in which they propose a solution in accordance with the institutional guidelines that each country has.

#### **Evaluations**

Course evaluations with the following:

- Oral presentations.
- Policy Memos.
- Pop Quizzes.
- Two midterms.
- Final Policy Paper.



## **6. Evaluation Criteria**

- Class attendance and active participation demonstrating critical analysis of the class material. Inquiries by email will also be considered in the participation component of the grade.
- Assignments submission Timeline.
- Understanding of the concepts and core elements of the theoretical frameworks.
- Ability to apply the theory to concrete cases and assess its value and limitations.
- Internal consistency and argumentation skills.

### **6.1 Evaluation percentages**

- First term 30%: Pop quizzes 15% / First exam 15%.
- Second term 30%: Policy Memos & pop quizzes 15% / Second exam 15%.
- Third term 40%: Oral Presentations and pop quizzes 20% / Policy Paper 20%.



## 7. Timetable

Resultado previsto de aprendizaje (RPA)	Fecha de actividad	Tema y objetivo	Metodologías (Acciones y metodología en clase)	Materiales y lecturas para trabajo previo independiente del estudiante	Evaluación de los aprendizajes (Acciones evaluativas para verificar el avance en el logro del RPA)	Trabajo asincrónico del estudiante	
						Tiempo estimado (De las actividades y de la evaluación)	Tiempo real (De las actividades y de la evaluación)
To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	19/07/2021	Institutionalism/Neo-Institutionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Peter Hall and Rose Mary Taylor – Political Science and the three New Institutionalism.	Pop Quizzes	1h 45 mins	



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To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>22/07/2021</b>	Institutionalism/Neo-Institutionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Peter Hall and Rose Mary Taylor – Political Science and the three New Institutionalism.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>26/07/2021</b>	Institutionalism/Neo-Institutionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Peter Hall and Rose Mary Taylor – Political Science and the three New Institutionalism.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>29/07/2021</b>	Institutionalism/Neo-Institutionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Peter Hall and Rose Mary Taylor – Political Science and the three New Institutionalism.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>02/08/2021</b>	Structural-functionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Structural Functionalism – R.G. Abrahams, University of Cambridge.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	





To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>05/08/2021</b>	Structural-functionalism	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Structural Functionalism – R.G. Abrahams, University of Cambridge.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>09/08/2021</b>	Political Culture and Rational Theory	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Suggested: Paul W. Zagorski, <i>Comparative Politics: Continuity and Breakdown in the Contemporary World</i> (New Jersey: Routledge, 2009)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>12/08/2021</b>	Political Culture and Rational Theory	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Suggested: Paul W. Zagorski, <i>Comparative Politics: Continuity and Breakdown in the Contemporary World</i> (New Jersey: Routledge, 2009)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To study the main and specific concepts involving the discussions about the political systems.	<b>16/08/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>19/08/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>23/08/2021</b>	First Midterm	N/A	N/A	Essay during the classtime about a case study using the main concepts	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>26/08/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>30/08/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>02/09/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To frame the problematic debate regarding the political systems in the current global order.	<b>06/09/2021</b>	Middle Class and Democracy	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Barrington More, <i>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World</i> (Beacon Press, 1993). (Chapters 7,8, and 9)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>09/09/2021</b>	Politics in the Islamic World - The Case of Iran	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Kamran Bhokari and Farid Senzai, <i>Political Islam in the Age of Democratization</i> (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>13/09/2021</b>	Politics and Business in East Asia - The Case of South Korea's Cheabol	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Yun-dal Sung and David Murillo, <i>Understanding Korean Capitalism: Chaebols and their Corporate Governance</i> (ESADEgeo Center for Global Economics and Geopolitics, 2013)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>16/09/2021</b>	The Totalitarian State - The Case of North Korea	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Chong-Sik Lee and Robert Scalapino, <i>North Korea: Building of the Monolithic State</i> (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>20/09/2021</b>	Democracy and Ethnic violence in Plural Societies - The Case of Nigeria	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Arendt Liphart, <i>Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration</i> (Yale University Press, 1977)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>23/09/2021</b>	Capitalism Under One Party System - The Case of China	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Keneth Lieberthal, <i>Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform</i> (W. W. Norton & Company, 2003)	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>27/09/2021</b>	Second Midterm	N/A	N/A	Open book exam	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>30/09/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – United States.	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	William Vickrey – On the prevention of Gerrymandering	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>04/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system - Germany	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Omar Handabaka – Challenges German Political System.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>07/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – Switzerland	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	European Programme - Switzerland: Historical Dynamics and Contemporary Realities.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>11/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – Spain	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Enrique Suárez – Íñiguez, Transition towards Democracy.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	





To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>14/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – United Kingdom	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Paul D. Webb, Are British Political Parties in Decline?	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>21/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – Latin America	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Michael Reid, Forgotten Continent: A history of the new Latin America.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>25/10/2021</b>	Political and electoral system – Colombia	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	Diego Younes Moreno, Derecho Constitucional Colombiano.	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	



To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>28/10/2021</b>	General Conclusions	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	N/A	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	
To compare the pros and cons of every political system analyzed in the course, which are paradigmatic to the whole world.	<b>04/11/2021</b>	General Conclusions	Presentations, videos, and constant interaction with the students	N/A	Policy Memos Pop Quizzes	<b>1h 45 mins</b>	