Universidad de Navarra

Compared political systems

Guía docente 2026-27

PRESENTACIÓN

Breve descripción:

- **Titulación**: Economics + Leadership and Governance
- **Módulo/Materia**: Módulo 7. Optativas / Materia 7.2. Optativas específicas
- **ECTS**: 4.5 (112 hours)
- **Curso, semestre**: 2nd year, 2nd semester
- **Carácter**: Compulsory
- **Profesorado**: Juan Ángel Soto Gómez
- **Idioma**: English
- **Aula, Horario**: FEC S1 Aula 10 Edificio Filosofía Eclesiástica (08:00-12:00)
- **Final exam:**
  - Ordinary: **Wednesday, May 13th**
  - Extraordinary: **Saturday, June 27th**

RESULTADOS DE APRENDIZAJE (Competencias)

- Development of logical reasoning in politics.
- Ability to analyse and synthesise issues in comparative politics.
- Acquisition of theoretical and applied knowledge of the basic methods and concepts of comparative political analysis.
- General understanding of how political systems function, given their institutional structures.
- Advanced knowledge of the role of government in the modern state.
- Understanding of a set of core concepts in political theory.
- Ability to conduct political analysis in a rigorous manner.
- Ability to discuss and develop real-world examples.
- **CEOP14.** Knowledge of basic principles of politics and understanding of their relationship with economics in a globalised context.
- **CEOP15.** Knowledge of basic principles of international relations and understanding of their relationship with economics in a globalised context.

PROGRAMA

09/01. Session 1. Introduction to Comparative Politics

- Definition and scope of comparative politics.
- Why compare? Logic, purpose, and limits of comparison.
- Core questions of the discipline.
- Comparative politics in a globalised context.

Competencies: development of logical reasoning in politics; understanding of basic concepts; analytical and synthetic capacity.

16/01. Session 2. Methods and Approaches in Comparative Politics

- Foundations of the comparative method.
- Qualitative and quantitative approaches.
- Case studies, historical analysis, and institutionalism.
- Strengths, limitations, and biases of comparative analysis.

Competencies: acquisition of basic methods; rigorous political analysis; critical thinking.

30/01. Session 3. The Modern State: Origins, Sovereignty, and Legitimacy

- Historical formation of the modern state.
- Sovereignty, legitimacy, and political authority.
- Types of states: unitary, federal, and regional.
- The state, markets, and political economy.

Competencies: political theory; role of government; politics–economics relationship (CEOP14).

04/02. Session 4. Political Regimes: Democracy and Authoritarianism (Room 9 Amigos Building from 17:00 to 19:00)

- Concept and classification of political regimes.
- Liberal, illiberal, and defective democracies.
- Authoritarian and hybrid regimes.
- Measuring and assessing democracy.

Competencies: comparative analysis; conceptual synthesis; analytical rigour.

06/02. Session 5. Systems of Government: Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Models

- Institutional logic of systems of government.
- Separation and fusion of powers.
- Governability, stability, and political accountability.
- Comparative case studies.

Competencies: institutional understanding; applied analysis; real-world examples.

13/02. Session 6. Electoral Systems and Political Representation

- Types of electoral systems.
- Representation, proportionality, and majorities.
- Political and institutional effects of electoral design.
- Social and economic consequences of electoral systems.

Competencies: institutional analysis; politics–economics interaction; empirical application.

20/02. ESSAY 1 (10%)

27/02. Session 7. Party Systems and Political Competition

- Concept and typologies of party systems.
- Fragmentation, polarisation, and electoral volatility.
- Political parties, social cleavages, and representation.
- Crisis of traditional parties and emergence of new actors.

Competencies: comparative reasoning; synthesis; discussion of real-world cases.

06/03. Session 8. Legislative Power in Comparative Perspective

- Structure and functions of legislatures.
- Unicameralism and bicameralism.
- Representation, law-making, and oversight.
- Legislatures and economic policymaking.

Competencies: understanding of institutional functioning; rigorous analysis.

13/03. Session 9. Executive Power and Political Leadership

- Types of executive authority.
- Political leadership and decision-making.
- Executive–legislative relations.
- The executive's role in the modern economy.

Competencies: advanced knowledge of government; institutional analysis.

20/03. ESSAY 2 (15%)

24/04. Review Session

ACTIVIDADES FORMATIVAS

- Class participation (in-person/online)
- Reading assignments
- Essay writing
- Exam

EVALUACIÓN

CONVOCATORIA ORDINARIA

- Grade composition
  - Final Exam: 45%
  - Attendance & participation: 30%
  - Essay 1: 10%
  - Essay 2: 15%
- Theoretical lectures and seminars are imparted and compulsory! The final exam is based on these lectures and additional readings.
- The essay is to be written on a topic chosen by the student with a maximum of 3.500 words. A list of topics is available in the contents section, but alternative topics can be proposed by the student. The essay must follow the guidelines applicable to political science, and employ the analytical tools or concepts explained in class. The ethical standards of a scientific working style apply. Citation style for papers

CONVOCATORIA EXTRAORDINARIA

- Grade composition
  - Final exam: 55% (new)
  - Mid-term Essays (2): 45%

HORARIOS DE ATENCIÓN

Juan Ángel Soto (jasotog@external.unav.es)

- Video-call meeting or in-person meeting via email appointment

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Recommended Bibliography

Universidad de Navarra

Session 1. Introduction to Comparative Politics

- Almond, G. A., Powell, G. B., Strøm, K., & Dalton, R. J. (2019). *Comparative politics today: A world view* (11th ed.). Pearson.
- Caramani, D. (2020). *Comparative politics* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Landman, T. (2013). *Issues and methods in comparative politics: An introduction* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Peters, B. G. (2019). *Comparative politics: Theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Session 2. Methods and Approaches in Comparative Politics

- King, G., Keohane, R. O., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton University Press.
- Lijphart, A. (1971). Comparative politics and the comparative method. *American Political Science Review, 65*(3), 682–693.
- Mahoney, J., & Rueschemeyer, D. (Eds.). (2003). *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sartori, G. (1994). *Comparative constitutional engineering: An inquiry into structures, incentives and outcomes* (2nd ed.). Macmillan.

Session 3. The Modern State: Origins, Sovereignty, and Legitimacy

- Fukuyama, F. (2011). *The origins of political order: From prehuman times to the French Revolution*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Migdal, J. S. (1988). *Strong societies and weak states: State–society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton University Press.
- Tilly, C. (1992). *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990–1992*. Blackwell.
- Weber, M. (2004). *The vocation lectures* (D. Owen & T. Strong, Trans.). Hackett Publishing. (Original work published 1919)

Session 4. Political Regimes: Democracy and Authoritarianism

- Dahl, R. A. (1971). *Polyarchy: Participation and opposition*. Yale University Press.
- Levitsky, S., & Way, L. A. (2010). *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge University Press.
- Linz, J. J., & Stepan, A. (1996). *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Przeworski, A. (1991). *Democracy and the market*. Cambridge University Press.

Session 5. Systems of Government

- Elgie, R. (2011). *Semi-presidentialism: Sub-types and democratic performance*. Oxford University Press.
- Lijphart, A. (2012). *Patterns of democracy: Government forms and performance in thirty-six countries* (2nd ed.). Yale University Press.
- Sartori, G. (1997). *Comparative constitutional engineering* (2nd ed.). Macmillan.
- Shugart, M. S., & Carey, J. M. (1992). *Presidents and assemblies: Constitutional design and electoral dynamics*. Cambridge University Press.

Session 6. Electoral Systems and Political Representation

- Cox, G. W. (1997). *Making votes count: Strategic coordination in the world' s electoral systems*. Cambridge University Press.
- Farrell, D. M. (2011). *Electoral systems: A comparative introduction* (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell, P. (Eds.). (2008). *The politics of electoral systems*. Oxford University Press.
- Norris, P. (2004). *Electoral engineering: Voting rules and political behaviour*. Cambridge University Press.

Session 7. Party Systems and Political Competition

- Dalton, R. J. (2018). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies* (7th ed.). CQ Press.
- Kitschelt, H. (1994). *The transformation of European social democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mair, P. (2013). *Ruling the void: The hollowing of Western democracy*. Verso.
- Sartori, G. (2005). *Parties and party systems: A framework for analysis*. ECPR Press.

Session 8. Legislative Power in Comparative Perspective

- Fish, M. S., & Kroenig, M. (2009). *The handbook of national legislatures: A global survey*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lijphart, A. (1999). *Democracies: Patterns of majoritarian and consensus government in twenty-one countries*. Yale University Press.
- Norton, P. (1990). *Parliaments in Western Europe*. Frank Cass.
- Olson, D. M., & Norton, P. (Eds.). (1996). *The new parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe*. Frank Cass.

Session 9. Executive Power and Political Leadership

- Blondel, J. (1987). *Political leadership: Towards a general analysis*. Sage.
- Elgie, R. (2015). *Studying political leadership: Foundations and controversies*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Neustadt, R. E. (1990). *Presidential power and the modern presidents* (Rev. ed.). Free Press.
- Poguntke, T., & Webb, P. (Eds.). (2005). *The presidentialization of politics* . Oxford University Press.

Session 10. Judicial Power and the Rule of Law

- Dicey, A. V. (1982). *Introduction to the study of the law of the constitution* (10th ed.). Macmillan. (Original work published 1885)
- Ginsburg, T. (2003). *Judicial review in new democracies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hirschl, R. (2004). *Towards juristocracy: The origins and consequences of the new constitutionalism*. Harvard University Press.
- Møller, J., & Skaaning, S.-E. (2014). *The rule of law: Definitions, measures, patterns and causes*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Session 11. Public Policy, Welfare States, and Political Economy

- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Polity Press.

- Hall, P. A., & Soskice, D. (Eds.). (2001). *Varieties of capitalism: The institutional foundations of comparative advantage*. Oxford University Press.
- Pierson, P. (2001). *The new politics of the welfare state*. Oxford University Press.
- Schmidt, V. A. (2002). *The futures of European capitalism*. Oxford University Press.

Session 12. Globalisation, Governance, and International Relations

- Held, D., McGrew, A., Goldblatt, D., & Perraton, J. (1999). *Global transformations: Politics, economics and culture*. Polity Press.
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (2012). *Power and interdependence* (4th ed.). Longman.
- Krasner, S. D. (1999). *Sovereignty: Organised hypocrisy*. Princeton University Press.
- Moravcsik, A. (1998). *The choice for Europe: Social purpose and state power from Messina to Maastricht*. Cornell University Press.