



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Comparative Politics: Institutions and Processes - 56106*

*Last update 15-03-2025*

*HU Credits:* 2

*Degree/Cycle:* 1st degree (Bachelor)

*Responsible Department:* Political Science

*Academic year:* 0

*Semester:* 2nd Semester

*Teaching Languages:* Hebrew

*Campus:* Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator:* Dr. Odelia Oshri

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*Coordinator Office Hours:* Wednesday 12:30-13:30, by appointment

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Teaching Staff:

Dr. Odelia Oshri

Course/Module description:

Comparative politics, one of the core fields in political science, focuses on analyzing and researching political phenomena as they occur in different political systems throughout the world. The analysis of comparative politics is based on the assumption that gathering information about different political systems and comparing between them widens our scope and deepens our understanding and ability, as citizens as well as researchers, regarding political phenomena, and increases our ability to analyze, explain, and sometimes predict how processes will develop. The most common questions asked by researchers of comparative politics include, among others: why are some states more democratic than others? What is the connection between the quality of democracy and a state's economic development? What are the different interests between a state and a nation? Is the internet accelerating the adoption of direct democracy? What are the processes that lead to political revolutions? What are the variables that determine the effectiveness of governments? Unlike the field of international relations, which focuses on dynamics between states, the field of comparative politics focuses on internal state factors and processes, recognizing that political processes that occur on a national and international level (such as colonialism, globalization, etc.) also influence internal state politics.

Course/Module aims:

This course is one of two introductory courses to the fields of comparative politics. The aims are to develop a knowledge of basic concepts on the state-level field of politics; to introduce the students to main theoretical themes in the field of comparative politics; to introduce and characterize the types of modern political regimes; to educate towards comparative thinking and grant basic research tools scholars use in this field. During the course there will be a comparative analysis of regimes and political institutions (the state, democracy, authoritarian regimes, constitutions), and processes of democratic withdrawal. In addition, several concepts related to political organizations (such as political parties and interest groups) will be examined, and competition/cooperation between them in different social institutional settings, laying the foundation for what will be analyzed in more detail in the advanced "Comparative Israeli Politics" course.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- \* Define basic concepts in comparative politics.
- \* Identify the various theories and methods that are used in comparative research.
- \* Distinguish between the different types of regimes and list their main

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characteristics.

- \* *Identify the main political institutions and evaluate their functions.*
- \* *Define key characteristics of the different political cultures and the ways they developed.*
- \* *Interpret, at a basic level, different patterns of political behavior.*

Attendance requirements(%):

*University regulations apply*

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lectures*

Course/Module Content:

- 1. Key Concepts in the Study of Politics*
- 2. Theoretical Approaches*
- 3. Comparison Strategies*
- 4. The State*
- 5. Democracy*
- 6. Authoritarian Regimes*
- 7. Constitutions and the Legal Framework*
- 8. Political Parties and Election*
- 9. Public Policy*

Required Reading:

*Hague, Rod, Martin Harrop  
and John McCormick. Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction, 11th  
edition. London: Palgrave, 2019  
Selected chapters*

Additional Reading Material:

*In the syllabus*

Grading Scheme:

Additional information: