

# **SOC340H1F COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY**

**University of Toronto, St. George Campus**

**Fall 2024**

Time: Tuesday 10:10 am–12 pm & 12–1 pm

Room: Check ACORN

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Office hours: TBA

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Office hours: By appointment

## ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

This course introduces students to comparative political sociology, one of major theoretical fields in sociological inquiry that probes the nexus between state and society. The focus of this class is placed on understanding the evolution of modern states, the social origins of political regimes, the varieties of capitalist and welfare states, and the agency of social classes in the making of state-market relations. The class will critically engage with both classical and contemporary theories of political sociology as tools to analyze the divergent trajectories and configurations of state institutions, capitalist systems, and social relations. This course is intended to offer a comparative understanding of political sociology by examining historically and regionally diverse cases that provide novel and critical insights into the forces that shape sociopolitical structures.

***COURSE OBJECTIVES:*** Students are expected to achieve the following

- (1) To understand the basic concepts and debates in political sociology by critically engaging with readings, lectures, class discussions, and tutorials
- (2) To gain knowledge on the historical, social, and economic sources that make contemporary state institutions and capitalist economies
- (3) To appreciate a comparative approach to political sociology by recognizing various trajectories and diverse sociopolitical outcomes
- (4) To demonstrate and articulate students' understanding of course materials in oral and written assignments.

## ***PREREQUISITE***

To enroll in this course, students must have completed SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 plus two (1.0 FCE) of SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1. Students without the fulfillment of this pre-requisite will be removed from this class at any time discovered and without notice.

## ***COURSE MATERIALS***

There is no required textbook. All readings are available on Quercus. Important announcements, course materials, and any additional learning aids will be posted here, so please check the website regularly.

## ***GRADING AND EVALUATION***

### **1. Attendance and discussion participation: 10%**

Regular attendance is a must for this class. Students who attend 10 classes (the first class and the midterm test don't count) will receive full 10 points.

### **2. Weekly tutorials: 20%**

Most tutorials will be organized into three parts. Part 1 will involve group discussion to reinforce the concepts from the readings and lecture. Part 2 will focus on small group activities specifically on advancing the progress of students' case studies. In Part 3, students will receive time to write a short reflection which will be the basis for the students' tutorial grade. As this assignment will be done during tutorial time, it should not add significantly to students' workload. It is meant to both gauge participation in tutorials and to help students work consistently on their case studies throughout the term.

***Tutorial reflection paragraphs:*** At the end of each tutorial, students will be asked to write a short reflection (about one paragraph) that discusses how a concept or framework (of the student's choice) from the week's readings could be used in the case study project or, alternatively, a reflection on why the student would not utilize a concept or framework discussed. This exercise aims to help students develop an in-depth understanding of the concepts in the course material, while advancing progress on the case study project. This short in-tutorial assignment would be uploaded to Quercus.

***Tutorial Assessment: 10 tutorials x 2 points = 20 points***

***Tutorial Grading Point Breakdown:***

2: A clear and concise reflection paragraph that demonstrates a deep engagement with the course material

1.5: A reflection that demonstrates sufficient engagement with the course material

1: Submission needs improvement

0: Missing

***Proposed Plan for SOC340 Tutorials (To be added by the TA)***

***TA Office Hours***

Ahead of Case Study Outline

Ahead of Mid-term/After Outline

After Mid-term/Ahead of Final Case Study

Ahead of Final Case Study

Ahead of Final Case Study

**3. Mid-term test: 30% October 22**

There will be a mid-term test to assess students' understanding of the key concepts and arguments discussed in lectures and assigned readings. The test will consist of 4 short questions to be answered in about 200-300 words for each (4 x 5 = 20 point) and one essay question to be answered in about 700-800 words (1 x 10 = 10 point) (no multiple choice).

**4. Country study paper: 40% (10% for the outline + 30% for the paper)**

Students choose **a country** from the list below and write a case study paper focusing on **one of suggested themes**.

***Suggested countries:*** Brazil, Germany, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, and Spain

***Suggested themes:***

(1) Social actors and the state: Who are the dominant actors (in terms of class, race, and gender) in the country's politics? Who forms the opposition? What were the significant historical events or contexts (such as colonialism, war, economic crisis, religion, and others) that shaped such power relations? How would you describe the current state of the political regime within the spectrum of democracy and authoritarianism? In your discussion, include the two concepts or theoretical approaches from the readings and lectures that are most insightful in addressing these questions. Provide some indicators, empirical evidence, and historical data to substantiate your discussion.

(2) The relationship between the state and the market: What are the key economic sectors and industries? How would you describe the relationship between the government and the economy

within the spectrum of laissez-faire and state control (i.e., the extent of political intervention in the market)? What does the country's welfare state (selective or universal, minimal or generous) and the level of inequality look like? In your discussion, include the two concepts or theoretical approaches from the readings and lectures that are most insightful in addressing these questions. Provide some indicators, empirical evidence, and historical data to substantiate your discussion.

(3) Social actors and political change: Are there examples in which collective actors mobilized to bring about a drastic sociopolitical change in the last five decades (between the 1970s and the 2020s)? Who were the central actors and what was the main agenda and goals? Which method of collective action did they use? Were they successful in achieving their goals? Who was the key opponent to this mobilization? In your discussion, include the two concepts or theoretical approaches from the readings and lectures that are most insightful in addressing these questions. Provide some indicators, empirical evidence, and historical data to substantiate your discussion.

***Country study paper development:***

(1) After choosing your country and the focused theme, write up **an outline** (1-2 pages or about 700 words) of your paper (**10%**). Submit the outline to Quercus by **10 am on October 8**. The teaching assistant will mark and return the outline to students with comments in about ten days. Students are expected to reflect these comments in the subsequent development of the paper.

(2) Do more research and develop the paper. The final paper should be submitted to Quercus by **5 pm on December 3. Word count: 2500 (minimum)-3000 (maximum) words (30%)**

The paper will be evaluated by the following criteria.

- A. Fully addressing the basic questions posed for each theme
- B. Discussing the country case in relation to class materials (by adopting analytical concepts or theoretical approaches, engaging in implied comparisons with cases discussed in class, or critiquing existing frameworks)
- C. Showing evidence of substantial independent research on the subject (reference at least 10 academic sources -books, book chapters, and journal articles- outside the class readings)
- D. Providing reasoned arguments and writing clearly and succinctly.

***Recommended format:*** All written assignments should be within the word/page limit set for each assignment, excluding tables, figures, and bibliography. Font 12 and double-spacing recommended. Students may use a reference style of their choice but need to use it consistently. Full citations (in-text and bibliography) of all the sources used in the writings should be provided in appropriate formats.

### **Other matters related to grading and evaluation**

*Absence and late/missed assignments policy:* Students who miss a paper deadline or a test will receive a mark of zero for that paper or test unless the reason is a circumstance beyond their control. Within three days of missing a paper deadline or test, students must send the instructor a request for consideration. Students must document their request with one of the following:

- Absence declaration via ACORN
- U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form
- College Registrar's letter (e.g., in case of personal/family crisis or emergency)
- Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services

*Late submissions:* Assignments that fail to meet the deadlines will result in losing one point for every 24-hour tardiness from the original due date.

*Incomplete:* No incomplete will be granted in this course unless the student provides one of the above.

#### ***Grade scale:***

A+: Above 90	B+: 77-79	C+: 67-69	D+: 57-59
A: 85-89	B: 73-76	C: 63-66	D: 53-56
A-: 80-84	B-: 70-72	C-: 60-62	D-: 50-52

*Writing skills:* The quality of writing will greatly impact the grade. Writing skills (clarity, logic, parsimony, organization) are probably the most important skills students need to develop in university. Students in need of improving their writing skills can be assisted by various services and workshops offered by the Academic Success Centre, the Career Centre, and U of T Libraries. Please visit <https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>

*Accessibility needs:* Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if students have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach the professor and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978-8060 or visit: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

*Contacting the professor:* If students feel overwhelmed by the course materials or encounter other difficulties that may affect their performance in class, they should immediately contact the professor and seek consultation EARLY in the semester. I will be happy to offer any additional guidance that might be needed for each student.

## ***ACADEMIC HONESTY and CLASS ETHICS***

### **Academic integrity/Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that students earn will be valued as a true indication of their individual academic achievement. Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

***In papers and assignments:*** Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement; Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks; Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor; Making up sources or facts; Including references to sources that you did not use; Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (including working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work; having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing"); Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

***On tests and exams:*** Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone; Looking at someone else's answers; Letting someone else look at your answers; Misrepresenting your identity; Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the Code. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on the student's transcript. If students have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from the professor, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website. If students are experiencing personal challenges that may impact their academic work, please inform the professor or seek the advice of the college registrar.

***Turnitin:*** Sometimes, students will be required to submit their assignments to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

For some of your assignments, we will be using the software Turnitin. It uses text matching technology as a method to uphold the University's high academic integrity standards to detect any potential plagiarism. Turnitin is integrated into Quercus. For the assignments set up to use Turnitin, the software will review your paper when you upload it to Quercus. To learn more about Turnitin's privacy policy please review its Privacy Policy.

Assignments not submitted through Turnitin will receive a grade of zero (0 %) unless a student also provides, along with their paper, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is theirs.

### **Taping, recording, photographing lectures**

Lectures and course materials prepared by the professor are the professor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lecture or other course material are required to ask the professor's explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted. This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Blackboard materials, etc. Once obtained, such permission is only for that individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish the professor's notes to a website or sell them in other forms without formal permission.

## ***COURSE SCHEDULE***

### **Week 1. September 3: Introduction and overview**

#### **Week 2. September 10. Political sociology and the study of state**

Michael Mann, "A theory of the modern state" in *The Sources of Social Power* Vol. III (Cambridge University Press 1993): 44-91 (Read pages 44-63)

Elissa Berwick and Fotini Christia, "State capacity redux," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21 (2018): 71-91 (Read pages 71-82)

#### **Week 3. September 17. Patriarchy and racial capitalism**

Sherry Ortner, "Patriarchy," *Feminist Anthropology* 3-2 (2022): 307-314

Jodi Melamed, "Racial capitalism," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1-1 (2015): 76-85

#### **Week 4. September 24. Political regimes and social actors**

Ruth Collier, Introduction in *Paths towards Democracy* (Cambridge University Press 1999): 1-32

Kellee Tsai, Chapters 1-2 in *Capitalism without Democracy* (Cornell University Press 2007): 1-43

#### **Week 5. October 1. Between the market and the state**

Peter Evans, "The developmental state" in *The End of the Developmental State?* Edited by Michelle Williams (Routledge 2014): 220-240

David Harvey, "The neoliberal state" in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford University Press 2005): 64-86

#### **Week 6. October 8. Varieties of welfare states**

T. H. Marshall "Citizenship and social class" reprint in *Inequality and Society* (W.W. Norton and Co. 2009): 148-154

Gosta Esping-Andersen, Introduction and Chapter 1 in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton University Press 1990): 1-34

**\*Case study paper outline due**

**Week 7. October 15. Social cleavages and political parties**

Russell Dalton, "Political cleavages and political parties" in *Political Realignment* (Oxford University Press 2018): 109-132

**Week 8. October 22. Midterm**

**October 29. Reading week: No class**

**Week 9. November 5. Social movements and political change**

D. Della Porta and M. Diani, "The study of social movements" in *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Blackwell 2006): 1-29

Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, Chapter 7 in *Contentious Politics* (Oxford University Press 2015): 145-167

**Week 10. November 12. Social actors and intersectionality**

Karen Brodtkin Sacks, "Toward a unified theory of class, race, and gender" *American Ethnologist* (1989): 534-550

Joan Acker, "Inequality regimes," *Gender and Society* 20-4 (2006): 441-464

**Week 11. November 19. Inequality and precarity**

John Krinsky, "Constructing workers," *Qualitative Sociology* 30 (2002): 343-360

Guy Standing, Introduction in *The Precariat* (Bloomsbury 2011): 1-47

**Week 12. November 26. Last class**

**December 3: Case study papers due**