

Title: **A&S Spring 2018 Standard Evaluation**

Dates: **04/23/2018 - 05/03/2018**

Course: **POLSV1501_001_2018_1/INTRO TO COMPARATIVE POLIT** Responses: **60/129 - 46.51%**

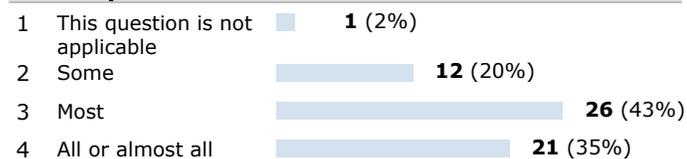
Instructors: **John D. Huber**

Number of Participants: **129**

Enrollment of All Students: **129**

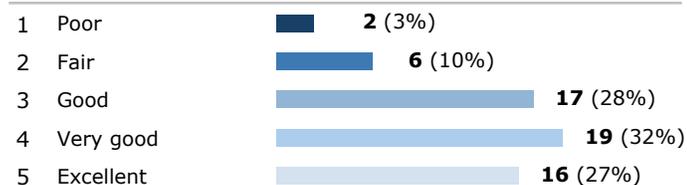
Graph Course Questions

1 What percentage of the work (including reading) assigned for this course did you complete on schedule? N=60



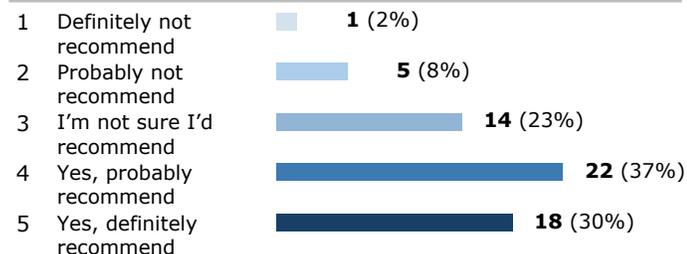
Median **3** Interpolated Median **3.15** Mean **3.12** Std Dev **0.78**

2 What is your overall assessment of the course? N=60



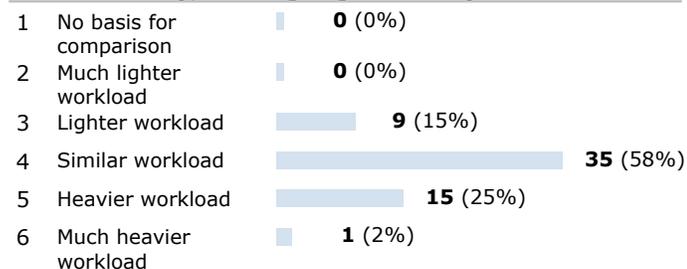
Median **4** Interpolated Median **3.76** Mean **3.68** Std Dev **1.08**

3 Would you recommend this course to another student? N=60



Median **4** Interpolated Median **3.95** Mean **3.85** Std Dev **1.01**

4 How does the workload in this course compare to Columbia courses with a similar structure (e.g. a lecture, seminar, laboratory, or language course)? N=60



Median **4** Interpolated Median **4.10** Mean **4.13** Std Dev **0.68**

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Comments Course Questions

Q1 What did you learn - in terms of knowledge, skills, or perspectives - in this course?

- I learned about some of the most significant elements of the state, how those elements can differ across countries, and how this affects various outcomes like democratic stability and level of redistribution.
- I learned more about different political systems, and how they may/may not matter for other social or political factors.
- Very little. We have a very vague understanding of what kind of government is best for a country, with no real way of figuring it out.
- Different forms of government and how to examine them
- I learned a lot about the different government systems, and a lot about countries around the world.
- I learned a lot of the basic underpinnings of comparative politics.
- I learned an overview of comparative politics that covered many essential background topics, such as different types of government and electoral systems, federalism and decentralization, ethnic and gender cleavages in politics, etc.
- Differences between SMD and PR electoral systems, closed and open list ballots, class and ethnic voting.
- Different governmental systems, the different kinds of political systems, and the pros/cons of each. Methods for studying different countries and how to be cautious.
- Introductory looks into pros and cons of different political systems and how different political scientists think about the problems facing modern political systems.
- The institutions, etc. that are used in crafting different types of governments and states
- Institutions and their political outcomes, electoral systems, voter choice, the theory behind them, and the perspectives of various political scientists on each of these topics. Also touched on some statistical methods (like regression analysis) when it comes to measuring these outcomes and the inherent difficulties in measuring them too.
- a lot of how countries vary in electoral systems, governance, and how that affects relations between them
- How to break down a country's its electoral and government systems, being able to compare them to other countries to see which systems were working the best.
- Democracy, Autocracy, and Federalism

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- I learned a lot to include regime types, characteristics, stability - measurements of democracy and how we gauge the viability of elections - how elections are composed and implemented in SMDP and PR systems, various political theories relating to political actors and political systems, etc.
- politics
- Great course. Learned tons about how to compare countries, political systems, look at data, and develop theories about best ways to improve democracies.
- Very big and wide understanding of politics. I expected to learn less about theory, but I'm glad I did as this will serve as a foundation for later courses.
- I learned about the methods that go into the field of comparative politics, how it is very much based on extrapolating theories out of data - and that there is nearly always a way to refute these theories depending on the data and methods of analysis.
- Government structures of different countries.
- I learned about individual countries' histories, gender/race/ethnic politics, different types of governments, etc.
- I gained a greater understanding of the laying foundation of comparative politics.
- I learnt about democratic institutions and electoral laws.
- a lot of fundamental definitions from a political science approach
- How electoral institutions affect different elements of society by comparing governments and different countries
- About political systems, its institutions, and outcomes based on institutional engineering
- Lots about the basic fundamentals of different forms of government regimes, elections, and government structures.
- A lot about how politics works.
- I learned about states, and different government types. Specifically, I learned more about theories on democracy, and how democracy differs around the world.
- I learned a lot in this course -- all of the basic arguments of the topics provided were pretty comprehensive and relevant to today's politics.

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Comments Course Questions

- I gained a good background in the standard theories and techniques common to the comparative politics subfield. It was clearly a survey course, but it gave me some tools and background information to use in the future.
- I learned the basic skills needed to understand comparative politics.
- basic concepts of comparative politics
- covered democracy and dictatorship, presidential and parliamentary systems, majoritarian and proportional representation systems, and federal and unitary systems
- We learned about the mechanics and development of different forms of government and electoral systems.
- I learned about the political institutions and electoral systems as they vary across different countries. We learned about what separates democracies from autocracies, what situations make a democracy more likely to occur, and what environments and institutions are more conducive to democratic stability.
- I learned to think about forms of government in very critical ways.
- regime types, a bit of information about various countries, democracy types, federalism, electoral laws..
- I learned more about various government systems in different countries around the world.
- I learned a lot about how governments are forms and what types of systems of Democracy have worked or not worked in certain countries. I have come to understand how data can show the results of how things really work. The professor was very assertive and detailed about the subjects of government.
- Comparative Politics
- Comparative politics
- some stuff about countries and government
- I learned some themes about comparative politics.
- canvassing of comparative politics theories and frameworks

Q2 What is your overall assessment of the course? What are its strengths? In what ways might it be improved? In answering this question, you might address the value of readings and assignments, the structure of the course (including the relationship of sections to lectures), the contribution of the course to your knowledge of the subject matter and to the development of your analytical and reasoning skills, etc. We encourage you to use specific examples where possible.

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Comments Course Questions

- I loved professor Huber, although I think he should reduce some of the "activities" in the class, and just explain what he has to explain without trying to be entertaining, because most of the time it was just annoying to stand up, create a political party, and it was not so useful in terms of knowledge.
- This class was wonderful and I thoroughly enjoyed. The course covered a lot of material but it was all presented in an engaging and interesting way and I feel that I have a much better grasp on the field of political science from this class. I was able to think more about systems, apply my reasoning, and understand the way systems function in different countries.
- Really awesome course, Huber made the course interesting by bringing in lots of direct examples of countries.
- I really enjoyed the TA sessions; I think I probably took the most out of recitation and the readings.
- Good
- the professor is insanely disorganized and the exams are bizarrely structured but it was interesting
- The information provided in this course was interesting - however, there were a lot of different topics and ideas, to the point where it was hard to synthesize it all. Also, the exam format did not reflect our understanding of the information -- given the amount of information we had to memorize for each test, it was difficult to remember it all and write about it under the time requirement.
- I believe that it could have been organized better however after the extensive readings you come to understand the concepts behind what the professor is addressing
- Its strengths - it is a very interesting topic and I did learn quite alot, but it felt incredibly disorganized and therefore was hard to follow. I did not get that much out of lecture and most of the time, I left confused. It was only in section (where I had an amazing TA) that things were clarified and solidified in my mind
- This is a great survey course that establishes solid foundations for a political science student.
- The exams are designed for students to actually remember the info, as it is very applicable. The only improvement is that the content can be quite disorganized at times, so it becomes hard to put together the larger picture.
- I thought it was fine. Standard introductory course. I liked that the slides were posted. The TA's were also helpful.
- It was unclear what content we should focus on for studying, and would therefore be tested on. Some of the readings were not important to the class. I did find the discussion sections to be very helpful.

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Comments Course Questions

- one of my favorite courses of the year
- interesting, short readings (although there are 4-7 per week)
- clear, organized structure (very useful "stuff to know" slides at the end of each lecture)
- section was useful to clarify questions and understand arguments
- straightforward midterms
- I really appreciated that we had access to the slides to use as a tool to study. With the examines though, I would study the 'Stuff to Know' slides, but a few times was thrown questions that were very specific. I found also some of the wording of some of the multiple choice questions to not be clear. Reflecting on the class now, I am glad I took it, but at times during the course I wasn't sure about it.
- Although it is a very broad course, it's still interesting because it focuses a lot on the specific history of certain countries
- good connection between lecture and readings, good consistency in themes and topics introduced, course is coherent
- It was a very good course. The material was very interesting but I feel like the assigned readings were a lot and they were not covered in the lectures in depth.
- The course as designed focused the vast majority of its time on democracy, both the theory and the practice in the form of electoral laws, etc. This was worthwhile, but the absence of in-depth discussion of non-democratic forms of government and especially the implication of "hybrid democracies" or "electoral autocracies" seemed to be a glaring omission, particularly since Western democracies are no longer the be-all and end-all of contemporary global dynamics, if they ever were. Its subject matter just didn't seem quite as comprehensive as it could have been. The readings seemed well chosen, generally, although the tests could have been more well-designed, especially at first. It was not always clear what answer a question was looking for. Also, while simulations are fun and definitely memorable, they take up a great deal of valuable class time and seem inefficient.
- I thought John Huber did a great job explaining the most important aspects of what were sometimes confusing readings.
- I thought this was a really good course. Not too much reading (and it was all good/helpful reading). Professor Huber is a good lecturer and the topics were very relevant and not too abstract.
- It was good course to learn about fundamental concepts of politics
- Very disorganized in lecture but i very much benefited from having a fantastic TA. I did all the readings which really helped me understand what was going on in the course. I struggled with the exams as they were very unpredictable in what they assessed (some math or problem solving components).

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Comments Course Questions

- This was my first political science class and I really enjoyed it. The assignments and readings were all very relevant and guided the students towards gaining important knowledge. Professor Huber is great, would definitely recommend him to any other student.
- Strong course, although it would be nice to talk about even more political systems around the world.
- The lectures were ok at best. They seemed thrown together at the last minute or generally ill-prepared. Honestly, the TAs saved this course. I make a point to go to all of my classes, but this was the first one I have taken at Columbia that has made me regret doing so.
- learned a lot in this class-was formatted in a way that incited curiosity (especially with TA presentations which were great case studies) ..too much reading and went over in class so not necessary to do the reading. overall great course would recommend to anyone interested in politics because i learned a lot
- discussion is good. volume of articles is maybe too high?
- Overall it was a good course. I learned a lot, the lectures were helpful and the professor had good lecture slides. The readings were long at times, but they were very doable.
- I really enjoyed the course content, but the organization of the syllabus wasn't great and the lectures themselves could definitely have been a little more organized, too.
- Amazing course. Huber was an amazing teacher and the TAs really cared. Learned tons!!!
- The TA's presentations were very interesting. Some of the readings seemed supplementary and should be cut out to the bare minimum we need to know.
- I could tell Professor Huber and my TA genuinely cared about whether or not we truly understood the material. He wasn't just spitting facts at us. He included some hands-on activities in class (like surveys, an election simulation) to further our understanding. The readings were always very relevant to what we were learning in class and in section.
- The course covers a lot and attempts to teaches a lot. However, there are some faults in that it does not seem to be completely fit for an intro course in terms of the breadth and scope of some of the materials and the speed of some of the lectures. Moreover, the exams, while improved throughout the course, were not organized enough and the TA's didn't know what exactly we should focus on for them.
I did think that by the end of the course there was a fairly decent arc of the course to follow and incorporate earlier topics into the most recent ones
- Need better TAs.

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Comments Course Questions

- I think Huber is still figuring out how much of lecture is going to interactive versus on the material we've read, but its really hard to be interactive with such a large class. I think next time maybe multiple TAs can guide us while doing those exercises. Also, I know the nature of the class leaves more answers than questions, but the "Stuff to know" could be phrased more concretely.
- This class was an interesting introduction to a field of politics that I was previously very unfamiliar with. There is a large amount of content for every midterm, which can be stressful when studying, but the midterms themselves were fair.
- Unorganized lectures, but interesting materials. Readings were reasonable. I wish that there was less audience participation and spurious data collection, and more outlining facts and what we need to know. Too many exams. The first exam was incredibly unreasonable and many of the questions had little to do with what we focused on in lecture. The second and third were pretty reasonable, but adding an additional research paper a week after the last exam is kind of evil.
- Course was poorly structured, readings, lectures, exams, and discussion sections were only nominally connected. Required more quantitative skills than were expected, but also more theoretical background than was presented.
- I thought the course was very solid, and this is coming from someone who is a senior and who has taken many introductory courses. I thought the material was informative - my political economy class would have been much easier had I taken this before, for example. I thought the course was strong in that it provided a lot of material, but did so in a way that seemed connected and built off of previously learned material. I think the course could be improved by reducing the number of reading. I am someone who did every single one of the readings, and I felt like many were not necessarily covered in class or lecture, which made me feel like the reading was pointless at times. If there was less reading that was covered more specifically, I think students would be more inclined to do it and focus significantly on it.
- Strength: gained a greater understanding of the laying foundation of comparative politics.
- The course was excellent and I would recommend it. It places other political systems in a context that makes them easier to understand. Strengths are that it was fun and interesting. Probably one weakness was that the exams seemed to be packed sand time was very limited when it came to answering questions. I prefer more comprehensive questions that give you more overall time to answer.

Q3 Please qualify your recommendations if you wish:

- None.
- The readings were excessively dense, and often the lectures were difficult to follow.

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Comments Course Questions

- \$1,750x4=\$7,000 <--this class was not worth that.
 - none
 - This class is a very important introductory class that introduces the basic structure of comparative politics and introduces students to the broad topics that political scientists deal with. I learned a great deal and I would recommend that everyone take this course if they are interested in political science.
 - If I was a first year in this class, I probably would not have chosen to be a polisci major
 - more academic activities
 - I enjoyed 2/3 of the course, but I wish the professor had explained SMD and PR systems a little more clearly.
 - I benefitted from what i learned but the structure of the lecture was a turn off. Very disorganized and difficult to follow. I didn't learn in class, but instead took time outside of class to review the readings an the lecture slides.
 - Great course of understanding of how politics work in the US and other countries
 - Was good
 - Take John Huber
 - Would recommend to anyone looking for an introductory political science course
 - Political science majors often have to take this course, so I don't know how relevant my recommendation or lack thereof would be. That being said, I didn't really like this course. I would not recommend it to a non political science major looking to learn more about politics.
 - I did not really like the subject area
 - Maybe it is just the professor that was the problem? The topic still sounds interesting, I wish I had learned more of it.
 - Amazing intro to polisci course. Fair, interesting and engaging.
 - Going to lecture was not really helpful, it was more helpful for me to read the slides on my own than get confused by the way Professor Huber talked about it/encouraged participation. Once I understood the material, it was interesting.
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Comments Course Questions

Q4 How many hours a week did you devote to this course? (Note: Please include all time spent on this class including class time, discussion sections, readings, assignments, studying, etc.)

- 10

- 8

- 15 hours

- 4

- 4-5

- 6 hours on any given week, about 10 if it was an exam week

- 5

- 8 hours

- 2 hours per class hours

- 10 hours

- 8

- 10

- 6-8

- 10

- ~8

- 10-15

- Probably around 3-4 hours.

- 7

- 20

- 4

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Comments Course Questions

- 7
- 4-4.5
- 6 to 12
- 5
- 10
- 5-6 (except weeks we had exams or when we had to give a presentation in class)
- 2.5 in class, 1 in section, about another 2 a week for readings, 4-5 hours to study for each exam
- 2 to 6 hours on reading
- 4 to 6 hours studying for each midterm (there are three)
- 6 to 8 hours on final paper
- 1 hour in discussion
- 3 hours in class
- 8 hours
- 5
- 8 hours
- 7
- 4+
- 5
- 1-5 hours
- 7.5 (2.5 hours of class, 1 hour of recitation, 4 hours worth of reading)... weeks with midterms were significantly more
- 3-6
- 7

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Comments Course Questions

- 3 hr

- Depends on the week- spend a lot more time around the exams, other than that not much.

- Class time: 2.5 hrs, readings/studying: 10+

- 7

- 2.5 hours in class, 1 hour a week doing readings, 1 hour discussion section, 7-8 hours writing research paper, 8-9 hours for each exam

- 10

- 5

- 4

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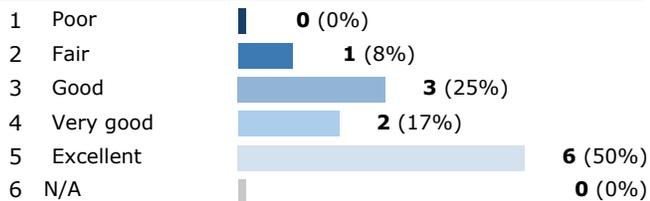
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TA Graph Report for: **Giovanna Maria Invernizzi**

1 What is your overall assessment of the effectiveness of the teaching assistant? N=12



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TA Comments Report for: **Giovanna Maria Invernizzi**

Q1 What are the strengths and weaknesses of your teaching assistant (discussion section leader, lab section leader, grader, or other assistant) as an instructor, and how might his or her teaching be improved?

- She was very great teacher because she encouraged students to learn and explore more about topics always
 - I thought Giovanna was a fabulous TA. Her discussion sections were organized very well, and were helpful. I think that she challenged us to think about the reading in a stronger way. She was also extremely nice and flexible.
 - Organizing the section to include more explanation of what is happening in lecture would be helpful. Feedback the was offered was always good, though, and questions were always answered thoroughly.
 - she's great!
 - too much focus on the readings, not enough time to ask questions for exams
 - She was very nice and approachable, so it was easy to ask her questions about the lectures/readings/assignments. Her format of the discussion sections (individual presentations on the readings) made it so that the readings were carefully analyzed, more so than in lecture, which deepened my understanding of the topics. Truly a wonderful discussion section overall.
 - Giovanna had us take turns summarizing and presenting information from the readings, which was a very effective strategy for keeping us engaged. She also made sure to explain anything that was unclear or unmentioned. She clearly cares about the class and the students.
 - She is very helpful inside and outside the class, always available to answer your questions and very clear when it comes to an explanation. I liked to work with her.
 - She had us do presentations which weren't very helpful in retaining the information.
 - Really fantastic TA! Very kind and intelligent. Clearly passionate about what she is teaching. Always came to section very well prepared and encouraged thought-provoking discussions very early in the morning (!)
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-