

**SOC340H1S**  
**Comparative Political Sociology**  
**University of Toronto**  
**Class hours: Mondays, 13:10 – 16:00**  
**Location:**

**Instructor:** Sébastien Parker

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### **Statement of Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory. [*Council of Aboriginal Initiatives, 2014*]

### **Course Description**

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The study of comparative (historical and cross-national) variation in outcomes that are the subject of research by political sociologists. This is a program-only course and is restricted to sociology majors and specialists.

**Prerequisites:** SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 & 1.0 FCE from SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1

### **Learning Objectives**

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There are 5 learning objectives in this course:

- 1) To critically read, analyze and write about comparative political sociology
  - 2) To understand and explain key ideas in comparative political sociological research
  - 3) To draw connections between major findings and concepts
  - 4) To apply insight from research in political sociology to pursue independent research on a self-chosen topic
  - 5) To engage in ongoing discussions on contemporary issues related to political sociology
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## Evaluative Components

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Type	Due Dates	Weight
Participation	Ongoing	25%
First test	February 12	25%
Research paper	March 11	25%
Second test	April 1	25%

## Grading Descriptions

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### Participation (20% + 5% = 25%)

Excluding the weeks where tests are due, there are 10 sessions throughout the term. Each session features in-class participatory activities, including reacting to lecture content, creating notes and questions for the tests, and engaging with material for the research paper. Each session contributes 2% to the final grade, marked on a satisfactory/non-satisfactory basis, amounting to 20% in total.

Additionally, there will be an in-class discussion and debate on March 25th, worth 5% of the final grade. Students will be divided into groups and assigned one of the three readings to discuss and debate. This activity will also be marked on a satisfactory/non-satisfactory basis.

### Take-home tests (25% x 2 = 50%)

Tests are significant components of the course, each constituting 25% of the final grade. They are non-cumulative, with Test 2 covering only the material from Part 2. For each test, students must complete one essay-type question, valued at 10 points, and three short-answer questions, each worth 5 points, totaling 25 points. These tests are take-home, allowing students a 48-hour period to complete them once released. First test will be due on February 12<sup>th</sup>, while the second test will be due on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Research paper (25%)

In addition to the sessions and tests, students will undertake a research paper, ranging from 5 to 6 pages, single-spaced. This paper demands a comparative analysis of two cases, which can be contemporary or historical, from similar or varying regions, ensuring they are comparable in scale (e.g., movements, cities, states, or countries). The central aim is to present a compelling argument, underpinned by a theoretical framework, offering insights through the comparative empirical examination of the cases. More detailed guidelines for the research paper will be available on Quercus and expounded upon during lectures.

## Late and Missed Test Policies

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### Handing in assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically via Quercus. The instructor and TA will not accept electronic copies of assignments via email.

**Missed tests and assignments**

If a student misses a test or submit assignments later for medical reasons, the student must contact me (not the TA) within 1 day of the missed exam or assignment and also declare their absence on ACORN. For other reasons, such as family emergencies or personal reasons, they must have the college registrar email me.

**Accessibility**

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

**Student Responsibilities and Expectations**

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**Email Policy**

I will respond to your email within two business days (48 hours, except weekends and holidays). In an email exchange, you must use your official University of Toronto email. Please also include the course code (e.g., SOC340) in the subject line.

In general, please treat emails as you would any other professional communication. You should be respectful in the way you address the instructor and the TA. Email is most suitable for questions that are clear, concise, and easily answerable. If you need help on course material, I strongly encourage you to attend office hours or make an appointment. For all general inquiries, please refer to the course syllabus.

**Help from your Teaching Assistant**

Your T.A. will hold scheduled office hours and respond to your emails. Please be judicious in your use of email. Use it only for questions that are brief and specific. Before sending a question by email, be sure to check the course outline to see if an answer is already available. Emails should not be seen as an alternative to doing the assigned reading or attending lectures. Expect to receive a response from your T.A. within two working days. For more in-depth discussions, take advantage of your T.A.'s office hours.

**Grade Appeals**

The instructor and teaching assistants do their best to mark work fairly, consistently, and accurately. Nevertheless, one of us may unintentionally err in our marking duties. For basic mathematical errors, simply alert the TA of the error. In the case of more substantive appeals, you must wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark. If you wish to appeal, please submit a thorough written explanation to your instructor of why you think your mark should be altered. If your appeal is deemed appropriate, the entirety of your test/assignment will be re-graded. Please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up. You have 7 days after receiving a mark to appeal it.

**Academic Integrity**

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 you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

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 your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

### **Generative Artificial Intelligence**

Students are encouraged to make use of technology, including generative artificial intelligence tools, to contribute to their understanding of course materials. Students may use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, in this course as learning aids or to help produce assignments. However, students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit.

If using generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the term assignment in this course, students must document this in an appendix. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work.

### **Ouriginal**

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

Students not wishing their assignment to be submitted through Ouriginal will not be assessed unless a student instead provides, along with their work, 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 truly their own.

## Course Schedule

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### Required readings

All course readings, videos, and podcasts are accessible electronically. Unless otherwise noted, course readings will be uploaded on Quercus. Please refer to the proper week in the Modules tab.

### Week 1 (January 8)

*Course overview & introduction on the logic(s) of comparison*

### Part 1.

### Week 2 (January 15)

*Nation building and the welfare state*

#### Readings:

- (a) Wimmer, A., 2018. *Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart* [selection].
- (b) Berman, S., 2006. *The primacy of politics: Social democracy and the making of Europe's twentieth century* [selection].
- (c) Chauvel, L. and Schröder, M., 2014. Generational inequalities and welfare regimes. *Social Forces*.

### Week 3 (January 22)

*Democratic and autocratic development*

#### Readings:

- (a) Rosenfeld, B., 2020. *The Autocratic Middle Class: How State Dependency Reduces the Demand for Democracy* [selection].
- (b) Slater, D. and Wong, J., 2022. *From Development to Democracy: The Transformations of Modern Asia* [selection].
- (c) Nugent, E.R., 2020. *After repression: How polarization derails democratic transition* [selection].

### Week 4 (January 29)

*Authoritarian populism and illiberalism*

#### Readings:

- (a) Norris, P., and Inglehart, R., 2019. *Cultural Backlash. Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism* [selection].
- (b) Heller, P., 2020. The age of reaction: Retrenchment populism in India and Brazil. *International Sociology*.
- (c) Rosanvallon, P., 2021. *The Populist Century: History, theory, critique* [selection].

**Week 5 (February 5)***Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities*Readings:

- (a) Gethin, A., Martínez-Toledano, C. and Piketty, T. eds., 2021. *Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities: A Study of Fifty Democracies, 1948–2020* [selection].
- (b) Emanuele, V., Marino, B. and Angelucci, D., 2020. The congealing of a new cleavage? The evolution of the demarcation bloc in Europe (1979–2019). *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*.
- (c) Taylor, Z., Lucas, J., Armstrong, D.A. and Bakker, R., 2023. The Development of the Urban-Rural Cleavage in Anglo-American Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*.

**Week 6 (February 12)****\*Test 1 (25%) due at 11:59 pm EST\*****Week 7 (February 19)****Reading Week****Part 2.****Week 8 (February 26)***From glocal to national: Religious, secular, and human rights*Readings:

- (a) Yadav, V., 2021. *Religious parties and the politics of civil liberties* [selection].
- (b) Laxer, E., 2019. Unveiling the nation: The politics of secularism in France and Québec [selection].
- (c) Ayoub, P.M., 2014. With arms wide shut: Threat perception, norm reception, and mobilized resistance to LGBT rights. *Journal of Human Rights*.

**Week 9 (March 4)***State and subnational politics: uneven, diffuse, transformed*Readings:

- (a) Niedzwiecki, S., 2018. *Uneven Social Policies: The politics of subnational variation in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press [selection].
- (b) Grumbach, J., 2022. *Laboratories against Democracy: How national parties transformed state politics* [selection].
- (c) Abel, D., 2021. The diffusion of climate policies among German municipalities. *Journal of Public Policy*.

**Week 10 (March 11)****\*Research paper (25%) due at 11:59 pm EST\****A time and place for protests and resistance*Readings:

- (a) Beissinger, M.R., 2022. *The revolutionary city: Urbanization and the global transformation of rebellion*
- (b) Van de Velde, C., 2022. A global student anger? A comparative analysis of student movements in Chile (2011), Quebec (2012), and Hong-Kong (2014). *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*.
- (c) Bourdin, S. and Torre, A., 2023. Geography of contestation: A study on the Yellow Vest movement and the rise of populism in France. *Journal of Regional Science*.

**Week 11 (March 18)**Readings:

- (a) Diani, M., 2015. *The Cement of Civil Society* [selection].
- (b) Fournier, P., Van Der Kolk, H., Carty, R.K., Blais, A. and Rose, J., 2011. *When citizens decide: Lessons from citizen assemblies on electoral reform*. Oxford University Press [selection].
- (c) Boswell, J., Dean, R. and Smith, G., 2023. Integrating citizen deliberation into climate governance: Lessons on robust design from six climate assemblies. *Public Administration*.

**Week 12 (March 25)****\*In-class discussion & debate (5%)\****The past, present, and future of our "Age"*Readings:

- (a) Zuboff, S., 2020. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*.
- (b) Savage, M., 2021. *The return of inequality: Social change and the weight of the past*.
- (c) Lunz, K., 2023. *The Future of Foreign Policy Is Feminist*

**Week 13 (April 1)****\*Test 2 (25%) due at 11:59 pm EST\***