Comparative politics focuses on comparisons within or between countries, regions, or systems. In this course, we will focus on the links between public opinion, democratic politics, elections and public policy. Using both country-specific and cross-country analyses, we will discuss key themes, debates and concepts in the literature contrasting insights from empirical work in developed democracies with the emerging literature in developing democracies with particular attention to Latin American democracies. The course will include replications and laboratory exercises based on the analysis of public opinion data.

Course Objectives
The course aims to introduce students to the main research paradigms in comparative political behavior; and, to advance training in doing original empirical research on political participation, voting, public opinion analysis, etc. in a comparative perspective.

Pre-requisites
Students should have a background in statistical inference (for example, FLS 5028, or a similar course) and multivariate regression analysis (for example, FLS 6183, or a similar course).

Course Requirements
Participation and Seminar Presentations 30%
Problem Sets 30%
Final Paper 40%

Bibliography
Books


Articles


Topics
1. Participation
2. Values, Issues and Ideological Orientations
3. Partisanship and Voting
4. Attitudes and Political Behavior
5. Representation
6. Performance and the Vote
7. Economic Crisis and Reform
8. Globalization and the Vote

Course Outline

Topic 1. Participation
Dalton, Chapters 3-4


Topic 2. Values, Issues and Ideological Orientations
Dalton, Chapter 5-6


**Topic 3. Partisanship and Voting**

Dalton, Chapters 7,8, 9


**Topic 4. Attitudes and Political Behavior**

Dalton, Chapters 10


**Topic 5. Representation**

Dalton, Chapters 11


**Topic 6. Performance and the Vote**


**Topic 7. Economic Crisis and Reform**


**Topic 8. Globalization**


Lab #1 Assignment.

Question 1. Concepts and Measurement

The empirical analyses presented in *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies* use data for four industrial democracies from the World Values Survey and European Values Survey (WVS/EVS). The empirical analyses presented in *The Latin American Voter: Pursuing representation and accountability in challenging contexts* uses data from LAPOP’s AmericasBarometer.

What concepts of citizen engagement underlie the questionnaire design of each survey? What forms of engagement are excluded?

Are there any differences in how the surveys attempt to measure voter participation in elections?

Question 2. Comparative Political Behavior in Latin America

During class, we will divide the Latin American countries in the course among participants and discuss the sources we will use for coding.

For the countries assigned to you, please compile the same information as reported in Dalton’s Table 1.1 with summary information on the country’s population, GDP per capita, year of establishment of the current political regime, state form, government structure, chief executive, method of selection, legislature, lower house, upper house, power of upper house and information regarding the electoral system for the lower and upper houses of the legislature. Please be sure to also include the names of the parties that hold at least 20% of the seat shares in Congress.

Given the differences among countries that are in your specific sample in Latin American and theories that explain voter turnout, do any specific issues seem important in cross-country comparisons of participation?

How does the Latin American sample compare with the industrialized democracies sampled used by Dalton?

Please upload the data to:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CCEfqmmcXj9qpBGrA6S9ASMb65L7ulC7blJjUFzZQwg/edit?usp=sharing

Question 3. Replication of “Who is the Latin American Voter?”

For this exercise, we will replicate the model reported in Table A2.1 as estimated using the do-file provided by the authors. This exercise is intended to help you with familiarizing yourself with Stata commands and logistic regression coefficients. After replicating the table, pick the same countries for which you compiled information in
Question 2 and run separate regressions for these countries. How do the results differ? What are the most appropriate methods for comparing your results?