



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE NAMUR**

FACULTÉ
DES SCIENCES ÉCONOMIQUES,
SOCIALES ET DE GESTION

EPOLB366- COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Course Description

Comparative politics is a subfield of Political science that touches to the various areas of the wider discipline. Initially focused on the comparison of the domestic policies of nation-states, its scope has expanded as to overlap with a variety of other subfields such as area studies and international relations. It has become a transversal approach that can be used to study a variety of topics in Political Science, ranging from institutions to revolutions, from the behavior of voters to the behavior of warriors, from democratic to dictatorial regimes. As such, it is an essentially interdisciplinary subfield.

This course is a graduate level one. Its primary purpose is to provide an introduction about Comparative Politics. It will offer a general overview of the methods, research designs and theorizing efforts that have been developed in the subfield. In doing so, it will also familiarize the students with the main paradigmatic approaches in the subfield, notably rationalistic (rational-choice), sociological, historical and structural explanations of political behavior, political systems and processes and related phenomena. It also ambitions to review some of the main substantive issues dealt with in Comparative politics in the last decades.

The course will rest on a combination of lectures by the professor and presentations and discussions by the students.

Course Requisites

This course is part of the Political Science Programme, so no specific requisites are attached to it. However, a successful approach to the course requires a constant effort by each student to improve her/his language fluency and commit to read, speak and write in English.

Course Objectives

The main objectives of this course are:

1. introducing the subfield of Comparative politics;
2. presenting the challenges of Comparative politics: methods, research design and theories
3. acquainting the students with the variety of phenomena studied by Comparative politics: political systems and regimes; political behaviour; political processes...
4. introducing the major substantive issues addressed by Comparative politics
5. familiarizing the students with the relevant literature and authors
6. providing them with the knowledge and skills enabling them to undertake a comparative research.