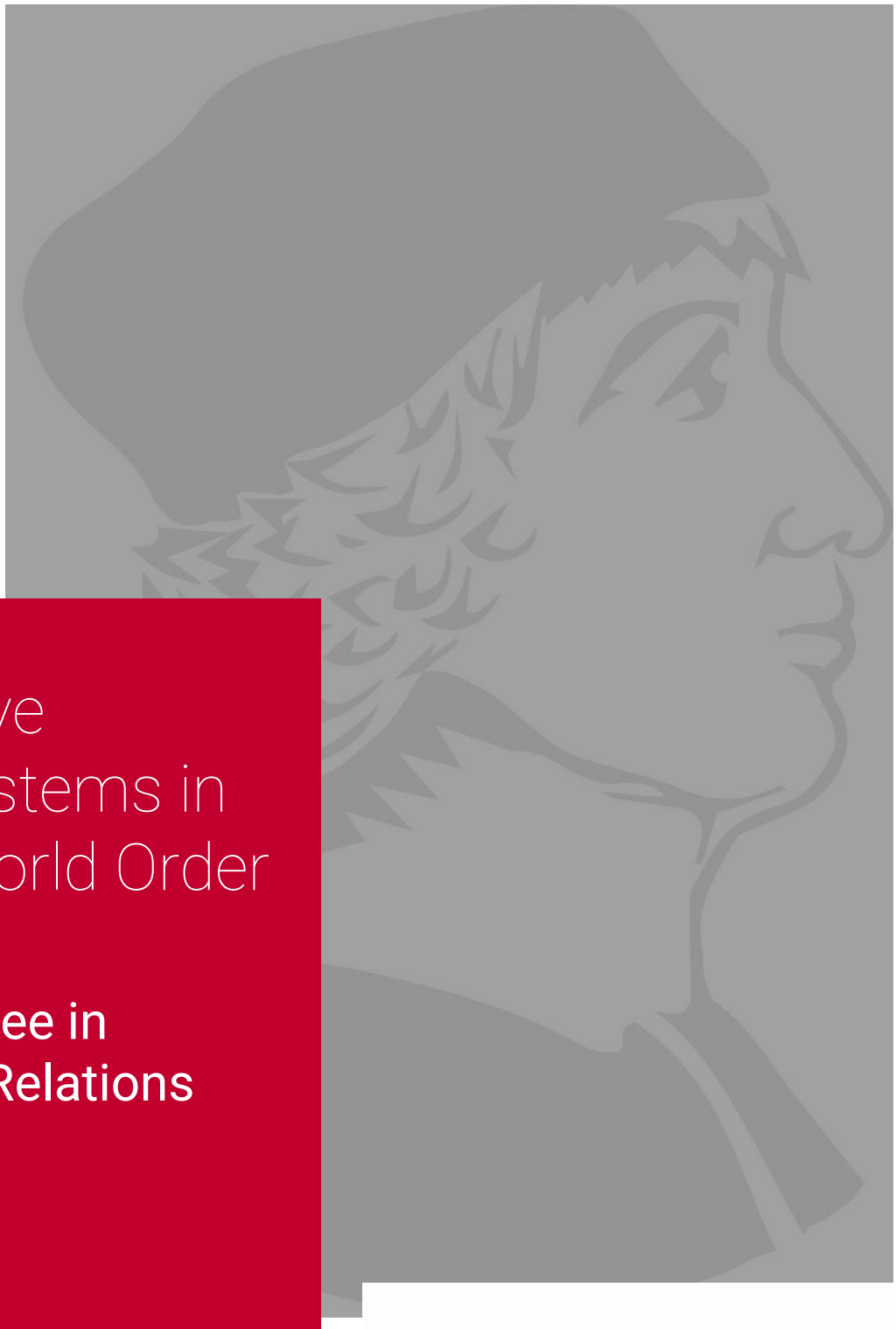


Comparative Political Systems in the New World Order

Master's Degree in International Relations

UNIVERSIDAD NEBRIJA

TEACHING GUIDE

Course: Comparative Political Systems in the New World Order

Title: Master's Degree in International Relations

Academic Year: 2025-2026

Type: Compulsory

Language: English

Modality: Classroom attendance

ECTS: 5

Semester: 1st.

Teacher: Dr. Nieves Fernández Rodríguez

1. COMPETENCES AND LEARNING RESULTS

1.1. Competences

Basic competences

CB1. Students must possess and understand the knowledge in an area of study that builds on the foundation of general secondary education and is typically at a level that, while supported by advanced textbooks, also includes some aspects that involve knowledge from the forefront of their field of study.

CB2. Students must be able to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and possess the skills typically demonstrated through the development and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within their area of study.

CB3. Students must be able to communicate their conclusions—and the knowledge and ultimate reasons that support them—to specialized and non-specialized audiences in a clear and unambiguous manner.

CB4. Students must possess the learning skills that enable them to continue their learning in a manner that will be largely self-directed or autonomous.

General competences

CG1. The student must acquire up-to-date knowledge of international political, economic, and social relations.

CG2. The student must be able to systematically understand complex concepts, relevant information, its context, and how to apply it to specific situations, taking into account how it affects the different actors and agents in each situation.

CG3. The student must master advanced techniques that will allow them to obtain and analyze information, evaluate its relevance and validity, synthesize it, and adapt it to the context.

CG4. The student must be able to understand and deal with complex situations and arguments systematically and creatively, with critical judgment, with incomplete information, taking risks, making decisions, and communicating them to any type of audience.

CG5. The student must be able to communicate correctly both orally and in writing, both in Spanish and in a second language, using the most up-to-date technology.

CG6. The student must be able to act autonomously in evaluating sociopolitical events as well as foresee possible scenarios for the development of events.

CG7. The student must be able to perform different roles within a team.

CG8. The student must be able to recognize the need for change and must have the necessary skills to manage it.

CG9. The student must be able to act autonomously within a framework of responsible freedom.

CG10. The student must be able to add value to the organization through their creativity and participation.

CG12. Ability to integrate equality policies, especially between women and men and attention to disability, into organizations and at work.

Specific Competences

CE1. Ability to critically analyze, evaluate, and synthesize new and complex ideas derived from different advanced theoretical approaches in the field of International Relations, integrating acquired knowledge and considering social responsibility and respect for a strict professional code of ethics.

CE7. Ability to apply acquired knowledge to solve problems in new and dynamic environments, such as changes in international, regional, or state political systems.

CE11. Ability to contribute, from an academic perspective, to the advancement of the analysis of international politics through the lens of a knowledge- and communication-based society.

CE13. Knowledge of the characteristics of the stages of the research process.

CE17. Ability to conduct research in the field of international relations.

CE18. Ability to design sociopolitical research.

CE 23. Ability to make decisions from a strategic perspective based on the formal and analytical models of the most recent and advanced theories in international relations.

CE24. Ability to design sociopolitical research using qualitative and quantitative research techniques and develop applied sociopolitical research projects using ICTs.

CE29. Ability to develop strategic negotiation processes based on an advanced analysis of the specific distributive interests of international actors and organizations.

CE32. Ability to develop innovative leadership and communication skills within multinational companies, international organizations, and agencies.

2. CONTENTS

2.1. Requisites

None.

2.2. Description of contents

The course will address various political systems and institutional alternatives, employing the comparative method to identify differences and qualitatively analyze aspects of international politics. Topics to be covered include systems of government and political systems, ideologies, political culture, and institutional development. Additionally, current controversies regarding the evolution of the new world order will be examined, as well as globalization and its influence on the governance of the international system.

2.3. Detailed contents

Block I. Foundations and Approaches in Comparative Politics

1. Introduction to Comparative Politics *(October, 14th)*

- Concept of comparative politics and units of analysis.
- Objectives of comparative politics.
- David Easton's political system revisited.

2. Approaches to Comparative Politics *(October, 16th)*

- Institutional, behavioral, structural–functionalist, and new approaches.
- Advantages and limitations of each perspective.

3. Research Design in Comparative Politics *(October, 21st , 23nd)*

- Number of cases: case studies, small N, large N.
- Variables and hypotheses.
- Case selection: the method of similarity and the method of difference.
- Challenges of research design for comparative analysis.

Block II. Political Regimes

4. Democracies and Dictatorships: Classification and General Characteristics *(October 28th)*

- Concept and elements of a political regime.
- Democracies vs. dictatorships.
- Hybrid regimes.
- Factors of democratization.

5. Democratic Models and Systems *(October 30th)*

- Differences between parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential democracies.
- Differences between majoritarian and consensus democracies.
- Mechanisms of direct democracy.

6. Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes *(November 4th)*

- Differences between authoritarianism and totalitarianism.
- Types of regimes: monarchies, single-party dictatorships, military and personalist dictatorships.
- Factors explaining the survival of authoritarian regimes.

Block III. Other Comparable Aspects of Political Systems

7. Party Systems and Electoral Processes (by Prof. Sebastián Umpierrez) *(November 11th)*

- Definition and origins of political parties.
- Types and dynamics of party systems.
- Types of electoral systems: majoritarian, proportional, and mixed.

8. Political Actors and Dynamics Beyond Parties *(November 13th)*

- Social movements.
- Interest groups.
- *(Populism).*

9. Public Policy *(November 18th)*

- Policy cycle.
- Policy Determinants

2.4. Educational activities

Theory: Lectures and seminars. Contemporary theories in the study and analysis of International Relations, their concepts, foundations, and methodological tools, as well as the main trends in interpretation and the most influential schools of thought, will be explained.

Practical Work: Case study-based learning.

Individual Work: Student group work.
The student will create and present an original group project for the course that shows an example of advanced application of the methods and techniques developed in the course.

3. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

3.1. Grading procedure

Final grades will be expressed numerically the following way:

0 - 4,9 Fail (Suspenso) (SS)
5,0 - 6,9 Pass (Aprobado) (AP)
7,0 - 8,9 Notable (NT)
9,0 - 10 Excelent (Sobresaliente) (SB)

'Honours' mention can be granted to students with grades equal or superior to 9,0.

3.2. Evaluation criteria

Ordinary call

Activity	Rate
Attendance, participation, daily work	20%
Individual or collective assignments	30%
Final exam	50%

Extraordinary call

Activity	Porcentaje
Individual or collective assignments delivered at the ordinary call	30%
Final exam	70%

It is up to the teacher to receive and assess again the assignments in case these were not delivered originally or the students wants to improve the grade obtained at the ordinary call.

3.3. Restrictions

Minimal grade at the exam

In order to be weighed with the other grades, it is necessary to tet at least 5 at the final exam.

Attendance

Any student missing over 25% of the clases with no justification could be deprived of the right to take the exam at the ordinary call

Quality of writing

Special attention will be paid to both presentation and content in written assignments and projects, as well as exams, particularly to grammar and spelling. Failure to meet the minimum acceptable standards may result in points being deducted from the assignment.

3.4. Warning about plagiarism

Antonio de Nebrija University does not tolerate plagiarism or copying under any circumstances. Plagiarism is considered the reproduction of paragraphs from texts other than the student's own work (from the Internet, books, articles, fellow students' work, etc.), when the original source is not cited. The use of quotations cannot be indiscriminate. Plagiarism is a crime.

If this type of practice is detected, it will be considered a Serious Offense and the sanction provided for in the Student Regulations may be applied.

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic bibliography

Almond, G, y G Powell. 1978. *Comparative Politics: System, Process, and Policy*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
Almond, Gabriel A., y Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt183pnr2 (12 de septiembre de 2025).
Cairney, Paul. 2012. «Complexity Theory in Political Science and Public Policy». *Political Studies Review* 10(3): 346-58. doi:10.1111/j.1478-9302.2012.00270.x.
Caramani, Daniele. 2011. *Comparative Politics*. OUP Oxford.
Duverger, Maurice. *Les régimes politiques.*
Easton, David. 1953. *The Political System*.
Geddes, Barbara. 1999. «What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?» *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1): 115-44. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.115.
Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, y Erica Frantz. 2014. «Autocratic breakdown and regime transitions: A new data set». *Perspectives on politics* 12(2): 313-31.
Gerschewski, Johannes. 2014. «The three pillars of stability: legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes». En *Comparing autocracies in the early Twenty-first Century*, Routledge.
Jann, Werner, y Kai Wegrich. 2017. «Theories of the policy cycle». En *Handbook of public policy analysis*, Routledge, 69-88. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315093192-12/theories-policy-cycle-werner-jann-kai-wegrich (7 de octubre de 2025).
Jenkins, J. Craig. 1983. «Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements». *Annual Review of Sociology* 9(1): 527-53. doi:10.1146/annurev.so.09.080183.002523.
Landman, Todd. 2014. *Política comparada: Una introducción a su objeto y métodos de investigación*.
Lijphart, Arend. 1989. «Democratic Political Systems: Types, Cases, Causes, and Consequences». *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1(1): 33-48. doi:10.1177/0951692889001001003.
Lijphart, Arend. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy*. Yale University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt32bg23 (12 de septiembre de 2025).
Linz, Juan J. 1990. «The perils of presidentialism». *Journal of democracy* 1(1): 51-69.
Linz, Juan José. 2000. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
McCarthy, John D., y Mayer N. Zald. 1977. «Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory». *American Journal of Sociology* 82(6): 1212-41.
Olson, Mancur. 1971. *Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.
Pierson, Paul. 2000. «Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics». *The American Political Science Review* 94(2): 251-67. doi:10.2307/2586011.
Seawright, Jason, y John Gerring. 2008. «Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options». *Political Research Quarterly* 61(2): 294-308. doi:10.1177/1065912907313077.
Stuart Mill, John. 1872. *A System of Logic*.
Tarrow, Sidney G. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. 3.ª ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511973529