

# POLS 103 A

# Comparative Politics

Class 1:

Introduction to the course

Populism, inequality, and the value of comparative analysis

Welcome to POLS 103!

# Comparative analysis: a case study





HELLO

What is comparative politics?

What is politics?

КТО КОГО?



# Politics and Political Science





# Comparative politics

- Subfield of Political Science
- Method

What does comparative  
politics compare?

# Units of comparative analysis

- Regions
- Countries
- Subnational administrative units (e.g. states, counties)
- Ethnic groups
- Political parties
- Legislatures, executives, and judiciaries
- Regime types
- Etc.

# Uses of comparative analysis

- Ghana and Togo
- Similarities: climate, income, ethnic and religious demography
- Differences: regime types, colonizer



# Inference

- Descriptive
- Causal

# Course overview

- Part I. Comparative political analysis
  - Introduction and the value of comparative analysis
  - Introduction to comparative politics
  - Comparative research
- Part II. The state and political development
  - Political order and the state
  - State-making
  - State-making: the United Kingdom in comparative perspective
  - Economic and political development, inequality, and exclusion

# Course overview

- Part III. Political regimes
  - Democracy and democratization: India in comparative perspective
  - Democracy and democratic backsliding: the United States in comparative perspective
  - Authoritarianism
  - Authoritarianism: China and Russia in comparative perspective
- Part IV. Organization of the state
  - Constitutions and constitutional design: Nigeria in comparative perspective
  - Legislatures and electoral systems
  - Coalitions, coalition-building, and executives

# Course overview

- Part V. Collective action
  - Political parties and interest groups
  - Contentious politics
- Part VI. Ideas and identities
  - Identities
  - Ideas and ideologies



# Assignments

- Analysis assignment 1:
  - Initial draft 5%
  - Final draft 5%
- Analysis assignment 2:
  - Initial draft 5%
  - Final draft 5%
- Research proposal 5%
- Research essay:
  - Initial draft 10%
  - Final draft 15%

# Other assessment

- Class involvement 15%
- Quizzes (→ Kahoot!) 5%
- Final exam:
  - In-class component 15%
  - Out-of-class component 15%
- Extra credit Up to 5%

# Policies and organizational matters

- Late submission and other penalties
- Attendance
- Electronics
- Accommodations
- Class organization
- Contact
- Schedule changes:
  - No class on January 21
- Responsibility for learning and classroom behavior

# Populism, inequality, and the value of comparative analysis



Global inequality has declined: Growth incidence curve, 1988-2008

