CPO4062 - Comparative Judicial Process
Dr. Bruce M. Wilson

Course Home

Instructor Contact:

Instructor	Bruce M. Wilson
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Dr. Wilson's websites	At UCF or at CMI in Norway

Required book:

The Judicialization of Politics in Latin America. 2005. Rachel Sieder, Line Schjolden, Alan Angell (Eds). London: Palgrave.

This is the only required book for this class and it is available in paperback and used. All other readings will be made available to you, without cost, through the class webpages.

Course Description:

Superior Courts in some countries are vitally important to everyday political events, in others they are moribund, politically unimportant institutions that do little to reign in the actions of popular branches of government or to uphold and enforce individual and collective constitutional rights. With this in mind, this class introduces students to the significance of Superior Courts in a variety of countries, with an emphasis on events in the post-war period. This class examines the rise (and lack thereof) of Superior Courts in developed and less developed countries and evaluates the impact of these institutions' actions on the way countries are governed. We will use a series of country case studies from the US, Africa, and Latin America to illuminate the consequence of the rise of Courts on governance and on powerful and marginalized groups in various societies.

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course you will be able to:

- Understand the relevance of constitutions
- Understand that why some Superior Courts are powerful upholders of constitutions while others are not
- Understand the motivation for judicial reform across many counties
- Understand the variance of court behavior across diverse
- Understand the inter-relationship between popularly elected branches of government and Superior Courts.
- Understand how even marginalized groups have been able to develop legal strategies to pursue their constitutional rights in some countries.
- Develop your research and communication skills.

Evaluation Procedures:

Grade Categories	Description of the requirements	Weight toward final grade
Intro module	one introductory module	1%
Substantive modules	six (6) substantive modules	66%
Research paper	3,000-word, proof-read, compelling research paper	33%

- The nature of on-line classes encourages (requires?) cooperation among students. So, this class is not a “competitive sport” but should be an interesting, thought-provoking, collaborative discovery of major issues and topics in Latin American politics.
    - Having said that, essays and quizzes should be completely your own work
- Grading information on specific assignments will be provided in the assignment itself.
- If you miss more than <u>three</u> (3) assignments or modules, you will fail the entire class, automatically.

Other Information:

- Grades will be assigned according to final points students earn in the course. There will be no + or - grades in this class:

  100-90 A
  89-80 B
  79-70 C
  69-60 D
  59 or lower F

Assignments:

- You are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments for this class. You are also responsible for checking that the grades posted online are correct; any discrepancies must be reported to the instructor within 1 week of being posted.

Late, make-up, and extra credit work

- Quizzes cannot and will not be reopened after their deadlines have passed.

- All late work will be penalized at a rate of 5 points per day late (including weekend days). No work will be accepted more than a week after the deadline. There are no substitute assignments and positively no extra-credit, **so please don't ask!**
- Academic integrity: The University of Central Florida has a very clear policy with respect to academic integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the policies of the "Golden Rule." especially p. 11 and p.16. All Assignments will have to be completed on your own.

Disclaimer:

- The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus during the semester as he deems appropriate.

Accommodations for students with disabilities:

- If you need to make any arrangements for fulfilling assignments or taking exams to accommodate for a disability, please contact the instructor.

Login and Password Information

To access the "eCommunity" or "Class Login" portions of this course, students must follow UCF's log-in and password conventions.

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Date	Topic and Module	Reading
August 22- 29	Module #1: Getting Started: Introduction to Comparative Courts and Learning Online	"Learning online" on course homepage; See Module #1 Start reading ahead, this will make your life a lot easier as the semester progresses.
August 26- September 5	Module #2: The role of Constitutions and Superior Courts • What is a constitution? • What is a Superior Court? • What is the relationship between the two? • Understand that the importance of Superior Courts varies by country and over time within countries • Understand the background of the US Supreme Court's role • Participate in an on-line discussion • take a quiz • Write a two-page, double-spaced summary of the of the readings and the forum discussion	Read: • Mauricio García-Villegas. "Law as Hope" • Sieder et al, Chapter 1
September 6-12	Starting your research project • Start your research for the final paper • write a one-page paper proposal	Readings: see module
September 13 - 26	Module #3: Courts and Rights Revolutions (the US case) • Understand the role of Constitutions in facilitating Rights Revolutions • Understand what permitted the rights revolution in the US	Read: • Charles Epp Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 (available on the Materials page)
September 27 - October 10	Module #4: Courts and Rights Revolutions (Comparative cases) • Understand the role of Constitutions in facilitating Rights Revolutions • Understand the difference between Common and Civil Law • Understand what permitted the rights	• Colombia and Costa Rica chapters from the textbook • Wilson "Rights Revolutions in Unlikely Places: Costa Rica and Colombia" (URL is in the module)

	revolution in Costa Rica and Colombia	
October 11-17	Make progress on your research paper • Create an account on Turnitin.com • Make some serious progress on your research paper • Produce an updated paper outline	no formal readings
October 18 - 31	Module #5: Judicial Reform, Rule of Law, and Democratic Governance in Latin America • Study a specific Latin American country • Understand the underpinnings and scope of Judicial Reform in the last 20 years • Understand the motivation for and impact of judicial reform • Participate in an on-line discussion • write a two page paper on the questions in the module	Read: Sieder et al book (you should see the module instructions for which chapters to read)
November 1-14	Module #6: Courts and Accountability • Understand why some African Courts engaged in Accountability and others did not. • Understand the accountability function in East Africa • Draw conclusions from the case studies	Read: Gloppen, et al *Courts and Power in Latin America and Africa*. • Chapter 2: Courts' Accountability Functions: A Framework for Inquiry • Chapter 5: Comparing Courts' Accountability Functions in Africa
November 15 - December 2	Module #7: International Tribunals and Domestic Responses	Readings: TBA
November 24-28	Thanksgiving Break	No class
December 2-5	• Complete your research paper project	

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