Course Overview
Are populist politicians scoundrels or saviors? Regardless of the answer, populism is undeniably a growing force in politics around the world: in democracies as well as autocracies, rich and poor countries, and involving different ideologies. How can we understand this diversity? In this class, we will explore populism using a variety of comparative frameworks: temporal (situating the current crop of populism in historical context), ideological (comparing populisms of the left versus the right), as well as geographic. We will try to understand the hallmarks of populism, when and why it emerges, and its impact on political institutions and society.

Course Materials
Hooray, there are no books for you to purchase! What a populist move on my part, taking on Big Bookstore in this fashion!

All materials (articles, videos, etc.) are available on Moodle. You are expected to bring a copy of the readings with you (hard copy or electronic) and take notes/make annotations as you read.

Course Work
Your grade in this course will be based on five elements, which will be weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reader response papers</td>
<td>10% (2 @ 5% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data analysis assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Participation (20%)
We will run this course as a discussion seminar, and as such, I expect everyone in class to participate actively throughout the term. Active participation requires you to contribute, not merely to receive—though respectful, open-minded, critical listening is also crucial to a good seminar. Active contribution
requires can take various forms: asking questions, bringing up interesting examples and counterexamples, presenting opposing points of view, reporting back to the class on small-group discussions, etc. But it all requires you to voice ideas. This is admittedly easier for some and harder for others, but discussions are a space where you can try out ideas, even ones that might not be fully baked. We will proceed from the assumption that we are part of the same epistemic community, that we are collectively working together to achieve deeper, broader understanding, and that we each bring different information resources to this common goal. This community only works if we trust each other and have the courage to take part in the discussion.

Because a positive and supportive environment is needed for our epistemic community to flourish, citizenship also matters for participation. Behaviors that will negatively affect your grade include: repeated tardiness, unexplained absences, not paying attention in class to me or your peers (by texting, using the internet, engaging in side conversations with your neighbors, etc.), and engaging in disruptive or disrespectful behavior during lecture, discussions, or presentations.

**Reader response paper (10%)**
Twice during the term, you will be responsible for handing in a short response paper on a selected reading. Eligible readings are indicated with an asterisk in the syllabus. You should aim to turn one response paper in before Week 5. Each one is worth five percent of your overall grade. The papers should be 2-3 double-spaced pages, and are due on the day for which that reading is assigned; therefore, completing this assignment will require you to prepare in advance to leave yourself with sufficient time to read, reflect on the material, and write the paper. Papers handed in after the class session will not be accepted for any reason; if you are not well or have to miss a class for any reason, you should pick a different reading from the remaining class sessions.

Each response paper should (1) identify the core argument being made and its contribution to the study of populism; (2) how this author’s argument speaks to larger conversations or debates in the field, and other works we have read, if appropriate; (3) how the author supports the argument being made; (4) strengths of the work, as you see it, and (4) potential critiques of the work, including unanswered questions or areas for future/further work. It is up to you how you organize the content, but all four elements should be present in some fashion.

**Midterm exam (15%)**
There will be a take-home midterm exam halfway through the term. You will be given several essay prompts. You will select any two and write a response of 8-10 (double-spaced) pages that demonstrate your knowledge of the material and draw substantially on the readings, lectures, and class discussions.

**Data analysis assignment (20%).**
To give you some hands-on experience collecting data on populist politics, we will learn how to do some content analysis of populist messages. The class will split into three groups, each of which will analyze one type of communication: speeches by political leaders, campaign ads, and party manifestos. Each group will explore existing measures and metrics used to code populist content, then build their own coding instrument by adding to and/or refining the categories used by other scholars. They will then determine how to sample relevant speeches/ ads/manifestos, and then work together to build a dataset. Once the dataset is built, the teams will analyze the patterns and present some of their most interesting findings in a 20-minute class presentation during the fifth week of the term. Each individual will also hand in a separate short document (2-3 pages) outlining their own investigation of their group’s dataset. This assignment will be assessed based on the group’s coding process and data collection (10%),
group presentation of results (5%), and individual data exploration (5%). Additionally, a floating ±2% can be added to (or subtracted from) your individual grade. The additional points function as extra credit in cases of exception contributions to the success of the team; deductions will occur if someone fails to contribute to the team. This floating ±2% will be determined via a combination of my observations and peer evaluations from the team.

Final paper (35%)
The final paper for this class will be a 20-25 page (double-spaced) research paper on a topic of your own choosing. This paper will be due on the last day of the exam period. To help you pace your work, the reading schedule also includes suggested goals (with deadlines) that you should build into your workflow for the term. While you are not required to submit these smaller components, you are strongly advised to do so, as I will give you feedback on them, and can help you spot problems and issues along the way.

Course Policies
Please refer to the course Moodle page for more detailed information on the relevant course policies pertaining to:

- Grading
- Late work
- Extensions
- Academic integrity
- Accommodations
- Use of computers, phones, and tablets

It is your responsibility to understand these policies and come to me with any questions or clarifications you might have. As in the real world, ignorance of the rules does not excuse you from the rules.

Schedule of Readings
The readings from this course come from a variety of sources, some of which are intended for a general audience of non-specialists and some for a more specialized, knowledgeable, and scholarly audience of political scientists. Depending on your background and prior experience with the subject matter, you may find some of these readings to be fairly straightforward. Others may be tougher going and will require more time and effort on your part. Regardless, it is your responsibility to read each piece with care.

Please engage in active, not passive reading: summarize main points for yourself as you go along, flag points that are unclear, write down questions that come to mind, note points where you agree and disagree with the author, assess whether the author has provided sufficient credible evidence to substantiate the argument, etc. The more work you put in ahead of time, the more productive class time will be. Remember: all readings and assignments are due for the day listed unless otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday,</td>
<td>Introduction and course overview</td>
<td>ASAP: familiarize yourself with this syllabus, review course policies, ask any questions about course policies, and visit Moodle site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>References</td>
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**Populism in Comparative Perspective**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Region/Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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| Thursday, October 17 | In-class data presentations               | • No reading  

*All documents related to data presentation should be uploaded to Moodle before class. Midterm exam handed out in class*
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 24</td>
<td>In-class movie</td>
<td>• No reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Midterm exam due on Moodle by 7pm*  
*Goal: submit proposed topic for final paper* |
| Thursday, October 31 | Electoral systems                                         | • Golder, Matt. 2003 ‘Explaining Variation in the Electoral Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe.” *Comparative Political Studies*, 36(4): 432-466. *  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 25</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Final paper due by 7pm on Moodle</strong> **</td>
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**What are the Consequences of Populism for Society?**

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**Goal: hand in detailed outline of final paper**

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**Goal: hand in draft of introduction and thesis for final paper**

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**Goal: hand in final paper**

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**Final paper due by 7pm on Moodle**