

Populism in Europe and the World

INSTRUCTOR: Paula D. Ganga, pg2655@columbia.edu

CLASS TIME: Wednesdays 2:10-4:00 PM, ONLINE.

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 4:00-5:00pm or by appointment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Populism is one of the political buzzwords of the early 21st century. It is central to current debates about politics, from radical right parties in Europe to left-wing presidents in Latin America to the Tea Party, Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump in the United States. But populism is also one of the most contested concepts in the social sciences. In line with a growing body of literature, populism should be defined in ideational terms, i.e., as a worldview that considers society to be separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite,” and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people. This course will provide an introduction to populism in theory and practice.

The course will discuss how scholars from different parts of the world studied populism since this phenomenon entered the political and social science agenda in the late 1960s. Is populism an ideology? A strategy? A style of politics? A certain type of discourse? Something else? And, crucially, who are “the people” in populism? Could we, possibly, re-conceptualize populism in a way that is at the same time minimal and with sufficient discriminatory power, politically relevant, analytically compelling, operationally feasible, and clearly pointing to an opposite pole?

Beyond defining populism, this course also examines the phenomenon in the entirety of its geographical variants. Populism is an omnipresent, multifaceted, and ideologically boundless phenomenon. What distinguishes its various manifestations in Europe, Latin America, the United States, and elsewhere across time (old vs. new populisms), region (western vs. eastern; but also Nordic, Baltic, and Southern European), regime type in which they develop (democracy vs. non-democracy), and ideological hue (right vs. left populisms)?

Throughout each class session different examples will be examined in assigned readings. These cases will look at actual populist strategies, how populist leaders gain their appeal, what social conditions increase the likelihood of a populist victory, how populists gain and maintain power. What are the determinants of voting motivation for populist parties? And how do they differ from mainstream parties? This course will also examine what happens once populists come into office, as has happened several times in both Europe and Latin America? Cases such as Hungary, Greece and Venezuela are studied in order to understand the way in which populism comes to power and governs.

LEARNING GOALS

In this course, students will:

- examine key concepts and theories that describe and explain the current phenomenon of populism.
- explore this concept in a comparative perspective drawing on the populist experience across the globe.
- develop oral presentation skills through class presentations and class discussions.
- practice research and analytical skills through two short papers on different aspects of populism and a large research paper.

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Attendance to all class meetings is required. **You will be penalized one full grade for more than two unexcused absences.** You will need to email me and provide medical proof in case of missed classes.

Readings

Required readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned. Class participation must show understanding of this material. The written assignments and the final paper will require you to have a strong comprehension of the material covered in both the readings and the class discussions.

Examinations

There will be no in-class examinations.

Class participation

All students are expected to come prepared to participate in class and contribute with arguments and questions to the class discussion. Because this class is an upper level seminar, participation is key (30% of the final grade). **At the end of each class session you will receive one of 3 attendance marks:** 1 if you attended the class but did not engage in discussion or if you only briefly contributed; 2 if you contributed several times during the class session with questions, examples or perspective; 3 if you showed deep engagement with the readings and sustained contribution to the discussion. At the midpoint of the course—before spring break—I will provide each student an **individual evaluation** of their standing in terms of class participation.

Leading class discussion

Each student will be expected to sign up to lead the class discussion at least once during the semester. Leading the class discussion entails a short overview of that week's readings (5-47minutes) in order to highlight the main directions of the discussion. The discussion leaders are expected to share several questions **ahead of class**—preferably at least the night before class—to start the class discussion. **Leading the class discussion is different from class participation—so a student**

who introduced the class topic and starter questions should continue participating in the discussion.

If there are more students than class sessions, accommodations will be made for some students to share leading the discussion. Because of time constraints, rescheduling your assigned week due to unforeseen circumstances is not possible. The students might be able to organize among themselves and swap sessions.

Short Paper Assignments

There will be two paper assignments in the first part of the semester. Each paper will be a reflection on topics covered in the course and be of a maximum of 5 pages (12pt double spaced). The first paper has to cover any topic from the first four class sessions (January 13, January 20, January 27, February 3) and the second paper will cover one of the following three sessions (February 10, February 17, February 24). The rule is that you have to pick the class session you want to write the reflection paper on and **submit the paper before that class**. So if you decide to reflect and write on the different approaches and definitions of populism you must submit the paper prior to class on January 20. The reflection paper can deal with all the readings in one week or just one reading, but it must show engagement and a critique of the readings and topic covered. The paper might compare two readings and critically evaluate them against one another or it might critique one of the assigned readings. The best papers will be well written, have a **guiding argument** and compelling examples. Having a clearly stated argument that organizes the rest of the evidence in the paper is the most important grading element.

Research Paper Assignment

The final assignment is a research paper due at the end of the semester during the examination period (20-25 pages, 12pt double spaced, references not included). Students may choose any topic covered in class—substantive issue or country case—or pick another topic related to populism approved by me. Students will have to turn in a short research proposal for this paper by March 17. We will work together to identify paper topics and develop an outline for the paper. In the week of March 24 each student will give a short presentation/state of their research update to the class and in the final two sessions of the course we will have presentations of the projects, before submitting a revised finished product for evaluation. The paper will be evaluated on the strength of its argument and evidence proving that argument. Both quantitative or qualitative methods are accepted.

PROCEDURES:

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations necessary for their full participation in the course and all of its requirements. If you are a student with a disability and have a DS-certified ‘Accommodation Letter’ please come to my office hours to confirm your accommodation needs. If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation, you should contact Disability Services at 212-854-2388 and disability@columbia.edu. For more information about accommodations and the process for acquiring them please see the following website: <http://www.college.columbia.edu/rightsandresponsibilities>

Office Hours

I will hold office hours each week to discuss substantive questions about readings, lectures, exams, and papers. As a general rule of thumb, if you have a substantive question that probably requires more than one or two sentences to answer thoroughly, I recommend that you come to office hours, email me a time to meet or save the question for class. This will be better for everyone because it not only saves time, but I will also be able to sit with you and work through the material in a much more comprehensive way, and in a way that I know will be clear to you. Moreover, people in class probably will have the same questions, and if you ask the question in class, other people will benefit as well. If you have administrative or organizational questions, however, I encourage you to email me first.

Late Assignments

Deadlines are strict. No extensions will be granted in the absence of a genuine emergency or documented illness. Predictable events, such as a heavy workload or extracurricular activities, are not normally considered grounds for an extension. All appeals for extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade for each day they are late.

Grading

Grades will be based on the absolute merit of your work, so **there is no grading curve** employed in this class. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation	30%
Leading Class Discussions	10%
Short Reflection Papers (15% each)	30%
Research Paper	30%

Grading Disputes

You may email me about a grading concern after a 48-hour waiting period. You are entitled to a satisfactory explanation for why you received a particular grade. If you are not satisfied with the explanation provided by me, you may submit a written explanation for why you believe that your work was misgraded. The work will then be regraded by me with the understanding that I may ultimately issue a grade that is better, the same, or worse than the original grade.

Use of Electronic Devices

Students are allowed to use laptops or tablets to take notes as long as it does not interfere with their class participation. Since you will receive a participation grade each class session, if you know that electronics distract you then refrain from using a computer. Phones are strictly prohibited.

Since the class will be held virtually please refrain from doing other activities during class time and dedicate yourself to participating actively in the class. Class participation counts for 30 percent of the final grade and you get a participation grade each class session.

Statement on Academic Integrity

The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us

bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgment of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

January 13: Introduction to the class

Kaltwasser, C.R., Taggart, P.A., Espejo, P.O. and Ostiguy, P. eds., 2017. *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press. Introduction (skim)

Krastev, Ivan. 2007. "The Strange Death of the Liberal Consensus." *Journal of Democracy* 18(4): 56-63.

Nadia Urbinati. 2020. The Pandemic hasn't Killed Populism. After Lockdowns, Demagogues Will Likely Resurge. *Foreign Affairs*. August 6, 2020.

Larry Diamond. 2020. Democracy Versus the Pandemic. The Coronavirus Is Emboldening Autocrats the World Over. *Foreign Affairs*. June 13, 2020.

January 20: Defining populism

Mudde, Cas. 2018. Populism. An Ideational Approach. in Kaltwasser, C.R., Taggart, P.A., Espejo, P.O. and Ostiguy, P. eds., 2017. *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press.

Mudde, Cas. 2004. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39(4): 542-63.

Maurits J. Meijers¹ and Andrej Zaslove. 2021. Measuring Populism in Political Parties: Appraisal of a New Approach. *Comparative Political Studies* 54(2) 372-407.

January 27: Populism and democracy

Canovan, Margaret. 1999. "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy." *Political Studies* 47(1): 1-16.

Mounk, Yascha. 2018. *The People vs. Democracy*, Harvard University Press, 1-98.

February 3: Authoritarianism (Deadline for the first short paper)

Mounk, Yascha. 2018. *The People vs. Democracy*, Harvard University Press, continued.

Sheri Berman. 2016. Populism Is Not Fascism. But It Could Be a Harbinger. *Foreign Affairs*.

Mounk, Yascha. 2019. Dictator's Last Stand. Why the New Autocrats are Weaker Than They Look. *Foreign Affairs*.

Bela Greskovits. 2015. The Hollowing and Backsliding of Democracy in East Central Europe, *Global Policy Volume 6*: 28-37.

February 10: Populism, nationalism and identity politics

Pippa Norris and Ron Inglehart. 2019. *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism*, Cambridge University Press, 3-64.

Rogers Brubaker. 2017. The new language of European populism. Why "civilization" is replacing the nation. *Foreign Affairs*.

Andreas Wimmer. 2019. Why Nationalism Works. And Why It Isn't Going Away. *Foreign Affairs*.

De Cleen, B., 2017. Populism and nationalism (pp. 342-362). Kaltwasser, C.R., Taggart, P.A., Espejo, P.O. and Ostiguy, P. eds., *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press.

February 17: Populism and economics

Rodrik, Dani. "Populism and the Economics of Globalization." *Journal of International Business Policy* (2018): 1-22.

Hernández, Enrique, and Hanspeter Kriesi. "The electoral consequences of the financial and economic crisis in Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 55, no. 2 (2016): 203-224.

Rodrik, Dani. 2018. Is Populism Necessarily Bad Economics?. AEA Papers and Proceedings 2018, 108: 196-199.

Mazzucato, Mariana. 2020. Capitalism After the Pandemic. *Foreign Affairs*.

Jonathan Schlefer. 2017. Market Parables and the Economics of Populism. When Experts Are Wrong, People Revolt. *Foreign Affairs*.

Hilary Appel and Mitchell Orenstein. 2015. Duda's Economic Populism. Poland's New President and the Future of Neoliberalism. *Foreign Affairs*.

February 24: Explaining populist success (Deadline to submit the second reflection paper)

Sheri Berman and Maria Snegovaya. 2019. Populism and the Decline of Social Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 30(3): 5-19.

Franz-Stefan Gady. 2018. Has Austria Found the Answer to Right-Wing Populism? Why Center-Right Parties Are the Establishment's Best Bet. *Foreign Affairs* September 11, 2018.

Omar Encarnacion. 2019. Is Far-Right Populism Gaining Ground in Spain? What Vox's Rise in Andalusia Means for Madrid. *Foreign Affairs* February 11, 2019.

Barr, R. R. 2009. "Populists, Outsiders and Anti-Establishment Politics." *Party Politics* 15(1): 29-48.

Akkerman, A., C. Mudde and A. Zaslove. 2013. "How Populist Are the People? Measuring Populist Attitudes in Voters." *Comparative Political Studies*.

Ivarsflaten, E. 2007. "What Unites Right-Wing Populists in Western Europe?: Re-Examining Grievance Mobilization Models in Seven Successful Cases." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(1): 3-23.

Spring break

March 10: Populist discourse and appeals

Pappas, Takis S. 2008. "Political Leadership and the Emergence of Radical Mass Movements in Democracy." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(8): 1117-40.

Pappas, Takis S. 2016. "Are populist leaders "charismatic"? The evidence from Europe." *Constellations* 23, no. 3: 378-390.

Rajacic, Agnes. 2007. "Populist Construction of the Past and Future: Emotional Campaigning in Hungary between 2002 and 2006." *East European Politics and Societies* 21(4): 639-60.

March 17: Populism in office

Anna Grzymala-Busse. 2019. How Populists Rule: The Consequences for Democratic Governance. *Polity*, volume 51, number 4 (October 2019)

Luther, K. R. 2011. "Of Goals and Own Goals: A Case Study of Right-Wing Populist Party Strategy for and During Incumbency." *Party Politics* 17(4): 453-70.

Pappas, Takis S. 2014. "Populist Democracies: Post-Authoritarian Greece and Post-Communist Hungary." *Government and Opposition* 49(1): 1-23.

Michael Bronning. 2016. The rise of populism in Europe. Can the center hold?. *Foreign Affairs*.

Petra Guasti. 2020. Populism in Power and Democracy: Democratic Decay and Resilience in the Czech Republic (2013–2020). *Politics and Governance*, 8(4):473–484.

March 24: Varieties of populism (Short student presentations)

Kenneth M. Roberts. 2019. Bipolar Disorders: Varieties of Capitalism and Populist Out-Flanking on the Left and Right, *Polity*, volume 51, number 4 (October 2019)

Mudde, Cas and Cristbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2012b. "Exclusionary Vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America." *Government and Opposition* 48(02): 147-74.

Wendy Hunter and Timothy J. Power. 2019. Bolsonaro and Brazil's Illiberal Backlash, *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 30, Number 1, January 2019, pp. 68-82.

Hawkins, Kirk. 2003. Populism in Venezuela: the rise of Chavismo, *Third World Quarterly*, 24:6, 1137-1160.

Erin Conway-Smith. 2020. How Far Can Populism Go in South Africa?. *Foreign Affairs*

March 31: The future of populism and new challenges

Kathleen R. McNamara. 2019. When the Banal Becomes Political: The European Union in the Age of Populism, *Polity*, volume 51, number 4 (October 2019)

Daniel Baer. 2020. Poland's Slide Toward Homophobic Politics. When Putin's Rhetoric Meets Trump's Populism. *Foreign Affairs*

Michael Beckley. 2020. Rogue Superpower. Why This Could Be an Illiberal American Century. *Foreign Affairs*. November/December 2020

Daniel Nexon and Jeffrey Stacey. 2020. Fear of Trump's Populism Might Save American Al-

liances. U.S. Partners Know They Need to Help Biden Succeed. *Foreign Affairs*. December 3, 2020

Michael Fuchs. 2020. A Foreign Policy for the Post-Pandemic World. How to Prepare for the Next Crisis. *Foreign Affairs*. July 23, 2020

April 7: Student Presentations

April 14: Student Presentations

***Final Paper:* Paper due during the exam period**