

GV101 Week 01: The World of Politics

Questions to Consider

Teacher: Joe Greenwood

Email: j.greenwood3@lse.ac.uk

Office Hours (by appointment via the [Student Hub](#)):

Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30, CBG.4.13

Wednesdays, 14:30 – 15:30, CBG.4.13

Essential Reading Questions:

1. Clark, Golder, and Golder draw a comparison between the 2011 Arab Spring and the 1848 Spring of Nations. What things do you think have remained constant, and what things do you think have changed, between those two events?
2. Clark, Golder, and Golder list a series of events that have raised questions prompting major activity in political science. What do you think are the most important questions for political science to answer now? And in the future?
3. Pye notes that political science has moved between a focus on institutions, a focus on individuals, and a compromise between the two. Which of those approaches do you find most convincing, and why?
4. Pye also notes that, at various times, political science has been influenced by sociology, psychology, anthropology, and economics. Which of those influences do you think has had the biggest impact, and why? And which one, if any, do you think should have the biggest impact?

Essential Readings for Next Week:

- 'The Economic Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship' and 'The Cultural Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship' chapters, in William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, *Foundations of Comparative Politics* (London, Sage, 2019), pp. 71-95, pp. 97-122.
- Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, 'Islamic Culture and Democracy: Testing the "Clash of Civilizations" Thesis', *Comparative Sociology*, Vol. 1, No. 3-4 (2002), pp. 235-263.

Further Readings for Consideration Next Week:

- Ben Ansell and David Samuels, 'Inequality and Democratization: A Contractarian Approach', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 12 (2010), pp. 1543-1574.
- Stephen Haber and Victor Menaldo, 'Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism? A Reappraisal of the Resource Curse', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (Feb., 2011), pp. 1-26.