

POP88404— Political Corruption

Module Information	
Module Code	POP88404
Module Title	Political Corruption
Department	Political Science
Module Personnel	Sergio Ascencio
Academic Year	2026-2027
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 2
Contact Hours	10 hours of lectures

Module Content	
Module Description	Corruption is a major issue across the world, with far-reaching consequences for development, governance, and public trust. Yet it is also a difficult concept to define and study. What counts as corruption? How can it be measured? Why does it take different forms across political systems, bureaucracies, and societies? And why do corrupt arrangements often survive scandals, reforms, and public opposition? This graduate seminar examines political corruption in comparative and international perspective. We will consider how scholars define and measure corruption, how political and bureaucratic corruption differ, why corruption emerges, what consequences it has for political and economic outcomes, and why it can be so persistent.
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module, students should be able to: • Reflect on different definitions and dimensions of corruption, and discuss its causes, consequences, and persistence; • Apply key concepts and theories from political science and related social sciences to debates about corruption; • Distinguish between political and bureaucratic corruption, and analyse how corruption operates in different institutional settings;

Module Content

- Assess the merits of academic arguments about corruption, and offer reasoned and constructive critiques of them;
- Evaluate different types of evidence used to study corruption, including their strengths and limitations; and
- Develop independent arguments about corruption and anti-corruption in comparative and international perspective.

Assessment

Assessment Components

Participation 25%
Response papers 25%
Final project 50%

Additional Information

Prerequisites

None

Co-requisites

None