

Comparative Politics

POLS 150-01/150-01(H)
T/R 11:00am-12:15pm
Location: McGannon Hall 121
Spring 2014

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Course Description and Objectives:

Political science is divided into several sub-disciplines including comparative politics, political theory, American politics, international relations, and public policy. Comparative politics is the study of the domestic politics of foreign states. This course will introduce students to the methods, concepts and theories that guide scholars of this field. Important concepts in Comparative Politics include the state, political economy, democracy, authoritarianism, communism, terrorism, and globalization.

In addition to learning about the field, this course is focused on developing reading skills, and particularly the ability to read and outline scholarly journal articles, a skill that will benefit students in future courses in political science and other disciplines. Finally, because an understanding of contemporary events is essential to a student's success in the study of politics, a third expectation is that students will develop the habit of reading a newspaper on a daily basis. Students who fulfill all course requirements will be prepared for a successful undergraduate career in political science.

Course Requirements:

Class attendance, completion of all reading assignments, participation in team-based learning exercises and class discussion, two exams, and a daily commitment to reading the International Section of a reputable newspaper.

Attendance Policy/Participation Grade

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in discussions in order to gain full participation credit. The professor will provide guidance on what types of comments in class discussions are acceptable and beneficial for fulfillment of the participation grade. Three unexcused absences are allowed before the student's grade is impacted. Completion of online evaluation at the end of the course is a part of classroom participation and is expected from all students.

Reading Assignments:

There are generally less than fifty pages of reading each week of class, which is less than is usually assigned for an introductory course in political science. I have assigned less reading because scholarly writing is denser than standard textbooks and because students are also expected to read the news daily. Students must learn to read academic texts differently than novels or textbooks. Students should be able to summarize the argument of the article and should be able to discuss them using the terms provided in course lectures. Students will be permitted to use any notes taken while reading on in-class quizzes (not tests). In other words, students are strongly encouraged to outline their reading assignments.

Team-Based Learning:

Team-Based Learning is a proven method for increasing student comprehension, encouraging participation and discussion and developing critical reading skills. The method is simple. Students are assigned a group in the second week of classes. Throughout the semester, student progress will be randomly assessed through pop quizzes. Students will then retake the same quiz as a member of a group. The entire group must come to unanimous agreement on the answers to the quiz. The student's grade will be an average of his or her individual score and the group's score. The quizzes thus provide an incentive

for students to learn to talk about scholarly literature since students have to convince their colleagues why they should select a particular answer in order to protect their grades.

Newspaper Requirement:

Students are expected to read the international section of a newspaper daily. Because *The New York Times* is available for free on campus, it is highly recommended that students arrive to campus early enough to obtain a hard copy of the paper. Other acceptable newspapers, all of which are available online, include: *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *Le Monde*, *al-Jazeera*, etc. *The USA Today* is not an acceptable newspaper for this requirement. Students should expect to spend about thirty minutes a day reading the news.

Exams:

There are two exams in this class: a midterm and a final exam. The exams are not cumulative. Students can and are encouraged to study for these exams with their colleagues. The exams will only address material from readings and lectures. They will be multiple choice. I will employ all five answer choices.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	Below 60

Grading Detail:

- 20% Class attendance and participation
- 30% Quizzes (to evaluate student reading comprehension of required texts and a major newspaper, as well as team-based learning exercises)
- 50% Two exams

Required Text:

ERCP: *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 4th edition, Patrick O’Neil and Ronald Rogowski

Recommended Text:

ECP: *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 4th edition, Patrick O’Neil

This textbook is recommended for students who want a traditional textbook with definitions of concepts in order for review purposes. It is not required.

Both texts are published by W.W. Norton and Company. Students are welcomed to purchase older editions of textbooks in order to save money but will be responsible for obtaining any missing information and determining page number equivalencies from colleagues.

Academic Honesty:

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other

academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

Student Learning and Disability Statement:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Extra Credit:

There is one extra credit opportunity in this class. On 29 April we will discuss the significance of comparative politics. Students who arrive to class that day with a thoughtful reflection paper answering the question, “What is the significance of comparative politics?” will receive one extra credit point on their final grade. The reflection paper should be one page and double-spaced in 12-point font with one-inch margins.

Honors Students:

Students who are enrolled with this course as Honors students have an extra assignment. They will write an annotation for each reading assigned on the syllabus, and gather them into one document thus creating an annotated bibliography. The first draft of the bibliography is due **6 February 2014** and should include all readings assigned up to that date. The final bibliography is due **24 April 2014**.

The format for each entry is highly formulaic. The average length of an entry should be 250 words. Do all of the following: Identify the main argument of the scholarship (maybe an actual quote), rephrase this argument in your own words, identify the scope conditions (to what/whom/when does this theory apply?) and clarify if there are any articulated or implied biases. Finally, evaluate the argument. Does it offer an appropriate solution to a problem? Why or why not? Is the argument well supported? What evidence is particularly strong or weak? Each entry should begin with a full citation. Follow the style guide from the journal *Comparative Politics* available at: <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/jcp/style.htm>

Reading Schedule:

Bullet points below each day are THAT day's homework, ie: due the following session

Week One: Introduction

14 January: Review syllabus and getting to know one another

- Read the article, "Forget what you know about Good Study Habits" in *The New York Times*. 7 September 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/07/health/views/07mind.html>
- 1 page reflection paper: Evaluate your study habits.

16 January: How to Outline

- Resource: Basic outlining
<http://www.lib.jjay.cuny.edu/research/outlining.html>
- Class Activity: Outlining Lichbach and Zuckerman text
- Read and outline: King, Keohane and Verba text

Week Two: What is Comparative Politics?

21 January: Introducing the field

- In-class: Teams assigned
- Read and outline: Bartels

23 January: Comparing KKV and Bartels

- Read and outline: Fukuyama
- Read and outline: Weber

Week Three: The State

28 January:

- Read and outline Herbst
- Read and outline: Krasner

30 January:

- Read and outline: Hobsbawm
- Read and outline: Fearon and Laitin

Week Four: Nations and Society

4 February:

- Read and outline: Alesina and La Ferrara
- Read and outline: Baldwin and Huber

6 February:

- Read and outline: Smith
- Read and outline: North

Week Five: Political Economy

11 February:

- Read and outline: Acemoglu
- Read and outline: Banerjee and Iyer

13 February:

- Read and outline: Schmitter and Karl
- Read and outline: Lijphart

Week Six: Democratic Regimes

18 February:

- Read and outline: Putnam
- Read and outline: Stepan, Linz and Yadav

20 February:

- Read and outline: Linz and Stepan
- Read and outline: Weinthal and Pauline Jones Luong

Week Seven: Nondemocratic Regimes

25 February:

- Read and outline: Diamond
- Read and outline: Levitsky and Way

27 February:

- Read and outline: Skocpol (can also be saved until during Spring Break. We will not go over this reading until 18 March)

Week Eight: Midterms

4 March: Reviewing for the midterm

6 March: **The midterm**

Week Nine: Spring Break (no classes)

Week Ten: Political Violence

18 March:

- Read and outline: Goldstone
- Read and outline: Abrahms

20 March:

- Read and outline: Tocqueville
- Read and outline: Acemoglu et al.

Week Eleven: Advanced Democracies

25 March:

- Read and outline: Przeworski
- Read and outline: Duverger

27 March:

- Read and outline: Marx and Engels
- Read and outline: Darden and Grzymala-Busse

Week Twelve: Communism and Post-communism

1 April:

- Read and outline: Bunce and Wolchik
- Read and outline: He and Warren

3 April:

- Read and outline: Easterly
- Read and outline: Collier and Gunning

Week Thirteen: Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries

8 April:

- Read and outline: Krugman
- Read and outline: Arnold

10 April:

- Read and outline: Florida (not due until 22 April)
- Read and outline: Rodrik (not due until 22 April)

Week Fourteen:

15 April: Grant Opportunities for Undergraduates

17 April: **Easter Break, no classes**

Week Fifteen: Globalization

22 April:

- Read and outline: Economist
- Read and outline: Jiang

24 April:

- One-page reflection paper (**extra credit**): What is the significance of comparative politics?

Week Sixteen: Final Exam Week

29 April: So what? Assessing the importance of comparative politics

- Extra credit due in class 29 April

1 May: **Final Exam** (in class; we will not use the scheduled exam period)