

Introduction to Comparative Politics (PSC 1001), Summer 2020

Discussion Section:

Thursday 2:20 – 3:10

Office Hours:

Tuesday 12:00 – 2:00 p.m

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Course Description

Why are some countries democratic and others dictatorships? Why do civil wars occur in some countries and not others? How does history impact the political and economic stability of nations? These are some of the questions addressed by scholars working in the field of comparative politics, which is defined by its focus on political questions that can be answered through cross-country comparison. In this course, we will explore the field of comparative politics through a survey of issue areas, including state capacity, nation-building, ethnic conflict, democratic and authoritarian regimes, transitions to democracy, terrorism and insurgency, and economic development.

Course Requirements

- 1) Quizzes (10%)
- 2) Class participation and attendance (10%)
- 3) Memo and presentation (20%)
- 4) Group projects (30%)
- 5) Final (30%)

Required Reading

The class will also be required to read assigned readings from textbooks, academic articles and book chapters, and policy publications. The textbooks should be purchased, and other reading materials will be posted on Blackboard. The textbooks we will use for this course are:

- O'Neil, Patrick. 2018. *The Essentials of Comparative Politics* (6th Edition). New York: WW Norton & Company.
- O'Neil, Patrick and Ronald Rogowski. 2018. *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics* (5th Edition). New York: WW Norton & Company.

Quizzes

The instructor will administer up to six quizzes on the reading material.

Class Participation and Discussion Questions

Class participation and attendance constitutes 10% of your final grade. It will be assessed by course attendance (roughly 5%) and contributions to class discussion (roughly 5%).

Memo and Presentation

Students will be required to give an in-class presentation based on a memo that they write on the readings. This memo will be approximately 2-5 pages in length and will critically analyze a portion of the assigned reading. The aim of the memo is not to summarize but to analyze a question and respond to it. Students will use this memo to lead part of a class discussion. The professor will post discussion questions that the students can use as a basis for crafting their memos. Students will post their memos to the discussion board on Blackboard by 5 p.m. the day before class.

Group Projects

Students will work in teams of two or three to complete a series of six methods assignments.

Final Exam

Students will be required to take a final exam. The final will be comprehensive, meaning that it will test the students' knowledge of all of the material covered in the course.

Learning Objectives:

This class satisfies G-PAC requirements in critical thinking and cross-cultural perspectives. In this class, you will:

- Learn and critically analyze fundamental concepts in political science and comparative politics;
- Apply these concepts in a variety of countries;
- Learn how historical, societal, and cultural differences influence the practice of politics;
- Compare the differences between regime types and their impact on political, economic, and social outcomes;
- Demonstrate your knowledge through analytical papers, writing exercises and one term paper, along with an intensive peer review process.

Grading Policies

Grading Scale

100-94	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0-59	F

Makeup and Late Assignment Policies

Except in the case of a documented family or medical emergency, there will be no makeup exams or paper deadline extensions. Emergencies must be verified through the academic advising office of your college. Routine doctor's appointments do not qualify as medical emergencies; students will

not be excused from exams or assignments for non-emergency doctor's appointments. No make-up exams or deadline extensions will be provided for early holiday travel.

Assigned memos and papers must be turned in at the beginning of the class period. For each day a memo or paper is late (starting five minutes after the beginning of class) ten percentage points will be deducted from the final grade. Written responses to the discussion questions will only be accepted if the student is in class.

Technology Policies

During class and exams students should refrain from using any electronic devices, including laptops, cell phones, PDAs, iPads, dictionaries or any other electronic equipment. Despite their convenience, laptops can be distracting and the use of laptops is therefore to be strictly limited.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is vital to the health and reputation of the University. It is also vital to your education. I will pursue violations of academic integrity, including but not limited to cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers and responses to discussion questions, to the fullest extent possible.

The following is an excerpt from Article II, Section 1 of the University's Code of Academic Integrity, which defines academic dishonesty:

“(a) Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

(b) Common examples of academically dishonest behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Cheating - intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying from another student's examination; submitting work for an in-class examination that has been prepared in advance; representing material prepared by another as one's own work; submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both instructors; violating rules governing administration of examinations; violating any rules relating to academic conduct of a course or program.

2) Fabrication - intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any data, information, or citation in an academic exercise.

3) Plagiarism - intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.

4) Falsification and forgery of University academic documents - knowingly making a false statement, concealing material information, or forging a University official's signature on any University academic document or record. Such academic documents or records may include transcripts, add-drop forms, requests for advanced standing, requests to register for graduate-level courses, etc. (Falsification or forgery of non-academic University documents, such as financial aid forms, shall be considered a violation of the non-academic student disciplinary code.)

5) Facilitating academic dishonesty - intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.”

According to Article III, section 5 of the Code, the *minimum* penalty for a first offense is failure of the assignment in question. Repeat offenders will be referred directly to the Academic Integrity Council for a hearing. For more information, refer to the Code at <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>

1. Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method

May 21: What is Comparative Politics? What is the Comparative Method?

- O'Neil, Chapter 1
- Lichbach and Zuckerman in Essential Readings, Chapter 1

May 23: The Comparative Method

- King, Keohane & Verba in Essential Readings, Chapter 1
- John Stuart Mill in Essential Readings, Chapter 1

******May 26, Causal Diagram Assignment Due, Submit Online***

2. States, State Capacity, and Political Violence

May 28: State Capacity

- O'Neil, Chapter 2
- Charles Tilly (1985) "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" (Blackboard)
- Video: "Why Countries Exist"

May 30: State Failure & Political Violence

- O'Neil, Chapter 7
- Jeffrey Herbst in Essential Readings, Chapter 2
- Video: "Hunting Boko Haram"

******May June 2, Two-By-Two Assignment Due, Submit Online***

3. Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Design

June 4: Ethnicity and Nationalism

- O'Neil, Chapter 3
- Alesina and Ferrara in Essential Readings, Chapter 3
- Video: "How America's Public Schools Keep Kids in Poverty"
- Video: "School Segregation"

June 6: Ethnicity, Cooperation and Conflict

- Fearon and Laitin in Essential Readings, Chapter 3
- Cederman et. al. in Essential Readings, Chapter 3
- Video: "Losing Iraq"

******June 9, Most Similar Systems Assignment Due, Submit Online***

4. Political Regimes and Democratic Transitions

June 11: Democracy

- O'Neil, Chapter 5

- Foa and Mounk in Essential Readings, Chapter 5
- Niall Ferguson in Essential Readings, Chapter 11
- Video: “Revolution in Cairo”

June 13: Authoritarianism

- O’Neil, Chapter 6
- Levitsky and Way in Essential Readings, Chapter 6
- Video: “Putin’s Way”

*****June 16, Most Different Systems Assignment Due, Submit Online**

5. Gender

June 18: Women and Elections

- Georgina Waylen in Essential Readings, Chapter 5
- Krook & Norris (2014), “Beyond Quotas” (Blackboard)
- Video: “Women Who Make America”

June 20: The Impact of Women’s Leadership

- Beaman et. al. (2012), “Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls” (Blackboard)
- Dittmar et. al. (2018), *A Seat at the Table*, Chapters 7 & 8 (Blackboard)
- Video: “Women in Politics: Advocates of Change”

*****June 23, Scatterplot Assignment Due, Submit Online**

6. Political Economy

June 25: Political Economy of the OECD

- O’Neil, Chapter 8
- Estevéz-Abé et. al. in Essential Readings, Chapter 8
- Video: “The Nordic Model of Social Democracy”
- Video: “Bernie Sanders’ American Dream is in Denmark”

June 27: Political Economy of Development

- O’Neil, Chapter 10
- Beeson & Zeng (2018), “The BRICS and Global Governance” (Blackboard)
- Video: “Trump’s Trade War”

*****June 29, Causal Diagram Assignment Due, Submit Online**

*****June 29, Final Exam, Online**