

**Department of Political Science and Public Administration**

**POS 102-01: Introduction to Comparative Politics**

**Fall 2013**

**WB 616**

**TR 11-12:15**

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**Office Hours**: Mondays 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

**Course Description:**

 Introduction to Comparative explores the nature of the political universe in comparative perspective. Primarily we will be focusing on how groups and individuals share and struggle over power **in countries outside the United States.** In this course we will look at how different countries structure their political arenas to best divide power between competing groups in society. We will look at the different components of countries – the state itself, civil society, electoral institutions, international groups and actors, and individuals –and debate the effectiveness, justness, and viability of different governing arrangements. We will be using the comparative method to do so, in which we explore the similarities and differences in various countries and groups of countries in order to formulate and test hypotheses about the political world. We will also be discussing at length the emergence of the state system that serves as the foundation of the global order, and the ways in which the dual systems of states and nations often find themselves in conflict with one another. Among the questions we will ask are: Why are some states democracies and others authoritarian? Why do some states provide more generous public benefits for their citizens than others? Why are some states plagued by violence and corruption while others appear to be well run?

**Goals and Philosophy:**

The course is not designed to force you to memorize facts, figures and dates but rather to help you become conversant in the major political questions and themes that characterize public debate in the global order. By the end of the course you will not just understand but be *fluent* in the kinds of questions policymakers, scholars, and opinion-leaders tackle on a daily basis. This syllabus serves as an invitation for you to join the conversations that political scientists engage in with each other, with scholars from other disciplines, with policymakers, and with other groups and individuals in the political world. This is not a lecture-only course. On the contrary, to help develop your skills as critical thinkers, we will be engaging in a variety of collaborative and group activities in the classroom, designed to solve problems and offer answers to the toughest questions facing those who consider questions of politics and policy.

**Required Texts:**

The following texts are available for purchase in the university bookstore.

1. Patrick H. O’Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, **Fourth Edition**.

*All other readings will be posted well in advance on Blackboard, alpha by author, under “Syllabus and Readings.” Such readings are denoted by a* **{BB}** *in the syllabus.*

**Prerequisites:** There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Attendance and Punctuality:**

Because of the frequency of interactive activities and presentations, your presence in class is essential to the creation and maintenance of a collaborative learning environment. Three absences are permitted, whatever the reason. Any further absences will be subtracted on a percentage basis directly from your final grade, unless excused by a note. We meet about 27 times, so for example, if you miss three classes beyond your 3 permitted absences, you will be docked 1/9 of your final grade – 11 total points. So if you scored an 87 in the class but missed 6 classes, your total grade will be reduced to a 76. The following chart illustrates the penalties associated with the number of skips:

1: no penalty 6: 11 points 11: 31 points

2: no penalty 7: 15 points 12: 35 points

3: no penalty 8: 19 points 13: 39 points

4: 3 points 9: 23 points **14: automatic failure**

5: 7 points 10: 27 points

**Crisis Policy**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your health, personal life or any other crisis that is affecting your ability to come to class and complete the work, it is imperative that you alert me as soon as possible. The best path is to see someone at Roosevelt’s counseling center, who can then alert all your professors that you are having trouble. This is very important: You cannot come to me in December and tell me you’ve been having trouble since August. You’ll find that if you come to me promptly, I will be very understanding and will work together with you to devise strategies to get you through the class.

**Grade Components**

*Mid-term Exam:* There will be one exam, a midterm, administered on Tuesday, October 25th.

*Quizzes:* There will be 6 quizzes based on the required readings and lectures. Quiz days are listed in the syllabus. No make-up quizzes will be given for late or absent students, but your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

*Working Group Presentations:* We will be forming 10 country-specific working groups, in which you will be working in groups of 4. The main responsibility of these groups is to make one presentation about your country – topics will be distributed well in advance of this presentation. Groups will receive a collective grade for their presentation. Working groups will occasionally present their findings in plenary sessions in which the class will come together as a group to engage in extended discussion. More details about these working groups will follow during their formation. The Working Groups will be**:** The United Kingdom**,** Germany**,** MexicoandIran

*Final Exam:* There will be a final exam during the allotted exam period*.*

*Participation:* Your participation grade is an average of your fellow group members’ evaluation of your semester-long work in the group, and the instructor’s evaluation of your contribution to the class environment. The participation rubric for the instructor’s evaluation is as follows:

A: Student rarely misses class, contributes frequently with thoughtful comments clearly drawn from a careful consideration of class materials.

B: Student rarely misses class, contributes occasionally with comments and questions that are clearly drawn from a consideration of class materials.

C: Student misses class frequently, and participates with comments that betray a lack of engagement with class materials. A C will also be assigned to students who attend class diligently but never contribute to class discussions.

D: Student misses class very often and makes contributions to the class environment that are an obvious distraction from the materials, ideas and issues under consideration.

F: Student rarely if ever shows up for class.

**Grading**

Mid-term 20%

Final Exam: 30%

Quizzes: 30%

Presentations: 10%

Participation: 10%

**The grading scale is as follows**. Grades will be rounded down below .5, and rounded up for .5-.9 – i.e. an 89.4 is an 89, but an 89.5 is a 90.

92.5 – 100% : A 86.5 – 89.4%: B+ 76.5 – 79.4%: C+ 66.5 – 69.4%: D+

89.5 – 92.4%: A- 82.5 – 86.4%: B 72.5 – 76.4%: C 59.5 – 66.4%: D

79.5 – 82.4%: B- 69.5 – 72.4%: C- 0 – 59.4%: F

**Academic Integrity**

Committing **plagiarism** or other academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating) will result in a grade of 0 (zero) for the assignment in question, and will result in formal notification of the incident to your major department chair, college dean, and the University’s Assistant V. P. for Student Services. Further disciplinary action may be pursued depending on the circumstances of the incident and may result in expulsion from the university. There are **no exceptions** to this policy. It is **your responsibility** to know and follow the official Roosevelt University description of academic integrity.

**University Policy on Absence to Observe Religious Holidays:**

Roosevelt University respects the rights of students to observe major religious holidays and will make accommodations, upon request, for such observances. Students who wish to observe religious holidays must inform their instructors in writing within the first two weeks of the semester of their intent to observe the holiday so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. See the student handbook for further details.

**LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW - Fall 2014 full semester courses is 10/28/2013.**
Prior to and including the first week of the fall or spring semester sessions, students may drop one or more courses with no record of the class appearing on the transcript. In weeks two through ten of the fall or spring semester, students may complete a Change in Registration form in person or by fax.

The form is found on the web at [http://www.roosevelt.edu/registrar/forms](https://webmail.roosevelt.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e10aa61a4f154d6e95c3df19f3f1aa2d&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.roosevelt.edu%2fregistrar%2fforms" \t "_blank).  Online withdrawals after the semester has begun are not an option. The course will be recorded on the transcript with the notation of "W" indicating that the student withdrew.

After week ten of the fall or spring semester students may not withdraw from courses without completing a Petition for Late Withdrawal form found at [http://www.roosevelt.edu/registrar/forms](https://webmail.roosevelt.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e10aa61a4f154d6e95c3df19f3f1aa2d&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.roosevelt.edu%2fregistrar%2fforms" \t "_blank).  The petition form requires the student’s signature and the approval of the instructor, department chair, dean or dean’s designee.  It also requires a statement of the non-academic reason for your late withdrawal, including reason student was unable to withdraw by deadline, AND, documentation.

Withdrawing from courses may have serious consequences for academic progress towards the degree, for financial aid eligibility, for repayment of refunds, visa requirements (for international students), and eligibility for competition (for student athletes). Students should consult carefully with their instructors and academic advisors and must meet with a financial aid advisor before withdrawing from classes after the semester has begun.  Tuition Refund Schedule and Withdrawal deadlines are published for each semester and for summer session on the Important Dates page of the website at [http://www.roosevelt.edu/registrar/ImportantDates](https://webmail.roosevelt.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e10aa61a4f154d6e95c3df19f3f1aa2d&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.roosevelt.edu%2fregistrar%2fImportantDates" \t "_blank)

**Class Schedule**

**\*\*\*Readings Are To Be Completed Before Class on the Date They Are Assigned\*\*\***

**Week 1: THE POLITICAL WORLD AND THE COMPARATIVE METHOD**

**Tuesday August 26th**

In class: Logistics and Introduction to the study of politics

Read: -

**Thursday August 28th**

In-class: What is comparative politics? Formation of working groups

Read: Essentials of Comparative Politics, “Introduction,” pp. 3-25.

**Week 2: Empires, States and the State System**

**Tuesday, September 2nd**

In-class: Lecture: “Emergence of the state system”

Read: Essentials Chapter 2, “States,” pp. 27-55.

**Thursday, September 4th**

In-class: Lecture: “The State” + discussion

Read: Charles Tilly, “War-Making and State-Making as Organized Crime” **{BB}**.

**Week 3: Democratic Political Institutions/The United Kingdom**

**Tuesday September 9th**

In-class: Quiz #1; Lecture “Structuring Contestation in Democratic Societies”

Read: *Essentials of Comparative Politics* Chapter 5, “Democratic Regimes,” pp. 126-160. Cases in Comparative Politics: “The United Kingdom” **{BB}**.

**Thursday, September 11th**

In-class: Collaborative exercise on types of government; collaborative work time

Read: Juan Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism.” *Journal of Democracy* **{BB}**. Scott Mainwaring and Matthew S. Shugart, “Juan Linz, presidentialism and democracy: A critical appraisal.” *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 29, No.4 (1997) **{BB}.**

**Week 4: Political Institutions/the United Kingdom**

**Tuesday, September 16th**

In-class: Lecture: Sovereignty and Nationalism in the UK

Read: *Essentials of Comparative Politics* Chapter 3: Nations and Society. Roland Flamini, “Scotland’s Independence Bid: History, Prospects, Challenges.” *World Affairs*, May 1 2013. **{BB}.**

**Thursday, September 18th**

In-class: Watch returns of Scottish independence referendum

Read: Matt Qvortrup, “Referendums on Independence, 1860-2011.” *Political Quarterly*, January-March 2014. **{BB}.**

**Week 5-6: Electoral Institutions/the United Kingdom**

**Tuesday, September 23rd**

In-class: Quiz #2. Lecture: “Electoral Systems”

Read: David Horowitz, “Electoral Systems: A Primer For Decision Makers.” **{BB}.**

**Thursday, September 25th**

In-class: UK Group Presentations

Read**:** John Curtice, “Politicians, Voters and Democracy: The 2011 U.K. Referendum on the Alternative Vote. *Electoral Studies* (2013). **{BB}**

**Tuesday, September 30th**

In-class: Lecture: Parties and Party Systems

Read: Susan Scarrow, “Political Parties and Party Systems” in *Comparing Democracies 3* **{BB}.** Thomas Quinn, “From Two-Partism to Alternating Predominance: The British Party System, 1950-2010.” *Political Studies* (2013): pp. 378-400.

**Thursday, October 2nd**

In-class: UK Group Presentations

Read: Simon Schama, “Three-Way Race” **{BB}**.

**Week 7: Advanced Democracies/Germany**

**Tuesday, October 7th**

In class: Quiz #3. Lecture “Problems in advanced democracies”

Read: *Essentials of Comparative Politics* Chapter 8 “Advanced Democracies” pp. 224-255.

**Thursday October 9th**

In-class: Collaborative exercise

Read: James W. Vaupel et al., 2006, “Redistributing Work in Aging Europe,” *Science* June 30, 20056: 1911-13. **{BB}.**

**WEEK 8: MIDTERM**

**Tuesday, October 14th**

**In-class: Midterm Review**

**Thursday, October 16th**

**In-class: Midterm Examination**

**Week 9: German Political Institutions**

**Tuesday, October 21st**

In-class: **Lecture: German Institutions and the EU**

Read: Cases in Comparative Politics: Germany **{BB}**

**Thursday, October 23rd**

In-class: Germany group presentations

Read: Frank Decker, “Follow-up to the Grand Coalition: The German Party System Before and After the 2013 Federal Elections.” *German Politics & Society* (Summer 2014). **{BB}** Timoty Garton Ash, “The New German Question.” *New York Review of Books*, August 2014. **{BB}**

**Week 10: The Future of the Welfare State/Germany**

**Tuesday, October 28th**

In-Class: Quiz #4; Lecture: “Welfare States”

Read: Essentials of Comparative Politics Chapter 4, “Political Economy,” pp. 91-125. David Leonhardt, “The German Example,” *New York Times*, June 7th, 2011 (**BB**); Ivan T. Berend. “The Welfare State: Crisis and Solutions.” **{BB}**.

**Thursday, October 30th**

In-class: Germany group presentations

Read: Jens Alber, “What the European and American Welfare States Have in Common and Where They Differ.” Journal of European Social Policy, (2010). **{BB}**

**Week 11: Non-Democratic Regimes/Iran**

**Tuesday November 4th**

In-class: Lecture: “Politics in Authoritarian States”; Working groups

Read: Essential of Comparative Politics Chapter 6, “Non-Democratic Regimes,” pp. 162-194.

**Thursday November 6th**

In-class: **Collaborative Exercise on authoritarianism + Discussion**

Read Cases in Comparative Politics: “Iran”. **{BB}**

**Week 12: Political Violence/Iran**

**Tuesday, November 11th**

In-class: Quiz #5. Lecture: Revolution and Iranian Institutions

Read: *Essentials of Comparative Politics* Chapter 9, “Political Violence,” pp. 192-122. Omid Payrow Shabani, “The Green’s Non-Violent Ethos: The Roots of Non-Violence in the Iranian Democratic Movement.” *Constellations*, (2013): pp. 347-360.

**Thursday, November 13th**

In-class: Iran Group Presentations

Read: Richard Cohen: “Iran: The Tragedy and the Future.” **{BB}**

**Week 13: Ethnic Nationalism/Iran**

**Tuesday November 18th**

In-class: Lecture: Secession and Ethnic Conflict

Read: Donald Horowitz, “The Cracked Foundations of the Right to Secede.” *Journal of Democracy* (April 2003). **{BB}.** John Bradley, “Iran’s Ethnic Tinderbox.” *Washington Quarterly* (2006). **{BB}**

**Thursday November 20th**

In-class: Iran Group Presentations + Discussion

Read: Ahmedzadeh, Hashem and Stansfield, Gareth. “The Political, Cultural and Military Re-awakening of the Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Iran” **{BB}**.

**Week 14**

**No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week 15**

**Tuesday December 2nd**

In-class: Quiz #6. Lecture: Globalization and the Future of the State

Read: *Essentials of Comparative Politics* Chapter 11: Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics

**Thursday December 4th**

In-class: Final Exam Review and Semester Wrap

**Week 16**

**Tuesday, December 9th**

Final Exam, 11 a.m.

**Important Notes:**

Enrollment in this class constitutes acceptance of the policies outlined above.

Students with disabilities may request special accommodations. Students must let me know within the first two weeks of the semester if this is the case, and they also must contact Nancy Litke in the Academic Success Center (312-384-3810).

Cell phones, mp3 players and other personal electronic devices must be switched off during class. You may use your laptop for notetaking, but students using their laptops for personal communication during class will be asked to stop.

There is no eating during class. You may bring drinks with lids or caps. You may also bring food that is invisible or that will only be consumed in a parallel universe or a simulacrum of our world.