

Introduction to Comparative Politics (POLS 241, Section 3)

Fall 2017

Professor: Jonathan Hassid

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515-294-0698

Professor's Office Hours: Tues, Thurs 2-3 and Fri 9-12 in Ross Hall 515

Course Description: This course is designed to familiarize students with the basics of comparative politics and the comparative method. Over the course of the semester we will discuss important concepts in comparative politics, including the nature and origins of the state, the state's role in economic development, and how states might respond to contemporary challenges. We will also examine similarities and differences among democracies and autocracies, investigate how presidential systems differ from parliamentary ones, explore how dictatorships become democracies (and vice versa) and begin to look at the origins of political violence, including revolutions and terrorism.

Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able:

1. Apply general political science concepts and data sources to describe and analyze the politics of a number of countries
2. Identify and analyze the purpose and roles of the state
3. Identify key differences between democratic, authoritarian, and semi-authoritarian states.
4. Identify and discuss the major issues and challenges facing countries in the transition to and consolidation of democracy.
5. Describe and compare how different political systems operate.

Required books:

Essentials of Comparative Politics (WW Norton: 2015), Patrick H. O'Neil
(referred to below as O'Neil)

Comparative Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings (Oxford: 2017), J. Tyler Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood
(referred to below as Dickovick & Eastwood)

Course Requirements:

Participation (10%): based on class attendance and in-class participation. **Come to class prepared to participate!**

Group presentations (15%): Students groups (typically 3 students) will present on their chosen country during the last three weeks of the course in a group. There will also be an individual research paper assignment. More details will follow on the mechanics of this assignment.

Two mid-term exams (25% each, 50% total): a comprehensive mid-terms with essays, multiple choice and/or short answers. These will be administered by the **Online Testing Center on Sep 25-27, and on Nov 8-10.**

Final exam (25%): a comprehensive final, with essays, multiple choice and/or short answers. This will be administered by the Online Testing Center during finals week. **Note that you may take the exam any time during finals week. EXAMS MUST BE COMPLETED BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15.**

I will give more details on these exams as they approach.

Grades are based on the following grading system:

93 and higher = A
90 – 92 = A-
87 – 89 = B+
83 – 86 = B
80 – 82 = B-
77 – 79 = C+
73 – 76 = C
70 – 72 = C-
67 – 69 = D+
63 – 66 = D
60 – 62 = D-
59 and below = F.

Late or Missed Assignments

Exams are only excused for official school absences, serious illness (with medical documentation), bereavement and the like. Missed exams must be made up as quickly as possible, **with a two-week deadline.** 15 or more days after a missed exam, the make-up opportunity has expired.

Course Adherence to University Policies

Academic misconduct

All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. The *Student Disciplinary Regulations* will be followed in the event of academic misconduct. Depending on the act, a student could receive an F grade on the test/assignment, F grade for the course, and could be suspended or expelled from the University. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically-related matter and any knowing attempt to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to each of the following acts when performed in any type of academic or academically-related matter, exercise, or activity:

Obtaining unauthorized information. Information is obtained dishonestly, for example, by copying graded homework assignments from another student, by working with another student on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted to do so by the instructor, or by looking at your notes or other written work during an examination when not specifically permitted to do so.

Tendering of information. Students may not give or sell their work to another person who plans to submit it as his or her own. This includes giving their work to another student to be copied, giving someone answers to exam questions during the exam, taking an exam and discussing its contents with students who will be taking the same exam, or giving or selling a term paper to another student.

Misrepresentation. Students misrepresent their work by handing in the work of someone else. The following are examples: purchasing a paper from a term paper service; reproducing another person's paper (even with modifications) and submitting it as their own; having another student do their computer program or having someone else take their exam.

Bribery. Offering money or any item or service to a faculty member or any other person to gain academic advantage for yourself or another is dishonest.

Plagiarism. "Unacknowledged use of the information, ideas, or phrasing of other writers is an offense comparable with theft and fraud, and it is so recognized by the copyright and patent laws. Literary offenses of this kind are known as plagiarism."

See <http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html>

Disability Accommodation. Iowa State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you have a disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please contact me to set up a meeting **within the first two weeks of the semester** or as soon as you become aware of your need. Before meeting with me, you will need to obtain a SAAR form with recommendations for accommodations from the [Disability Resources Office](#), located in Room 1076 on the main floor of the Student Services Building. Their telephone number

is 515-294-7220 or email disabilityresources@iastate.edu . Retroactive requests for accommodations will not be honored.

Dead Week. This class follows the Iowa State University Dead Week policy as noted in section 10.6.4 of the Faculty Handbook <http://www.provost.iastate.edu/resources/faculty-handbook>.

Harassment and Discrimination. Iowa State University strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U.S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact me, Student Assistance at 515-294-1020 or email dso-sas@iastate.edu, or the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#) at 515-294-7612.

Religious Accommodation. If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and I will review the request. You or I may also seek assistance from the [Dean of Students Office](#) or the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#).

Contact Information. If you are experiencing, or have experienced, a problem with any of the above issues, email academicissues@iastate.edu.

Advising Questions. Please direct advising inquiries to Jason Chrystal (jchrysta@iastate.edu).

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Course Schedule

Part 1, Definitions and a brief history of how we got here

Week 1 (8/22, 8/24)

- 1) Introduction
- 2) What is comparative politics?
 - Read O'Neil, Ch. 1

Week 2 (8/29, 8/31)

- 1) Origins of the modern world
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, 1.1 & 1.2
- 2) Prof out of town – **CLASS POSSIBLY CANCELLED TODAY**

- Read O’Neil, Ch. 2

Week 3 (9/5, 9/7)

- 1) The nation state 2 – “War makes the state, and the state makes war”
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, 3.1 & 3.2
 - Read Tilly (1985) (on Blackboard)
- 2) The nation state 3
 - Read O’Neil, Ch. 3

Week 4 (9/12, 9/14)

- 1) The nation state 4 – “An imagined community”
 - Read excerpts from Michael Billig (on Blackboard)
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, 13.1 & 13.2
- 2) Political economy 1 – What is political economy?
 - Read O’Neil, Ch. 4

Week 5 (9/19, 9/21)

- 1) Political economy 2 - “Development”
 - Read excerpts from Rostow & Gunder Frank (on Blackboard)
- 2) Political economy 3 – “Underdevelopment”
 - Read Gerschenkron (on Blackboard)
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, 5.1

Week 6 (9/26, 9/28)

- 1) **MID-TERM EXAM 1 (Sep 25, 26, or 27, in online centers. No class on 9/26)**

Part 2, Democracy, Autocracy, Revolution and Violence

Week 6 (cont’d, 9/28)

- 2) Democracy 1 – definitions
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, Ch. 6
 - Read O’Neil, pp. 136-150

Week 7 (10/3, 10/5)

- 1) Democracy 2 – presidentialism & semi-presidentialism
 - Read O’Neill, pp. 151-170
- 2) Democracy 3 – the Westminster System
 - Read Dickovick & Eastwood, Ch. 10

Week 8 (10/10, 10/12)

- 1) Autocracy 1 – background
 - O’Neil, Ch. 6
- 2) Autocracy 2 – democratic breakdown

- Dickovick & Eastwood, Ch. 7

Week 9 (10/17, 10/19)

- 1) Autocracy 3 – totalitarianism
 - Watch *A State of Mind* in class, read Arendt (on Blackboard)
- 2) Autocracy 4 – a Chinese model?
 - Read Huang, “Rethinking the Beijing Consensus” (on Blackboard)

Week 10 (10/24, 10/26)

- 1) Political Violence 1 – revolutions
 - Read O’Neill, pp. 206-219
 - Read Dickovic & Eastwood, 12.1 & 12.2
- 2) Political Violence 2 – terrorism
 - Read O’Neill, pp. 219-237
 - Read Ahmad, 1998 (on Blackboard)

Week 11 (10/31, 11/2)

- 1) Globalization 1 – Globalization in perspective
 - Read Pomeranz & Topik (on Blackboard)
- 2) Globalization 2 – Globalization and states
 - Read O’Neill, Ch. 11

Week 12 (11/7, 11/9) 1) Globalization 3 – the China challenge

- Read Ikenberry, 2008 (on Blackboard)
- 2) **MID-TERM EXAM 2 (Nov. 8, 9, or 10 – to be taken in online testing centers, no class on 11/9)**

Part 3: Individual Countries

Week 13 (11/14, 11/16)

- 1) Student country presentations (in groups)
- 2) Student country presentations (in groups)

THANKSGIVING BREAK (Nov. 20-24)

Week 14 (11/28, 11/30)

- 1) Student country presentations (in groups)
- 2) Student country presentations (in groups)

Week 15 (12/5, 12/7)

- 1) Student country presentations (in groups)
- 2) Student country presentations (in groups)

**Final exam (120 minutes) to be taken any time during the final exam week (at students' convenience, during opening hours) at the student testing centers.
THEY MUST BE COMPLETED BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15!**