

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Course Day & Times:

- Lectures: Monday / Wednesday 6th period, Virtual – online Zoom
- Sections: Various (Thursdays and Fridays)
- Office Hours (Kreppel): TBD (via Zoom)
- Messages via Canvas for course related questions
- Final exam December 16, 7:30am – 9:30am (online)

Course objectives, description and goals:

This course is designed to provide students a comprehensive introduction to Comparative Politics through the discussion of a broad range of thematic topics. These are supplemented with a selection of academic readings and real-world case studies from various regions of the world. In general, Mondays will be dedicated to the basic concepts of the week's readings (ECP), Wednesdays to the related scholarly readings (ERCP) and Thursdays/Fridays (sections) will focus on the comparative cases (CCP) as a platform for applying what was learned in the other readings.

Prerequisites

None – this is an introductory course

Attendance

Note that class attendance is required for this course. This includes attendance at lectures and weekly discussion sections. Attendance will be monitored as necessary through participation in polls and quizzes during online lectures. During lectures the professor may also occasionally provide insider information for exams and otherwise incentivize regular attendance. Attendance and participation grades in sections will be determined by the section instructor and may vary between sections.

Repeated absences will unquestionably affect your performance on exams since these are based on class lectures, section discussions, as well as readings. Lecture notes and other related course materials discussed or distributed during class will NOT be posted online or otherwise distributed (except in the case of an *excused* absence). **Zoom lectures will be NOT be recorded or accessible asynchronously.** Students who are absent for approved reasons will be given access to lecture slides. According to the Office of the University Registrar, “acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.” For further information about the University of Florida's attendance policy, please see the current [Undergraduate Catalogue](#)

Zoom Etiquette

For main lectures (Mondays and Wednesdays) all students should mute their microphones during the lectures unless and until called upon to ask a question. Students interested in asking a question may use the "raised hand" feature in Zoom or submit a question to the professor via the "chat" function. Questions submitted via chat will be visible only to the professor and TAs. Students may choose to have their video on or off, though if bandwidth becomes an issue, students may be asked to shut video off. If video is on students should respect basic rules of decorum (e.g. be fully clothed (no P.J.s), be attentive and present, avoid potential distractions within video frame, etc. Please note that individual TAs may have different rules for managing **student participation in sections**, including requiring that students keep their video on during the discussion

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, and what the university policies are.

If you have doubts, we please discuss with the professor immediately (after the infringement is too late). Please refer to the current [Undergraduate Catalogue](#) for more information on the Student Honor code. Students who have questions about these policies should contact the undergraduate advisement center for additional information.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) in the Dean of Students Office so that special arrangements can be made to accommodate your needs. It is your responsibility to do so at the beginning of the semester and to communicate directly with the professor during the first week of classes (or as soon as the disability occurs). Please consider in advance any

Grading & Assessment

Students are responsible for completing all readings for the topic in question prior to attending the class. Short quizzes on assigned readings will be held most weeks and in some cases there may be more than 1 quiz in a single week. There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes, which may be completed from the preceding Saturday through noon on the assigned day. Note that quizzes are timed (5 minutes), and that answers will be available after class on the assign day for the quiz.

- Midterms (20% each = 40%)
- Final Exam (35%)
- Quizzes (10%)
- Attendance (5%)
- Participation in discussion sections (10%)

Grading Scale

93% - 100% = A 90% - 92% = A- 87% - 89% = B+ 84% - 86% = B 80% - 83% = B-
77% - 79% = C+ 74% - 76% = C 70% - 73% = C- 67% - 69% = D+ 64% - 66% = D
60% - 63% = D- < 60% = F

*****PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THIS SYLLABUS AS NEEDED DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER. AS MUCH ADVANCE WARNING AS POSSIBLE WILL BE PROVIDED TO STUDENTS. CHANGES CAN BE MADE TO THE SCHEDULE, ASSIGNED READING OR OTHER ASPECTS AS DEEMED NECESSARY. NO CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO GRADING SCALE OR CORE UF POLICIES AS NOTED ABOVE. *****

REQUIRED BOOK & MATERIALS

- O'Neill, P., Essentials of Comparative Politics (6th Edition) **ECP**
- O'Neill, P. and R. Rogowski, Essential Readings in Comparative Politics (5th Edition) **ERCP**
- O'Neill, P., K. Fields, and D. Share, Cases in Comparative Politics (6th Edition) **CCP**

*Please note that earlier editions are **NOT** acceptable (I know they are less expensive). Unfortunately, they are substantively different enough that students will not be able to perform as well as they should on exams utilizing older editions*

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

WEEK 1 (August 31 & Sept. 2) Introduction to the Course and Comparative Politics

- What is comparative politics
- The comparative method

Readings:

- ERCP Chapter 1 (1) Lichbach and Zuckerman; (2) King, Keohane and Verba
- ECP Chapter 1 (intro)
- CCP Chapter 1 (intro)

WEEK 2 (Sept. 7 (Labor Day) & 9) The Origin and Role of States

- What is a state?
- The 'modern' state
- Comparing states

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 2
- CCP Chapter 2 (UK)

WEEK 3 (September 14 & 16) The Origin and Role of States (Cont.)

- What is a state?
- The 'modern' state
- Comparing states

Readings:

- ERCP Chapter 2 (1) Weber, (2) Herbst, (3) Rotberg
- CCP Chapter 3 (USA)

WEEK 4 (September 21 & 23) Nations, Nationality and Identity

- Ethnic identity vs. national identity
- Citizenship

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 3
- ERCP Chapter 3 - (1) Fearon and Laitin; (2) Alesina and La Ferrara; (3) Baldwin and Huber
- CCP Chapter 3 (USA) and Chapter 9 (India)

WEEK 5 (September 28 & 30) Political Economy

- Systems of political economy
- Evaluating political-economic systems

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 4
- ERCP Chapter 4 - (1) Smith; (2) Acemoglu; (3) Rogowski
- CCP Chapter 6 (Japan)

WEEK 6 (October 5 & 7): Review and Midterm I (7th)

- Catch-up & Review

WEEK 7 (October 12 & 14) Democracy and Democratic Regimes

- Democracy and democratization
- Institutions and political systems (variations on a theme)

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 5
- ERCP Chapter 5 - (1) Schmitter and Karl; (2) Lijphart; (3) Stephan, Linz and Yadav
- CCP Chapters 4 (France)

WEEK 8 (October 19 & 21) Non-Democratic Regimes

- Origins and characteristics of non-democratic governance
- Types of non-democratic systems

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 6
- ERCP Chapter 6 - (1) Linz and Stapan; (2) Levitsky and Way; (3) Geddes, Frantz and Wright
- CCP Chapters 10 & 13 (Iran and South Africa)

WEEK 9 (October 26 & 28) Political Violence

- Origins of political violence
- Types of political violence

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 7
- ERCP Chapter 7 - (1) Skocpol; (2) Crenshaw; (3) Walsh and Piazza
- CCP Chapter 14 (Nigeria)

WEEK 10 (November 2 & 4) Developed (Advanced) Democracies

- Core institutions
- Defining and understanding 'advanced democracies'
- New modes of sovereignty, identity and political values

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 8
- ERCP Chapter 8 - (1) Iversen and Soskice; (2) Duverger; (3) Acemoglu, et al
- CCP Chapter 5 (Germany)

WEEK 11 (November 9 & 11 (holiday)): Developed (Advanced) Democracies (continued)

- Core institutions
- Defining and understanding 'advanced democracies'
- New modes of sovereignty, identity and political values

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 8
- ERCP Chapter 8 - (1) Iversen and Soskice; (2) Duverger; (3) Acemoglu, et al
- CCP Chapter 5 (Germany)

WEEK 12 (November 16 & 18): Review and Midterm II (18th)

WEEK 13 (November 23 & 25 (holiday)): Communism and Post-Communism

- Communism: ideal versus reality
- Post-communism – political, economic and social transformations

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 9
- ERCP Chapter 9 - (1) Marx and Engels; (2) Ekiert; (3) Hale
- CCP Chapters 7 & 8 (Russia and China)

WEEK 14 (November 30 & December 2): Communism (finish)/Start Developing Nations

- Defining and understanding ‘less-developed’ countries (origins and implication)
- Industrialization and democracy

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 10
- ERCP Chapter 10 - (1) Collier and Gunning; (2) Clark; (3) Acemoglu and Johnson
- CCP Chapter 11 (Mexico)

WEEK 15 (December 7 & 9): Developing Nations (finish)/Globalization (abbreviated)

- Defining ‘globalization’
- Evaluating globalization

Readings:

- ECP Chapter 11
- ERCP Chapter – NA
- CCP Chapter 12 (Brazil)