

CPO2001: Comparative Politics Introduction

Fall 2025 | 3.00 credits

I. General Information

Meeting days and times: Online

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 11 am – 12 noon

Course Description

Classification of political systems according to institutional and developmental characteristics. Causes and costs of political stability and instability. Comparison will relate to contemporary political institutions and processes in specific countries.

Prerequisites

General Education Designation: Social and Behavioral Sciences (S)

Social Science courses must afford students an understanding of the basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavior and past and present social, political, and economic issues. **Social and Behavioral Sciences (S)** is a sub-designation of Social Sciences at the University of Florida. These courses provide instruction in history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Secondary General Education Designation: International (N)

International courses promote the development of students' global and intercultural awareness. Students examine the cultural, economic, geographic, historical, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world, and thereby comprehend the trends, challenges, and opportunities that affect communities around the world. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political, and/or social systems and beliefs mediate their own and other people's understanding of an increasingly connected world.

All General Education area objectives can be found [here](#).

Course Materials

- O'Neill, P., Essentials of Comparative Politics **ECP** (6th Edition or beyond)
- O'Neill, P., K. Fields, and D. Share, Cases in Comparative Politics **CCP** (6th Edition or beyond)

Materials will be available through the following means:

Available in bookstore

II. Course Goals

Course Objectives

In this course we will:

- We will study methodological concepts such as inductive and deductive reasoning, and causality and correlation, when analyzing relationships among events, actors, institutions, and outcomes.
- The course explores topics such as ethnic conflict, political violence, democratic and authoritarian regimes and political economy.

Student Learning Outcomes

A student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

- Identify core elements of different political systems, including regime type, institutions, relevant historical facts, societal issues, and implications.
- Apply core concepts to real world examples.

III. Graded Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the [Catalog](#).

Graded Components

Assignment	Number	Points	Total
Weekly Discussion	10	3	30
Weekly Quizzes	12	4	48
Current Events	3	4	12
Final Project	1	10	10
TOTAL			100

Weekly Discussions (10 x 3 pts = 30):

- The discussion will be based on the ECP readings. Students have to write a short answer based on the chapter assigned for that week.

- Discussion question will be available on Monday of that week and must be **due on Sunday** of that week at **1159 pm - no exception**.

Weekly Quizzes (12 x 4 pts = 48):

- There will be **12** quizzes – one quiz every week, starting from Week 3.
- These quizzes will be based on the readings assigned for that week from the CCP book.
- These quizzes will be **open book**, but you have to complete them in **15 minutes**.
- Every quiz will be made available on Monday of that week and must be **due on Sunday** of that week at **1159 pm - no exception**.
- If you are doing poorly on these quizzes or struggling with the material, please meet me during the office hours as early in the semester as possible to remedy the situation. I will not be able to help you improve your grades once the majority of quizzes are done.

Current Events (3 x 4 pts = 12):

- Students have to submit 3 current event reports.
- Select a news article from a reputable news source and analyze it by relating it to the course materials.
- Detailed instructions are provided on Canvas.
- Every report is **due on Friday** of that week at **1159 pm**.

Final (take home) project (10%):

- Your final project for this class requires you to DESIGN YOUR OWN COUNTRY the way case studies are structured in the blue textbook.
- Detailed instructions are provided on Canvas.

TOTAL: 100%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade
A	100-92.5
A-	92.4-89.5
B+	89.4-86.5
B	86.4-82.5
B-	82.4-79.5
C+	79.4-76.5
C	76.4-72.5
C-	72.4-69.5
D+	69.4-66.5
D	66.4-62.5
D-	62.4-59.5
E	59.4-0

See the UF Catalog's "[Grades and Grading Policies](#)" for information on how UF assigns grade points.

Note: A minimum grade of C is required to earn General Education credit.

IV. Calendar

Week/Topic	Date	Readings	Work Due
Week 1: Course Introduction	Aug 21-22	<i>No reading</i>	
Week 2: What is Comparative Politics?	Aug 25-29	ECP Chapter 1 ECP Chapter 2	Discussion 1
Week 3: States	Sept 1-5	CCP Chapter 2 (USA) CCP Chapter 3 (United Kingdom)	Quiz 1
Week 4: Nations and Society	Sept 8-12	ECP Chapter 3 CCP Chapter 9 (India)	Discussion 2 Quiz 2
Week 5: Nations and Society (continued)	Sept 15-19	CCP Chapter 13 (South Africa)	Current Event 1 Quiz 3
Week 6: Political Economy	Sept 22-26	ECP Chapter 4 CCP Chapter 6 (Japan)	Discussion 3 Quiz 4
Week 7: Democratic Regimes	Sept 29 – Oct 3	ECP Chapter 5 CCP Chapters 4 (France)	Discussion 4 Quiz 5
Week 8: Non-Democratic Regimes	Oct 6-10	ECP Chapter 6 CCP Chapter 10 (Iran)	Discussion 5 Quiz 6
Week 9: Non-Democratic Regimes (continued)	Oct 13-17	CCP Chapter 7 (Russia)	Current Event 2 Quiz 7
Week 10: Political Violence	Oct 20-24	ECP Chapter 7 CCP Chapter 14 (Nigeria)	Discussion 6 Quiz 8
Week 11: Developed Democracies	Oct 27-31	ECP Chapter 8 CCP Chapter 5 (Germany)	Discussion 7 Quiz 9
Week 12: Communism and post-communism	Nov 3-7	ECP Chapter 9 CCP Chapter 8 (China)	Discussion 8 Quiz 10
Week 13: Developing Countries	Nov 10-14	ECP Chapter 10 CCP Chapter 11 (Mexico)	Discussion 9 Quiz 11
Week 14: Globalization	Nov 17-21	ECP Chapter 11 CCP Chapter 12 (Brazil)	Discussion 10 Quiz 12
Week 15	Nov 24-28	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Week 16	Dec 1-3		Current Event 3
December 11		Final Project due	

V. University Policies and Resources

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see this link: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>