Proseminar in Comparative Politics
PSCI 503
Spring 2013
Wednesdays (1:00pm-3:45pm)
SS 134

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Office Hours: T/TH 1:00-2:00, W 3:45-4:45, or by appointment

Course Description:

Welcome to the Proseminar in Comparative Politics! The purpose of this course is to study the dominant issues in the subfield of comparative politics. We will analyze major readings that inform us about the important concepts, theories, and debates in the field, in addition to the underlying structures and processes of institutional design in major types of political systems throughout the world. This course will explore how political scientists have analyzed historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces that affect political systems. We will begin our journey with an introduction to the field of comparative politics. Then, we will delve into substantive issues that help us differentiate between political systems such as state/society relations, comparative political economy, and development. Subsequently, we will discuss modernization and political development in democratic and non-democratic political regimes, along with the effects of rebellion and revolution on political systems. Special attention will be given to regime theory by examining communist and post-communist states, as well as developing countries. We will conclude the course by discussing the impact of globalization on comparative political studies and the future of the discipline.

Format:

Each class will involve a round-table discussion about the assigned readings. Each student will be responsible for presenting assigned readings on a rotating basis (see Requirements/Assignments). In addition, we will use videos and invite guest speakers to further our understanding of Comparative Politics. Please note: This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor’s discretion.

Learning Outcome:

Students will understand the dominant issues in contemporary comparative politics, including important concepts, theories and debates in the field.
NO PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS AT ANY TIME.
THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO):
CELL PHONES,
LAPTOPS,
iPADS,
iPODS,
MP3 Players/Recorders,
Translation Devices
VIDEO CAMERAS
OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND

IF ANY OF THESE DEVICES ARE PRESENT IN CLASS YOU WILL BE ASKED TO STORE THEM OR LEAVE THE CLASS IMMEDIATELY.

Requirements/Assignments:

Papers: You must produce two papers (typed 12-point font, double spaced) worth a total of 50% of your grade. The first paper is a research paper focusing on the current political dynamics in an approved non-US nation-state. This paper is worth 20% of your grade. The second paper is a detailed research proposal (on an approved topic) that follows a designated format. This research proposal is worth 30% of your grade. Papers must be submitted in electronic form (as an email attachment) AND as a hard (printed) copy on the due date. You will be provided with specific guidelines to complete each paper. Note: Your research proposal cannot be the same or similar to a research proposal submitted for another course. Likewise, you cannot use the research proposal you design in this course for another class without the expressed permission of the other professor. Late papers will NOT be accepted for ANY reason.

Attendance: 10% of your grade is based on your class attendance. Students are required to attend class and attendance will be taken at the end of each class session using a sign-in sheet. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have signed in. Arriving late and/or leaving early will negatively impact your attendance grade. Attendance is critical, discussions are irreplaceable, and course sessions cannot be “made up.” I will not be managing any excuses for absences. You can miss ONE class session without penalty for any reason (excused or unexcused). More than one absence will result in a reduction in your grade, REGARDLESS of the reason (excused OR unexcused).

The attendance grade scale appears below.
• 0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade
• 1 absence= no penalty
• 2 absences= -2% from your grade
• 3 absences= -4% from your grade
• 4 absences= -6% from your grade
• 5 or more absences= -10% from your grade
Participation: Your participation in this course is worth 15% of your grade. Positive participation includes responding to my questions, asking your own questions, and contributing to class discussions. Your participation grade will be reduced if you use personal electronic devices in class, misbehave in class, or disrupt class in any way.

Readings Presentations: Each student will be assigned to present readings and help lead the discussions throughout the semester on an equitable and rotating basis. These presentations must be accompanied by a summary handout to be distributed to all of the students in the class. Each presentation will be strictly limited to 10 minutes each. Your presentations are worth 20% of your grade.

Short writing assignments and/or pop quizzes will be assigned throughout the semester. These will count for a total of 5% of your grade.

Exams: There are not any exams in this course.

Grades: Your grade in this course will be determined by the criteria listed below. Specifically, the following scale will be used to determine your grade:

- Research Paper (Due March 6): 20%
- Research Proposal (Due May 2): 30%
- Readings Presentations: 20%
- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 15%
- Short Writing Assignments/Quizzes: 5%

A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%

Notes on Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind: Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration. “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

Notes on plagiarism: All research papers will be submitted to turnitin.com, a digital plagiarism detection system. Any student who is caught plagiarizing will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration for academic dishonesty. If you have any doubt as to what may constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to submitting any written work.
In order to maximize your performance in this course, you must:

- **TURN OFF ALL PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES BEFORE CLASS BEGINS. THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO): CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, iPADS, iPODS, MP3 Players/Recorders, Translation devices, VIDEO CAMERAS, OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND**

- **IF ANYONE IS FOUND TO BE TEXTING OR ANSWERS A PHONE CALL DURING CLASS, THE ENTIRE CLASS WILL TAKE A POP QUIZ ON THE SPOT.**

- Attend each class session AND arrive ON TIME (the classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals **15 minutes after class starts**; Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early (this may affect your attendance grade);

- Read the assigned material before class;

- Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class;

- Refrain from reading materials or working on other homework during class;

- Do NOT get up in the middle of class to go to the bathroom unless absolutely necessary;

- Be courteous to -and respectful of- your fellow students and professor.

**Code of Student Conduct:** Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Required Readings:

There are three required texts for this course:

  Patrick H. O'Neil
  ISBN 978-0-393-91278-4

  Patrick H. O'Neil, Ronald Rogowski

  Patrick H. O'Neil, Karl Fields, Don Share
  ISBN 978-0-393-91279-1

Course Schedule:

Week 1  Introduction
January 16
Read:
- Readings for the first class session will be provided to you.
- *Buy your books*

Week 2  Comparative Politics Overview
January 23
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 1: Introduction
- Mark I. Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman, Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics: An Introduction from *Comparative Politics*
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, The *Science* in Social Science, from *Designing Social Inquiry*
- Larry M. Bartels, Some Unfulfilled Promises of Quantitative Imperialism
- Ronald Rogowski, How Inference in the Social (But Not the Physical) Sciences Neglects Theoretical Anomaly

Week 3  The State
January 30
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 2: States
- Francis Fukuyama, The Necessity of Politics, from *The Origins of Political Order*
- Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation
- Jeffrey Herbst, War and the State in Africa
- Robert I. Rotberg, The New Nature of Nation-State Failure
- Stephen D. Krasner, Sovereignty
Week 4  Nations and Society
February 6
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 3: Nations and Society
- Eric Hobsbawm, Nationalism
- James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War
- Alberto Alesina and Eliana La Ferrara, Ethnic Diversity and Economic Performance
- Kate Baldwin and John D. Huber, Economic vs. Cultural Differences: Forms of Ethnic Diversity and Public Goods Provision

Week 5  Political Economy
February 13
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 4: Political Economy
- Douglass C. North, Institutions
- Daron Acemoglu, Root Causes: A Historical Approach to Assessing the Role of Institutions in Economic Development
- N. Gregory Mankiw, The Trilemma of International Finance

Week 6  Democratic Regimes
February 20
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes
- Fareed Zakaria, A Brief History of Human Liberty, from The Future of Freedom
- Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, What Democracy Is … and Is Not
- Arend Lijphart, Constitutional Choices for New Democracies
- Robert D. Putnam, Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America
- Alfred Stepan, Juan J. Linz, and Yogendra Yadav, The Rise of “State-Nations”

Week 7  Non-Democratic Regimes
February 27
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 6: Nondemocratic Regimes
- Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, Modern Nondemocratic Regimes, from Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation
- Erika Weinthal and Pauline Jones Luong, Combating the Resource Curse: An Alternative Solution to Managing Mineral Wealth
- Larry Diamond, The Rule of Law Versus the Big Man
- Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism
Week 8  Political Violence; Research Paper Due  
March 6  
Read:  
  • Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 7: Political Violence  
  • Theda Skocpol, France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions  
  • Martha Crenshaw, The Causes of Terrorism  
  • Timur Kuran, Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989  
  • Jack Goldstone, Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies  
  • Max Abrahms, What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy  
  • Turn in your Research Paper as both a printed copy and an electronic copy by 1:00pm.

Week 9  SPRING BREAK (No Classes)  
March 13  
Read:  
  • Nothing.

Week 10  Advanced Democracies  
March 20  
Read:  
  • Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 8: Advanced Democracies  
  • Alexis de Tocqueville, Author’s Introduction, from Democracy in America  
  • Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson, and Pierre Yared, Income and Democracy  
  • Adam Przeworski, Conquered or Granted? A History of Suffrage Extensions  
  • Maurice Duverger, The Number of Parties, from Political Parties  
  • Torben Iversen and David Soskice, Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More than Others  
  • Margarita Estévez-Abé, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice, Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State
**Week 11  Communism and Post-Communism**  
March 27  
Read:  
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 9: Communism and Postcommunism  
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*  
- Keith Darden and Anna Grzymala-Busse, *The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse*  
- Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik, *Conclusions: Democratizing Elections, International Diffusion, and U.S. Democracy Assistance from Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries*  
- Ivan Krastev, *Paradoxes of the New Authoritarianism*  
- Baogang He and Mark E. Warren, *Authoritarian Deliberation: The Deliberative Turn in Chinese Political Development*  
- Azar Gat, *The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers*

**Week 12  Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries**  
April 3  
Read:  
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 10: Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries  
- William Easterly, *To Help the Poor, from The Elusive Quest for Growth*  
- Paul Collier and Jan Willem Gunning, *Why Has Africa Grown Slowly?*  
- Paul Krugman, *The Myth of Asia’s Miracle*  
- Wayne Arnold, *Vietnam Holds Its Own within China’s Vast Economic Shadow*  
- Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson, *Disease and Development: The Effect of Life Expectancy on Economic Growth*

**Week 13  Globalization**  
April 10  
Read:  
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 11: Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics  
- *The Economist*, *Leviathan Stirs Again*  
- Min Jiang, *Authoritarian Informationalism: China’s Approach to Internet Sovereignty*
**Week 14**  
**Case Studies: BRIC’s**  
April 17  
Read:  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 1: Introduction  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 12: Brazil  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 7: Russia  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 9: India  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 8: China

**Week 15**  
**Case Studies: Developing Countries**  
April 24  
Read:  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 10: Iran  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 11: Mexico  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 13: South Africa  
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 14: Nigeria

**Week 16**  
**The Future of Comparative Politics; Class Luncheon; Research Proposal DUE**  
May 1  
Read:  
- *Turn in your Research Proposal as both a printed copy and an electronic copy by 1:00pm.*

**Finals Week**

*There is not a final exam in this course.*