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.

Learning Outcome:

Students will understand the dominant issues in contemporary comparative politics, including important concepts, theories and debates in the field.

*This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor’s discretion.*
Global Learning Objectives:

**Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).

**Learning Outcome 2:** Students will be able to apply knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics.

**Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to view themselves as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

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**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 THE ENTIRE CLASS WILL HAVE A POP QUIZ AND THE INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE MAY BE DIRECTED TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM IMMEDIATELY.**

Requirements/Assignments

**Research Paper:**
You must produce one research paper (14-16 pages, typed 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1in margins all around), worth a total of 33% of your grade. The paper MUST be a case study of a country that we did NOT cover in class, and is NOT in the textbook. The purpose of this requirement is for you to construct your own comparative politics case study. Each student must select a different case. 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 the paper as the semester begins.

Note: Your research paper cannot be the same nor similar to papers submitted for another course. Likewise, you cannot use the research paper you write in this course for another class without the expressed permission of the other professor. **Late papers will NOT be accepted for ANY reason.**

**Take-Home Examination:** There is one take-home exam in this course, worth 33% of your grade. The exam requires you to answer three questions (2 pages each, typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1-in margins all around). The purpose of this requirement is to prepare you for comprehensive master’s degree exams in political science. You will be provided with specific guidelines to complete the take-home exam late in the semester. **Late exams 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. **Signing in a student who is not present or a asking a student to sign you in when you are absent constitutes academic dishonesty (see p.3).** 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 up to ONE class session without penalty for any reason. 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 2% 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.

**Pop Quizzes:** These will be assigned randomly throughout the semester and will count for a total of 2% of your grade. If you are absent when a pop quiz is given, you **cannot** make it up, irrespective of the circumstances. Pop quizzes will be graded on the basis of the content and clarity of your answers.

**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 20 minutes each.** Your presentations are worth 20% of your grade.

**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 (October 21): 33%
- Take-Home Exam (December 9): 33%
- Readings Presentations: 20%
- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 2%
- Quizzes: 2%

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

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 [or attempting to cheat] 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 there may be any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

Notes on plagiarism: 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, AND 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.**

  Cell phone Quizzes will consist of FOUR questions.
  Each incorrect answer will reduce your grade in the course by .5%

- 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 grade);

- **Read the assigned material before class and be prepared to discuss the topics presented:**

  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.
Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**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@tamuc.edu

**Required Readings:**

There are three **required texts** for this course:

- **Essentials of Comparative Politics, FIFTH Edition (2015)**  
  Patrick H. O'Neil  

  Patrick H. O'Neil, Ronald Rogowski  

- **Cases in Comparative Politics, FIFTH Edition (2015)**  
  Patrick H. O'Neil, Karl Fields, Don Share  
  ISBN 978-0-393-93754-1
Course Schedule:

Week 1    Introduction
September 2
Read:

  • Readings for the first class session will be provided to you.
  • *Buy your books*

Week 2    Comparative Politics Overview
September 9
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 5*
  • Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, The *Science* in Social Science, from *Designing Social Inquiry 7*
  • Larry M. Bartels, Some Unfulfilled Promises of Quantitative Imperialism 5
  • Ronald Rogowski, How Inference in the Social (But Not the Physical) Sciences Neglects Theoretical Anomaly 7

Week 3    The State
September 16
Read:

  • Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 2: States
  • Francis Fukuyama, The Necessity of Politics, from *The Origins of Political Order 14*
  • Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation 7
  • Jeffrey Herbst, War and the State in Africa 15
  • Robert I. Rotberg, The New Nature of Nation-State Failure 8
  • Stephen D. Krasner, Sovereignty 7

Week 4    Nations and Society
September 23
Read:

  • Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 3: Nations and Society
  • Eric Hobsbawm, Nationalism 9
  • James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War 11
  • Alberto Alesina and Eliana La Ferrara, Ethnic Diversity and Economic Performance 13
  • Kate Baldwin and John D. Huber, Economic vs. Cultural Differences: Forms of Ethnic Diversity and Public Goods Provision 18
Week 5  Political Economy
September 30
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 4: Political Economy
- Douglass C. North, Institutions 11
- N. Gregory Mankiw, *The Trilemma of International Finance* 2

Week 6  Democratic Regimes
October 7
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes
- Fareed Zakaria, *A Brief History of Human Liberty*, from *The Future of Freedom* 15
- Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, *What Democracy Is … and Is Not* 10
- Arend Lijphart, *Constitutional Choices for New Democracies* 9

Week 7  Non-Democratic Regimes
October 14
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* 12
- Larry Diamond, *The Rule of Law Versus the Big Man* 9
- Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism* 10
Week 8 Political Violence; Research Paper Due
October 21
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 7: Political Violence
- Theda Skocpol, France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions 15
- Martha Crenshaw, The Causes of Terrorism 14
- Timur Kuran, Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989 15
- Jack Goldstone, Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies 7
- Max Abrahms, What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy 15
- Turn in your Research Paper as both a printed copy and an electronic copy by 6:00pm.

Week 9 Advanced Democracies
October 28
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 8: Developed Democracies
- Alexis de Tocqueville, Author’s Introduction, from Democracy in America 8
- Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson, and Pierre Yared, Income and Democracy 6
- Adam Przeworski, Conquered or Granted? A History of Suffrage Extensions 18
- Maurice Duverger, The Number of Parties, from Political Parties 5
- Torben Iversen and David Soskice, Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More than Others 9
- Margarita Estévez-Abé, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice, Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State 15

Week 10 Communism and Post-Communism
November 4
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 9: Communism and Postcommunism
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party 10
- Keith Darden and Anna Grzymala-Busse, The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse NOT IN BOOK
- Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik, Conclusions: Democratizing Elections, International Diffusion, and U.S. Democracy Assistance from Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries 15
- Ivan Krastev, Paradoxes of the New Authoritarianism 8
- Baogang He and Mark E. Warren, Authoritarian Deliberation: The Deliberative Turn in Chinese Political Development 24
- Azar Gat, The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers 6
Week 11  Developing Countries
November 11
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 10: Developing Countries
- William Easterly, To Help the Poor, from The Elusive Quest for Growth 7
- Paul Collier and Jan Willem Gunning, Why Has Africa Grown Slowly? 17
- Paul Krugman, The Myth of Asia’s Miracle 9
- Wayne Arnold, Vietnam Holds Its Own within China’s Vast Economic Shadow 3
- Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson, Disease and Development: The Effect of Life Expectancy on Economic Growth 4

Week 12  Globalization
November 18
Read:
- Essentials of Comparative Politics, Chapter 11: Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics
- The Economist, Leviathan Stirs Again 5
- Min Jiang, Authoritarian Informationalism: China’s Approach to Internet Sovereignty 12

Week 13  Thanksgiving Break
November 25
Read:
- Nothing. Enjoy your break!

Week 14  Case Studies
December 2
Read:
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 1: Introduction
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 7: Russia 50
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 8: China 56
- Cases in Comparative Politics, Chapter 10: Iran 50

Week 15  The Future of Comparative Politics; Class Dinner;
Take-Home Examination DUE
December 9
Read:
- Turn in your Take-Home Examination as both a printed copy and an electronic copy by 6:00pm.

Finals Week

There is not a final exam in this course.
GLB/Proseminar in Comparative Politics
PSCI 503
Fall 2015
Wednesdays (6:00pm-8:45pm)
SS 134

STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

I, ________________________________________________, have read the syllabus in its entirety, and understand the guidelines and agree to the policies detailed therein as a condition of being enrolled in this course. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this course, and that failure to do so may result in serious consequences, including (but not limited to) being dropped from the course, and/or receiving a grade of “F” in the course.

Student Signature:________________________________________________

Student PRINTED Name: ___________________________________________

Date of Signature:__________________________

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS SIGNED STATEMENT BY THE SECOND CLASS SESSION (September 9, 2015) WILL RESULT IN YOUR BEING DROPPED FROM THIS COURSE.