

SPRING 2024
POL 160
COMPARATIVE POLITICS
MWF 12-12:50

Instructor Information:
Dr. Gregory Gunderson
Room 313
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715-571-9670

If you have an emergency, questions, etc, the best way to contact me is through email or a text.

Office Hours:
By appointment via Zoom

Required Textbook: O'Neil, Fields and Share. Cases in Comparative Politics. 7th edition'

Description

Studies a select set of important states with different political, economic, and cultural characteristics. Compares economic, social and political issues and policy choices, in addition to governance. Recommended for Business, Journalism, Education, and Political Science majors. SS

Course Content:

Paraphrasing Harold Lasswell, a well-known political scientist, politics is the process of deciding who gets what, when, and how within a society. That society may refer to politics at the global, national, or local level. Along with American politics, international relations, political theory, and public administration, Comparative politics, the subject of this course, is a sub-field of political science where we study a particular foreign country or region or, conversely, study a particular subject -- such as women in politics -- across a number of countries or regions. During this semester we will do both; looking at the various structures and actions of government and politics across several nations, both comparing and contrasting them, as well as looking at the politics of particular nations from South Africa to China to the UK and more. During the semester you will also learn about the methods -- the way -- that political scientists do research in comparative politics. Below you will find a list of learning objectives for the course during the semester. Please read the remainder of this syllabus carefully; it can be viewed as a contract of sorts, laying out what you can expect of me as well as what I will expect of you. I look forward to working with you this semester. Welcome.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester each student should be able to...

- Describe the world's major types of governments;

- Understand how different types of government respond to economic, political, and social challenges;
- Assess the differing ethical choices governments must face in making and implementing public policy;
- Define and apply key concepts – including methodology – in comparative politics;
- Compare and contrast the political, economic, and social systems of the various countries addressed in class;
- Explain how electoral systems work and impact differing democracies explored in the course;
- And investigate a wide range of competing views and ideals throughout the world in the areas of politics, economics, society, and theory.

Attendance: I believe, in general, that attendance policies should not be necessary at the university-level. Unfortunately, experience has shown that many students will only attend class regularly if it directly affects their grade. During the course, your discussion and attendance will be worth 100 points. Obviously, you cannot discuss if you do not attend. I will take attendance every day.

Additionally each student is responsible for (1) any announcements and handouts distributed in class; (2) the content of lectures and multi-media presentations in class; and (3) any changes to the class schedule announced in class. Let me repeat this - students are expected to attend all classes. A missed class is not an acceptable excuse for not knowing about changes in assignments, the content of class sessions, etc. It is the student's responsibility to find out. Do not call or email the instructor to inform him that you will miss a class or an exam. If you can be there, it is assumed that you will be there and if you cannot attend, a telephone call or email will not change my policy in any way.

Academic Honesty

Please do not cheat – cheating does nothing but rob you of the chance for an education. As a college student, you are part of an academic community and are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful of that community, in part by being academically honest. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to “cheating on an examination,” “submitting a paper or assignment as one’s own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another,” and “submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas.”

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance is required. See the section above on attendance for a discussion of my policy.
2. Discussion is important. Don’t be afraid to speak up, ask questions, or challenge the information I give you. Education is not strictly a spectator sport -- you will find the class more interesting and informative if you participate.
3. Be nice, be patient, be tolerant.
4. Exams and stuff like that –

- There will be three exams given in this class, Each exam will be worth 150 points.
- Regular class attendance and participation will be worth 100 points.
- Each student will be expected to write a movie review paper. The paper will be about 4-5 pages in length and will be worth 100 points. The assignment will be discussed in more detail (and directions will be provided in Canvas) during the first two weeks of the course. I will provide you a list of acceptable movies.
- To review, the distribution of points will be as follows:

Attendance and participation - 100 points

EXAMS - 450 points

Movie review - 100 points

Total - 650 points

There will be no make-up exams or assignments. There will be no extra credit! However, I will give out bonus quizzes from time to time. You may earn 20 total bonus points.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93-100%

A- = 90-92 %

B+=87-89%

B = 83-86%

B-= 80-83%

C+ = 77-79%

C = 73-76%

C-= 70-72%

D+= 67-69%

D = 60-66%

F = 59% or below

ZOOM Fridays: As some of you know I have had some health concerns this past year and the bottom line is that I cannot drive, meaning I have had to arrange for rides to get to campus. I have been able to secure rides for Mon and Wed classes, But not Friday. So this semester I will be teaching in the classroom on Mon and Wed and from home via Zoom on Fridays. This should not affect you -- you can still come to the classroom on Fridays and see my smiling face on the big screen. I will explain more in class.

Course Schedule: Subject to change. I will try to keep changes to a minimum and will announce them in class.

Day Date Subject Reading, Assignment, Etc.

Mon 1/22 Course Introduction

Wed 1/24 Introduction to the Discipline

Fri 1/26 The State

Mon 1/29 The State
Wed 1/31 The State
Fri 2/2 NO CLASS
Mon 2/5 Democracy
Wed 2/7 Democracies
Fri 2/9 United Kingdom
Mon 2/12 UK Chapter 2
Wed 2/14 UK
Fri 2/16 Japan Chapter 6
Mon 2/19 Japan
Wed 2/21 Japan
Fri 2/23 Radical Ideologies
Mon 2/26 Radical Ideologies
Wed 2/28 Non Democracies
Fri 3/1 EXAM 1
Mon 3/4 Germany
Wed 3/6 Germany Chapter 5
Fri 3/8 Germany
Mon 3/11 Russia
Wed 3/13 Russia Chapter 7
Fri 3/15 Russia
SPRING BREAK MARCH 18-24
Mon 3/25 China Chapter 8
Wed 3/27 China
Fri 3/29 China
Mon 4/1 Development
Wed 4/3 Development
Fri 4/5 EXAM 2

Mon 4/8 Brazil Chapter 12

Wed 4/10 Brazil

Fri 4/12 Brazil

Mon 4/15 Political Violence

Wed 4/17 Political Violence

Fri 4/19 Israel

Mon 4/22 Israel

Wed 4/24 Israel

Fri 4/26 South Africa

Mon 4/29 South Africa Chapter 13

Wed 5/1 South Africa

Fri 5/3 NO CLASS MOVIE REVIEW DUE BY MIDNIGHT!

Mon 5/6 Cuba

Mon 5/8 Cuba

Fri 5/10 Cuba LAST DAY OF CLASSES

Final Exam due by 5/17 at 3pm