

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Introduction to Comparative Government and Politics
POLS 267
Spring 2021
Section 001 /#61212

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Class: T/TH 11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
Morgan Hall 224
Office Hours: Online T/TH 8:15-
9:30 a.m, W 11:00 a.m.-noon, and
by appointment.

Course Description and Objectives

If one can conceive of international relations as the study of interactions between and among states, one can view comparative politics as the study of interactions within states and the interest groups, political parties, civic organizations, and institutions of governance that comprise countries' political systems. This 3-credit course aims to serve as an introduction to this study and to the central methodological, theoretical, and substantive questions that concern practitioners of the comparative politics subdiscipline.

The course is comprised of two broad sections. In the first section we will review some of the major concepts in comparative politics and examine some of the methodological tools used by political scientists working in the comparative tradition. In the second section we turn to some of the major substantive areas of interest for comparative politics, such as democratization, institutional performance, and the relationship between economics and politics.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the comparative method of analysis, the key concepts of the comparative politics subdiscipline, and how both are used to study, interpret, and explain events and outcomes in the real world of nations, leaders, and political conflict. The course assignments are also designed to help students develop the writing and research skills that are essential for further study in political science as well as in future academic courses and professional endeavors.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Structure

Individual course sessions will be a combination of traditional lecture and seminar-style discussion, with some classes reserved for small group activities. Student questions and comments are strongly encouraged. All opinions should be expressed in a manner that is respectful of other students in the class. Students should also expect to receive frequent emails from the professor with information of relevance to the lectures and readings, such as news articles on current political events.

Required Text (available at WIU Bookstore)

Drogus Carol Ann and Stephen Orvis, (2018) *Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context*, Los Angeles: CQ Press, 4th edition. ISBN: 9781506375465

All supplemental readings will be posted on either the library e-course reserves or Westernonline. You will need a valid ECOM user name and password to access the supplemental readings on westernonline.wiu.edu. If you have any problems accessing Westernonline, please contact University Technology Support Center at 298-2704.

Students should also make a habit of keeping up with current domestic and international political developments by reading daily or weekly news sources such as *The New York Times*, *The Financial Times*, and *The Economist*.

The professor reserves the right to alter and/or add readings wherever appropriate, and to modify course requirements.

Assessment

Attendance and participation (10 points)

Students are expected to attend each session and come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. A range of assignments may be given in class, such as requests for written summaries of lectures, films, and readings. Except in cases of documented illness, family emergency, and institutionally recognized obligation, no-make ups will be allowed. Please note that the use of cell phones and portable electronic devices in class is not permitted. Students who use such devices in class will not be eligible for attendance and participation points for that class.

Two Midterm Examinations (20 points each)

There are two midterm exams in this course. The first midterm will cover material from the *Concepts and Methods* portion of the class while the second midterm will consist of an essay exam that students will complete outside of class. Students will be permitted to rewrite the second midterm and submit it for regrading. Revised second midterms may receive an increase of up to one letter grade.

Journal Entries (20 points)

Students will be required to post four journal entries in response to questions made available at various times during the semester via the Westernonline assignment folder. Details of journal assignments will be provided in class.

Final Exam (30 points)

The final exam will be comprehensive in nature, covering material from across the entire semester.

Grading Scale

A 93-100
A- 90-92
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C 73-76
C- 70-72
D+ 67-69
D 63-66
D- 60-62
F Below 60

Academic Honesty and Student Rights

Academic honesty is expected of all WIU students; cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please take time to review the University's academic integrity policy, which is outlined at <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>. A more complete catalog of student rights and responsibilities can be found at <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php>.

Students who violate the academic integrity policy will fail the assignment in question with no opportunity for make-ups and will be reported to the Council on Admission, Graduation, and Academic Standards.

Campus Resources for Student Support

Students with disabilities: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at (309) 298-1977 or anonymously at: http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at: <http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php>.

The University Writing Center offers online (real-time) and e-tutoring (asynchronous) appointments Monday through Friday 7am - 10pm and Saturday and Sunday 8am -10pm. The UWC supports writers on any academic or professional writing project across disciplines at any stage of the process. The UWC is not an editing service, but provides extensive feedback as well as tips and strategies for a wide-range of writing challenges such as citation style formats, grammar, research development, and organization. Visit [wiu.edu/uwc](http://www.wiu.edu/uwc) to learn more or to make an appointment.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

January 19: Syllabus and Course Overview

PART I: CONCEPTS AND METHODS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

January 21: Comparative Politics: Subjects, Methods, and Limits

1. D&O, Chapter 1

January 26 – February 2: The State

1. D&O, Chapter 2
2. Herbst, Jeffery (1990) "War and the State in Africa" *International Security*; 14(4): 117-139.
3. Thies, C. G. (2009). National Design and State Building in Sub-Saharan Africa. *World Politics*, 61(4), 623–669.

February 4-9: Identity and the Political Community

1. D&O, Chapter 4
2. Film: The Death of Yugoslavia

February 11-16: Political Regimes

1. D&O, Chapter 3

February 18-23: Authoritarianism

1. D&O, Chapter 8

February 25-March 2: Democracy

1. D&O, Chapters 5&6
2. Lijphart, A. (1991) "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies," *Journal of Democracy*, 2(1): 72–84.

March 4: Anti-Establishment Politics

1. Zakaria, Fareed. 2016. "Populism on the March," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2016.

March 4: Midterm Exam I (Online Exam – due March 9)

PART II: THEMES AND CASES in COMPARATIVE POLITICS

March 9-11: Political Change I

1. D&O, Chapter 7

March 16-18: Political Change II

1. D&O, Chapter 9
2. Hopkins, A. E. (2012). "'Pressing Disengagement:' Chile's Transition to Democracy After Augusto Pinochet's 1973 Military Coup." *Inquiries Journal/Student Pulse*, 4(09)
3. Film: *The Battle of Chile*

March 23-25: Political Economy

1. D&O, Chapter 10

March 30- April 1: Globalization and Economic Development

1. Chapter 11
2. Barbieri, Pierpaolo. 2016. "The Losers of Deglobalization: Why States Should Fear the Closing of an Open World," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2016.

April 1- Midterm Exam II (Take Home Essay – due April 6)

April 6: Social Policy

1. D&O, Chapter 12, pp. 634-659

April 8, 15-20: Healthcare (No class on April 13)

1. D&O, Chapter 12, pp. 660-677
2. Film: *The NHS: A Difficult Beginning*

April 22-27 Environmental Policy

1. D&O, Chapter 12, pp. 677-697

April 29: Concluding Lecture and Final Exam Review

Final Exam Due by 11:50 a.m. on Thursday, May 6