

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

**Comparative Government and Politics**  
**POLS 568**

Section 001/# 61231  
Spring 2021

Professor Gregory Baldi  
Morgan Hall 413  
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Class: M, 6:00-8:30  
Morgan Hall 453  
Office Hours: Online T/TH 8:15-  
9:30 a.m, W 11:00 a.m.-noon, and by  
appointment.

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**Course Description and Objectives**

This 3-credit seminar provides an advanced overview of comparative politics as a subdiscipline of political science. It surveys major topics and themes in comparative politics, including prominent research programs and theoretical and methodological debates, and reviews historical and contemporary issues in the developing and developed world. Each week the course examines a particular theme in the field through an analysis of pertinent scholarly literature.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an advanced introduction to comparative politics. Upon successful completion of this course students will be expected to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the major substantive, theoretical, and methodological issues in the comparative subdiscipline.

**Course Structure**

Individual course sessions will be a combination of traditional lecture and seminar-style discussion. 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 Texts** (Available in the WIU Bookstore)

Bowen, J.R. 2007. *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kurzman, Charles. 2004. *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Landman, Todd and Edzia Carvalho. 2017. *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Ziblatt, D. 2017. *Conservative Parties and the Birth of Democracy* (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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 problems accessing Westernonline, please contact University Technology Support Center at 298-2704.

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

### Assessment

#### Attendance and discussion participation (15 points)

Students are expected to attend each session and participate in class discussions on the assigned readings. If you cannot attend class because of a medically supported illness and/or institutionally recognized obligation, it remains your responsibility to do the readings and complete the required assignments. Except in cases of proven medical or family emergency, no-make ups will be allowed. Please note that the use of cell phones and portable electronic devices in class is not permitted.

#### Weekly Reaction Papers (5 points each-30 points total)

Students will write six response papers (2-3 pages) critically analyzing the readings for a given week. Papers should be emailed to me by 2PM on Mondays. Students can choose to write more than the six required reaction papers if they wish, with the six highest paper scores used in the computing of the final course grade.

#### Presentation (15 points)

Each student will be expected to lead part of at least one seminar. For this course component, students will be required to give a formal presentation to the class and prepare questions for class discussion. Students will be required to meet with the professor in preparation for their presentation.

#### Research Paper (40 points)

Students will be complete a research paper on a topic to decided in individual consultation with the professor. A prospectus outlining the paper topic will be due at roughly the halfway point of the semester. Detailed guidelines will be distributed later in the 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 Graduate Council.

### **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](mailto: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.

The University Writing Center is available to assist students with general and specific questions on writing assigned in any discipline and at any academic level. The one – on – one assistance available at the Writing Center is valuable for generating ideas, talking about global – level issues such as organization, and even working through grammatical problems. The University Writing Center is located in Simpkins Hall 341. Call for an appointment (309-298–2815) and be sure to take a copy of an assignment.

### **Course Schedule and Readings**

#### **January 19: Introduction**

#### **January 26: Overview of the Field**

1. Landman, chapters 1-3
2. Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682-693.

#### **February 2: Different Approaches in Comparative Politics**

1. Landman, chapters 4-5
2. George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press, chapter 4.

#### **February 9: Ontology, Method, and Comparative Research**

1. Snyder, Richard. 2007. "The Human Dimension in Comparative Research," in Gerardo L. Munck and Richard Snyder, *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
2. Mahoney, James, and Kathleen Thelen. 2015. "Comparative Historical Analysis in Contemporary Political Science" in *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis* (eds. Mahoney and Thelen), New York: Cambridge University Press.

### **February 16: The Origin of Political Systems**

1. Ziblatt, *Conservative Parties*, all.

### **February 23: Economic and Political Development 1**

1. Landman, chapter 6
2. Acemoglu, D., Naidu, S., Restrepo, P. and Robinson, J.A., 2019. Democracy does cause growth. *Journal of Political Economy*, 127(1), pp.47-100.

### **March 2 : Politics and Culture**

1. Bowen, J.R. 2007. *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

### **March 9: Comparative Political Economy**

1. Hall, Peter A., and David W. Soskice. 2001. *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford University Press, chapter one.
2. Culpepper, P. (2015). Structural power and political science in the post-crisis era. *Business and Politics*, 17(3), 391-409.

### **March 16: Political Violence**

1. Landman, chapter 7
2. Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*, all.

### **March 23: Contentious Politics and Social Movements**

1. Landman, chapter 8
2. Beckwith, Karen. 2000. "Beyond Compare? Women's Movements in Comparative Perspective." *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (4): 431-468.

### **March 30: Democratization**

1. Landman, chapter 9
2. Schmitter, Philippe C, and Guillermo O'Donnell. 1986. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
3. Bermeo, Nancy. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27.1 (2016): 5-19.

### **April 6: Institutional Design and Democratic Performance**

1. Landman, chapter 10
2. Lijphart, Arend. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal Of Democracy*, 15(2): 96-109.
3. Stepan, Alfred, and Cindy Skach. 1993. "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism." *World Politics* 46(1): 1-22.

### **April 13: International Relations and Comparative Politics**

1. Landman, chapter 12
2. Li, Quan, and Rafael Reuveny. 2003. "Economic Globalization and Democracy: An Empirical Analysis." *British Journal of Political Science* 33(01): 29-54.

### **April 20: Human Rights**

1. Landman, chapter 11

2. Htun, Mala and S. Laurel Weldon. 2010. "When Do Governments Promote Women's Rights? A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Sex Equality Policy." *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (1): 207-216.

**April 27: Conclusion: Themes, Methods, and Theories in Comparative Politics**

1. Landman, chapters 13-14

*Recommended:*

1. Peter Evans, *et al.*, "The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium," *World Politics* 48 (October 1995): 1-49.

**Final Papers Due: Tuesday, May 3 at 6:00 pm**