



FOUNDATIONS OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS – PSC 102

Dr. Claire Greenstein

COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of comparative politics. We will be examining political institutions, discussing how these institutions were shaped by politics, and looking at how these institutions shape politics today. Throughout the course, we will analyze current events to see how political institutions and world politics interact. Besides familiarizing students with countries that they may not have studied before, this course is intended to provide students with the theories and concepts they need to understand world politics, help them learn how to compare and assess the merits of various political systems, and enable them to analyze politicians' actions and current events.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze current events using the theories presented to you in class
- Compare and contrast political ideologies
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of different types of political institutions
- Evaluate which types of political institutions would work best to promote democracy and/or stability in a particular country, given that country's unique political, cultural, economic, and historical context

Required Text and Course Materials:

Dickovick, J. Tyler, and Jonathan Eastwood. *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases*. 3rd Edition.

Graded Assignments & Activities Overview:

Assignments & Activities	Percentage
Participation	10
Homework (pick 5 of 12)	10
Quizzes	10
Guest Lecture Responses	15
Discussion Boards (pick 5 of 10 weeks)	25
Final Paper Topic	1
Final Paper Step 1 (Introductory Paragraph)	5
Final Paper Step 2 (Paper Outline)	5
Final Paper Step 3 (Body Paragraph with In-Text Citations)	5
Final Exam (Final Paper)	14
	100

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE:

Introduction to Comparative Political Analysis

August 24—Go over syllabus, introductions

August 26—Introduction

Have read and watched:

1. D&E Ch. 1 (23pp – pp = an abbreviation for ‘pages’)
2. The 10 videos on different approaches to political institutions that are posted on Canvas under the first module. All 10 videos will take you no longer than 21 minutes to watch. (Homework opportunity #1)

August 31—Assessing Sources, Spotting Bad Arguments

Have read: D&E Ch. 2 (23pp)

The State, Development, Democracy, and Authoritarianism

September 2—The State. Also, using the library workshop led by Professor Brooke Becker from Sterne Library

Have read: D&E Ch. 3 (24pp)

Country Selection Due—email me your top 3 country choices by the start of class –not **during** class!!!—, otherwise I will pick a country for you

Syllabus Quiz Due—Canvas submission window closes at 11:59pm Central Time

September 7—Political Economy

Have read: D&E Ch. 4 (26pp)

Finding and Analyzing Sources Quiz Due—Canvas submission window closes at 11:59pm Central Time

Country assignments released on Canvas, Discussion Boards Open on Canvas

September 9—Development

Guest Lecture from Prof. Claire Dunn

Have read:

1. D&E Ch. 5 (24pp)
2. Gross, Anna Sophie. 2018. "[Inside the Land Rights Struggle for the Descendants of Runaway Slaves in Brazil.](#)" *Pacific Standard*, 29 October. (Also available on Canvas) (5pp)

Citation Quiz Due—Canvas submission window closes at 11:59pm Central Time

Remember: 1st blog post opportunity closes in two days, Saturday, Sept. 11, at 11:59pm Central Time

September 14—Democracy and Democratization

Have read: D&E Ch. 6 (26pp)

Response to Prof. Dunn's Guest Lecture Due Sept 14 by 11:59pm Central Time

September 16— Democracy and Democratization, cont.

Have watched (22 minutes total) (Homework opportunity #2):

*** Warning: These videos contain violent images; use discretion ***

1. "[Tunisia and the Arab Spring 10 Year on: 'We Tried to Rise'](#)". 2020. *The Guardian*, 18 December. YouTube Video. Link also on Canvas. (10 minutes long)
2. "[Requiem for the Arab Spring: Why Has Tunisia Succeeded Where Others Failed?](#)" *France24 English*, 19 March. YouTube Video. Link also on Canvas. (12 minutes)

Plagiarism Quiz Due—Canvas submission window closes at 11:59pm Central Time

Sept 21—Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Breakdown

Have read: D&E Ch. 7. (27pp)

Sept 23—Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Breakdown, cont.—Guest Lecture from Prof. Paula Mukherjee

Have listened to, watched, and read (8 pages of reading, 6-minute radio story, 7 minutes of video) (Homework opportunity #3):

1. "[Uganda: 35 Years Under President Yoweri Museveni.](#)" 2021. Agence France-Presse. *Business Daily Africa*, 12 January. (Also on Canvas) (5 pages)
2. Peralta, Eyder. 2021. "[Uganda's Ruler Museveni Defends Violent Crackdown in Bid for 6th Term.](#)" *NPR's All Things Considered*, 12 January. (6-minute listen) (Transcript is on the linked page; let me know if you can't find it)
3. *** **Note: This video contains violent images. Use discretion.** *** "[How an Ex-Pop Star in Uganda Risked His Life to Run for President.](#)" 2021. *Sky News*, 10 January. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (4 minutes)
4. "[Why Is Museveni Still Uganda President?](#)" 2018. *VOA Africa*, 13 September. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (3 minutes)
5. Latif Dahir, Abdi. 2021. "[Uganda's Leader of 35 Years Is Re-elected Amid Accusations of Vote-Rigging.](#)" *New York Times*, 16 January. (Also on Canvas) (3 pages)

Paper Topic due by 11:59pm today (1% of final grade)

Sept 28 – Constitutions and Constitutional Design

Have read:

1. D&E Ch. 8 (27pp)
2. Bartlett, John. 2019. “[“The Constitution of the Dictatorship Has Died” Chile Agrees Deal on Reform Vote.](#)” *The Guardian*, 15 November. (Also on Canvas) (2pp)
3. “[“Chile Reserves Seats for Indigenous as It Prepares to Rewrite Constitution.](#)” 2020. *Reuters*, 15 December. (Also on Canvas) (2pp)

Response to Prof. Mukherjee’s Guest Lecture due Sept 28 by 11:59pm Central Time

By 11:59pm today: Submit your paper topic for my approval

Sept 30—No Class; I will be at the American Political Science Association Conference

Institutions of Government

Oct 5—Legislatures and Legislative Elections: Legislatures
Have read: D&E Ch. 9 (28pp)

Oct 7—Legislatures and Legislative Elections: Electoral Systems
Have watched the following 7 YouTube videos (35 minutes total) (Homework opportunity #4):

1. CGP Grey. 2011. “[The Problems with First Past the Post Voting Explained.](#)” *YouTube*. 9 March. (Link also on Canvas) (6.5 minutes)
2. CGP Grey. 2011. “[The Alternative Vote Explained.](#)” *YouTube*. 7 April. (Link also on Canvas) (4.5 minutes)
3. CGP Grey. 2011. “[Gerrymandering Explained.](#)” *YouTube*. 12 July. (Link also on Canvas) (5.5 minutes)
4. CGP Grey. 2011. “[Mixed Member Proportional Vote Explained.](#)” *YouTube*. 26 September. (Link also on Canvas) (4.5 minutes)
5. CGP Grey. 2014. “[Politics in the Animal Kingdom: Single Transferable Vote.](#)” *YouTube*. 22 October. (Link also on Canvas) (7 minutes)
6. CGP Grey. 2014. “[Extra: STV Election Walkthrough.](#)” *YouTube*. 27 October. (Link also on Canvas) (5 minutes)
7. CGP Grey. 2014. “[Footnote * from STV: Proportional Systems vs STV.](#)” *YouTube*. 27 October. (Link also on Canvas.) (1 minute)

Paper Intro due by 11:59pm today (5% of final grade)

Oct 12—Legislatures and Legislative Elections: Electoral Systems
Have watched the following 5 videos (29 minutes total) (Homework opportunity #5):

1. "[General Election 2019: The Voting System Explained.](#)" 2019. *BBC News*, 7 November. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (3 minutes)
2. "[David Cameron Explains Why He's Voting No to AV.](#)" 2011. *Conservatives*, 23 February. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (4 minutes)
3. "[Is Your Cat Confused About the Alternative Vote?](#)" 2011. *Reform Cat*, 27 April. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (4 minutes)
4. "[How Do German Elections Work?](#)" 2017. *CNBC International*, 14 September. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (5.5 minutes)
5. "[Can Ranked-Choice Voting Change U.S. Elections?](#)" 2019. *CNBC*, 4 November. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas.) (12 minutes)
6. Optional: play around with the [simulator linked here](#) (under "How Does Someone Win?").

Oct 14—Executives

Have read: D&E Ch. 10 (25pp)

Remember: If you have not yet submitted any blog posts, you must submit one every Saturday by 11:59pm Central Time from this Saturday, October 16, until Nov 13

Oct 19—Executives, cont.

Have watched (16 minutes) (Homework opportunity #6):

1. "[Roles of the PM and Cabinet – A-level Politics Revision Video.](#)" 2017. *Study Rocket*, 11 October. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (3 minutes)
2. "[Prime Minister vs. President: What's the Difference?](#)" 2016. *NowThis World*, 15 July. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (3.5 minutes)
3. "[How Prime Ministers Choose Their Cabinet Minister.](#)" 2019. *CBC News*, 19 November. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (9 min)

Oct 21—Political Parties, Party Systems, and Interest Groups

Have read: D&E Ch. 11 (26pp)

Oct 26—Political Parties, Party Systems, and Interest Groups, cont.

Have watched (35 minutes) (Homework opportunity #7):

1. [“The Role of Parties in Kenya as 30 New Political Parties Formed | Political Point.”](#) 2019. *KTN News Kenya*, 23 April. YouTube Video (Link also on Canvas) (35 minutes)

Politics, Society, and Culture

Oct 28—Nationalism and National Identity.

Guest Lecture from Dr. Phi Su.

Have read: D&E Ch. 13 (20pp)

Paper Outline due today (5% of final grade)

Nov 2—Nationalism and National Identity, cont.

Have read (9+pp, lots of photos, some videos) (Homework opportunity #8):

1. Ramzy, Austin. 2021. [“‘They Have My Sister’: As Uyghurs Speak Out, China Targets Their Families.”](#) *The New York Times*, 27 July. (Also on Canvas) (4pp, lots of pictures)
2. Wee, Sui-Lee, and Paul Mozur. 2019. [“China’s Genetic Research on Ethnic Minorities Sets Off Science Backlash.”](#) *The New York Times*, 4 December. (Also on Canvas) (5pp)
3. Kao, Jeff, Raymond Zhong, Paul Mozur, Aliza Aufrichtig, Nailah Morgan, and Aaron Krolik. 2021. [“‘We Are Very Free’: How China Spreads Its Propaganda Version of Life in Xinjiang.”](#) *The New York Times*, 22 June. Read and watch this online; it’s interactive.

Response to Dr. Su’s Guest Lecture Due Nov 2 by 11:59pm Central Time

Nov 4—Revolutions and Contention

Have read: D&E Ch. 12 (28pp)

Nov 9—Revolutions and Contention, cont.

Have watched the following 2 videos (25 minutes total) (Homework opportunity #9):

*** Warning: These videos contain violent images; use discretion ***

1. [“Inside Belarus, Europe’s Last Dictatorship.”](#) 2017. *Vice News*, 9 August. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (17.5 minutes)
2. [“Belarus’ Ongoing Protests: Examined.”](#) 2020. *ABC News*, 7 December. YouTube Video. (Link also on Canvas) (7 minutes)

November 11—Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.—Guest Lecture from Mr. Brandon Tensley

Have read, watched, and listened to (Homework opportunity #10):

1. *** Warning: This video contains violent images and discusses racism and police brutality; use discretion. If watching this will negatively affect your wellbeing, you do not need to watch it *** [“What It Means to Be Black in Brazil.”](#) 2020. Vox, 23 September. YouTube Video. Link also on Canvas. (12 minutes long)
2. García-Navarro, Lulu. 2015. [“Expats Find Brazil’s Reputation for Race-Blindness Is Undone By Reality.”](#) NPR, 22 May. (Also on Canvas) (5pp) (Transcript available on the linked page; let me know if you can’t find it)
3. [“Brazil in Black and White.”](#) 2017. NPR’s *Rough Translation*, 14 August. Audio and transcript also available here: (32 minutes long)

Last blog opportunity closes this Saturday, Nov 13

November 16—Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.

Have read (13pp, includes photos) (Homework opportunity #11):

1. Cooper, Helene. 2017. [“How Liberian Women Delivered Africa’s First Female President.”](#) *New York Times*, 5 March. (Also on Canvas) (8pp)
2. Faizi, Fatima, and Rod Nordland. 2019. [“Afghan Town’s First Female Mayor Awaits Her Assassination.”](#) *New York Times*, 4 October. (Also on Canvas) (3pp)
3. Faizi, Fatima, and Thomas Gibbons-Neff. 2020. [“An Afghan Mayor Expected to Die. Instead, She Lost Her Father.”](#) *New York Times*, 6 November. (Also on Canvas) (2pp)

**Response to Mr. Tensley’s Guest Lecture Due Nov 16 by 11:59pm CT **

November 18—Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.

Have read (14pp) (Homework opportunity #12):

1. Berger, Miriam. 2019. [“A Guide to How Gender-Neutral Language Is Developing Around the World.”](#) *Washington Post*, 15 December. (Also on Canvas) (7pp)
2. Garcia, Sandra E. 2021. [“The Vogueing Protesters of Bogotá.”](#) *The New York Times*, 31 May. (Also on Canvas) (4pp, includes photos)

3. Hopkins, Valerie. 2021. "[In Hungary, an Embattled LGBTQ Community Takes to the Streets.](#)" *The New York Times*, 24 July. (Also on Canvas) (3pp) ***Please note that this story does mention discrimination against people who identify as LGBTQ+. If reading about that will negatively affect your health and wellbeing, you do not need to read this article.***

Body Paragraph (including proper in-text citations) due by 11:59pm today (5% of final grade)

Semester Wrap-Up

Nov 23 and 25—No Class (Fall + Thanksgiving Break)

Nov 30—Free class period to account for the time you spent attending an outside lecture for your final “guest lecture” writeup

Dec 2—I will be available to meet to discuss and help with your papers

Bibliography Quiz Due—Canvas submission window closes at 11:59pm Central Time

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: ***Final Exam (your paper) is due Tuesday, December 7, by 1:15pm (14% of final grade)***