

Syllabus
INTL 3300 – Summer 2008
Introduction to Comparative Politics

Instructor:
Jennifer J. White

Class Time:
Monday-Friday, 10:30-12:15
7 July – 31 August

Office Hours:
Tuesday-Thursday 2-3PM,
or by appointment

Class Location:
Caldwell Hall, Room 203

Contact Info:
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Course Web Site:
<https://webct.uga.edu/public/intl3300jw/>

Course Description: Comparative political themes in political science. The transition from feudalism to capitalism, state building, democracy, and interaction between political institutions and cultures in various politics. Examples will be drawn from developed, communist/post-communist and developing political systems.

PREREQUISITE: POLS 1101 or INTL 1100

Raise d'Être of the Course: The crux of comparative political science is this: by examining two or more countries in the light of various political theories – and by comparing two or more themes and/or functions across countries – one learns far more than by studying these countries or themes separately. One can also clarify understanding of one's own political system, and therefore begin to ask and investigate political questions that have a direct bearing on one's own life and values. Undertaking this process requires disciplined investigation and critical thinking skills, which we shall work to develop throughout the course.

What We'll Do in This Course: In the next few weeks, we shall undertake an examination of the different approaches – both theoretical and thematic – to the study of comparative politics. Our study will be grounded in the theoretical foundations of the field (cultural, structural, and functional) as we shall consider the following:

- how political culture and history affect politics in a given society;
- how political institutions of a society are established and how and why they may change;
- and finally, how a society's political economy is organized and how it can affect potential political outcomes (such as elections or legislation).

Once these foundations are understood, we shall endeavour to examine and compare a number of political systems from around the world, looking at their various cultures/histories, political institutions, and political economies and evaluating how differences in and interactions among these three factors have given rise to different outcomes from one country to the next. Our emphasis will be on the following areas/systems:

- Democracies and Advanced, Industrialized Democracies (the US, Western Europe)
- Authoritarian States (China, Cuba)
- Newly Industrialized States (South-East Asia, India, Latin America)
- Developing Countries (African, Latin America)

In our investigation of these other systems and countries, we shall also compare them to the system here in the United States, which we shall use as a basic reference. As such, we shall engage in **critical assessments** of the differences we find and whether or not changes in our own political system or in other countries' systems may provide viable answers to some of the current political problems and controversies that many countries face today. As the United States faces a change of administration in the coming months, this aspect of the course may be particularly useful if you are considering for whom (or whether) you intend to vote.

A Word of Warning: As an introduction to an entire subfield of political science, this course will be covering a great deal of ground in a very short time. It is **absolutely essential** that you come to class completely prepared: each day's assignments must be completed before class, and each student must be ready to conduct a quality discussion on the day's material. Also, lectures will not be mere repetition of the reading material, and students will be expected to come to class ready to *expand* on the readings and assignments. In effect, we shall be building the lectures together, so each student must be engaged in the discussions.

Ground Rules: The condensed time of this course and the requisite of covering all of the necessary material mean that the following will be necessary:

1. The use of laptops, cell phones, iPods, or any other electronic device is **NOT** permitted during class time. You may use these during the break, of course, but your attention during class must be on the class itself, not elsewhere.
 2. **Attendance is required.** You are expected to participate in each class (in fact, it's part of your grade! See below...), and you cannot do so if you do not attend.
 3. **If you are absent on a day when an assignment is due, you must provide an acceptable excuse per University policy in order to make up the assignment.** If you will be absent, I would appreciate an e-mail notification ahead of time, if possible.
 4. **Work submitted for this course must be your own work:** All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. For more information, see: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>
 5. Our discussions may touch upon ideas or topics on which we may not all agree – in fact, this will probably be the case. Each student is expected to be courteous and respectful of the viewpoints and ideas of all others in the class, although disagreements are certainly acceptable. **In discussions, you should make an effort to provide either a theoretical or empirical basis for your comments – this is a major part of becoming a critical thinker, and it is part of the goal of this course.**
 6. This syllabus is a general plan; it may be necessary for me to amend any part of the syllabus as we proceed through the course. Announcements will generally be made in class and on WebCT, so you should be sure to attend each class, and to check the course Web site on WebCT *often*.
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Texts:

We shall use one main textbook for the course, indicated in the class schedule below as *Essentials*:

O'Neil, Patrick. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. (New York: WW Norton & Company, Inc.) 2007.
ISBN: 9780393928761

We shall also use an optional case studies accompanying text (from which we shall read several chapters on individual countries), indicated in the class schedule below as *Cases*:

O'Neil, Patrick, Karl Fields, and Don Share. *Cases in Comparative Politics*. (New York: WW Norton & Company, Inc.) 2006.
ISBN: 9780393170924 (Note: This ISBN number is for the discounted package of main text and accompanying text. The ISBN for just the Cases text is 0393929434.)

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There will also be selected readings from other texts (posted on WebCT). These readings will be drawn from the following:

Allen, Christopher. "The Case for a Multi-Party U.S. Parliament? American Politics in Comparative Perspective," in *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics, 2007-2008*, edited by Christian Soe.

Draper, Alan, and Ansil Ramsay. *The Good Society: An Introduction to Comparative Politics* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc.) 2008.

Heidenheimer, Arnold J., and Hugo Hecl, and Carolyn Teich Adams. *Comparative Public Policy: The Politics of Social Choice in America, Europe, and Japan* (New York: Worth Publishers) 1990.

Karns, Margaret P., and Karen A. Mingst. *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers) 2004.

Paul, Richard, and Linda Elder. *Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools* (Dillon Beach, CA: The Foundation for Critical Thinking) 2006.

Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books) 1999.

Wiarda, Howard. *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press) 2002.

Grading:

Group Presentations (2): 20% each	→	40%
Film Essays (2): 10% each	→	20%
Participation: 10%	→	10%
Final Exam: 30%	→	30%

Total: 100%

Each student will work as part of a group to give two (2) presentations on a pair of countries that the group selects. Each student will also prepare and submit via WebCT two (2) film essays on the films we view in class. Details concerning the presentation and film essay assignments will be discussed in class in advance of the respective assignments. **Additional assignments** may also be given during class, either to be completed in class or turned in during the next class session. These assignments will be announced in class and posted on WebCT.

The final exam will feature multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and essay questions. You will have the full class time to take the final on the last day of class; further information about the format of the final exam will be presented in class.

Daily Class Agenda:

For each class, students are expected to have completed the readings listed for that day in the course schedule, **and** to prepare two (2) questions on those readings to turn in **at the beginning of class**. These questions may be used as discussion points during the class, and as such, count towards your participation grade.

Students are also expected to be familiar with current world events, and we shall begin each class period with a discussion of these events and how they bear on our studies to that point. As this is a comparative politics course in which you are expected to sharpen your critical thinking skills, you should try to check out at least *two (2)* news sources each day and thoughtfully assess each source's presentation of the information. This may be most easily accomplished on-line, by going to the "world news" section in any of the following sources:

- The New York Times (www.nytimes.com – free registration required)
- The BBC On-Line (news.bbc.co.uk)
- The Guardian On-Line (www.guardian.co.uk)
- Le Monde (www.lemonde.fr – in French)
- Der Spiegel (www.spiegel.de – in German)
- The Christian Science Monitor (<http://www.csmonitor.com>)
- Or, check out **Google News** (<http://news.google.com/nwshp?hl=en&tab=wn>), and choose "World" to see the worlds news in the country of your choice – there are many news sources here in English (e.g., Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa) as well as other languages.

Class runs from 10:30 until 12:15, and we shall have one 15-20 minute break after about the first hour of class. Classes will consist of lecture, group activities and work sessions, presentations, and film viewings (consult the schedule of assignments and classes below).

Schedule of Assignments and Classes:

Readings marked with an asterisk () can be found on WebCT.*

Monday, 7 July: Introduction

- Introduction to Course
- "Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools," Paul & Elder*

Tuesday, 8 July: Getting Started

Readings:

- Chapter 1, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Chapter 1, "Good Societies," Draper & Ramsay*
- Chapter 1, "Introduction: New Directions in Comparative Politics," Wiarda*

Wednesday, 9 July: Structure - Institutions & States

Readings:

- Chapter 2, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- "The Case for a US Parliament," Allen*

Thursday, 10 July: Culture – Nations and Society

Readings:

- Chapter 3, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Chapter 8, "Political Culture and Democracy," Inglehart and Welzel [in Wiarda]*

Friday, 11 July: Function - Political Economy

Readings:

- Chapter 4, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Chapter 5, "Comparative Political Economy," Gill [in Wiarda]*

Monday, 14 July: Democracies and Advanced Democracies

Readings:

- Chapters 6 & 7, *Essentials*, O'Neil

In Class:

- Country Group Work

Tuesday, 15 July: Democracies and Advanced Democracies

Readings:

- Chapter 2, "The United Kingdom," in *Cases*, O'Neil *et al*
- Chapter 6, "Germany," in Draper and Ramsay*

In Class:

- Country Group Work

Wednesday, 16 July: Democracies and Advanced Democracies

Presentations:

- Country Reports – First 2 Groups

Thursday, 17 July: Democracies and Advanced Democracies

Presentations:

- Country Reports – Second 2 Groups

In Class

- Film #1: "Good Bye, Lenin"

Friday, 18 July: Communism and Post-Communism

Readings:

- Chapter 8, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Chapter 6, "Russia," in *Cases*, O'Neil *et al*

In Class:

- Film #1: "Good Bye, Lenin"

Monday, 21 July: Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism

Due:

- Film Essay #1

Readings:

- Chapter 5, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Chapter 7, "China," in *Cases*, O'Neil *et al*

Tuesday, 22 July: Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries

Readings:

- Chapter 9, *Essentials*, O'Neil

In Class:

- Film #2: "Machuca"

Wednesday, 23 July: Political Violence

Readings:

- Chapter 11, "Brazil," in *Cases*, O'Neil *et al*
- Chapter 9, "Chile," in Draper & Ramsay*

In Class:

- Film #2: "Machuca"

Thursday, 24 July: Globalization

Readings:

- Chapter 10, *Essentials*, O'Neil
- Readings from Chapter 6, "Nonstate Actors: NGOs, Networks, and Social Movements," Karns & Mingst (pages 211-230; 240-248)*

In Class:

- Film Discussion
- Country Group Work

Friday, 25 July: Globalization and Comparative Public Policy

Due:

- Film Essay #2

Readings:

- Introduction and Chapter 1, "The Perspective of Freedom," Amartya Sen*
- Chapter 1, "The Politics of Social Choice," in Heidenheimer *et al**

In Class:

- Country Group Work

Monday, 28 July: Political Violence

Presentations:

- Country Reports – First 2 Groups

Readings:

- Chapter 11, *Essentials*, O'Neil

Tuesday, 29 July: Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries & Political Violence

Presentations:

- Country Reports – Second 2 Groups

In Class:

- Film #3: "Battle of Algiers"

Wednesday, 30 July: Political Violence & Review

In Class:

- Film #3: "Battle of Algiers"
- Review for Final

Thursday, 31 July:

****FINAL EXAM****