

POLS 3365: Intro to Comparative Politics
Department of Political Science
CRN 81319
Fall 2017
3 credit hours
MWF 2:00-2:50 p.m. CHSS 232

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Office Hours:
M,W 4:00-7:00 p.m.
and by appointment

Course Description and Goals

What is democracy? Are France and Sweden more or less democratic than the U.S.? Why are some countries politically and economically developed whereas others (many Third World countries) so poor and ruled by dictatorial governments? Why do we have a strong two party system in the U.S. whereas most democratic countries have a multi-party system? What is a parliamentary system? What is a unitary system? Why is the U.S. Supreme Court one of the most political and most powerful high courts in the world? Why did communism collapse in the former USSR and Eastern Europe? What can social science tell us about revolutions and terrorism? What is globalization? These are some of the questions that we should be able to answer by the end of the semester.

Political Science is not only fun, exciting and controversial but is essential to an understanding of everyday life. This course will discuss: (1) various concepts in Comparative Politics; and (2) major governing systems such as Western industrialized democracies, former-communist regimes and recent transitions to unstable democracies, and third world dictatorial regimes. Throughout the course we will distinguish between description, analysis, and normative judgment.

Most students will find that the materials covered in this course are not especially difficult to understand. There is a substantial amount of materials to be read, however, and it is imperative for each student's success that he or she develops a regular study schedule that permits keeping up with the assignment at all times.

You are expected to watch national and international news such as CNN at least five times a week. I highly recommend PBS's News Hour. If you do not have access to television, you should read *The New York Times* or the daily news from the Internet sites <http://www.cnn.com> or <http://www.nytimes.com>.

Course Objectives

- (1) Students will learn basic information about 45 major countries around the world;
- (2) Students will learn major concepts in the field of comparative politics; and
- (3) Students will learn competing paradigms and theories in comparative politics.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is mandatory. It is imperative that you attend all the lectures. If you are going to miss a class, ask a friend to tape the lecture for you. Rolls will be taken periodically. Anyone with 3 absences (that are not excused) will receive an "F." Permission to take a make-up exam will rarely be given and only a dire situation will warrant one. Make-up exams will be harder than the one given to the entire class.

Religious Holy Day or Days

A student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day or days or to travel for the purpose of religious observance may take an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time. The student should inform me before or immediately after the absence in writing (e-mail preferred). The student will have 15 days to complete the assignment or take the exam. If you are to miss the lecture, have a fellow student tape the lecture for you. Absence due to religious holy day does not count towards the 3 absences.

The following is the official SHSU policy:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Academic Dishonesty

Anyone caught cheating will receive "F" for the course and will be referred to the Associate Vice President for Student Services for further disciplinary action.

The following is the official SHSU policy:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner

that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Attention Students with Disabilities

Requests for accommodation must be initiated by the student. Please go to the Counseling Center for certification of disability. Then, let me know. I will do all I can to assist.

The following is the official SHSU policy:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Visitors in the classroom

If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. As a rule, I have no objections to "tourists" if extra seats are available.

The following is the official SHSU policy:

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU

identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Instructor evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form towards the end of the semester.

Classroom rules of conduct

The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link:
http://www.shsu.edu/students/StudentGuidelines2007_2008.pdf

Course Grade Will be Computed as Follows*:

map quiz	10%
1 st Mid-Term Exam	30%
2 nd Mid-Term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%

* Note: The point distributions are somewhat tentative. They might fluctuate a little bit. For example, the 2nd mid-term might be 35 points and the final 25 depending on how fast we are able to proceed. There is a total of 100 points for the course. For the map quiz, you have to identify 10 countries and bodies of water on a map. All grades will be posted at Bb. One might earn up to 5 extra points. Asking a pertinent question or answering my questions might get you extra point or points.

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Textbooks:

Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 5th edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 2015).

Patrick H. O'Neil, and Ronald Rogowski, editors, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 4th edition, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013).

Hereafter O&R

OUTLINE

weeks 1-2 **Introduction**

- * O'Neil, maps before ch. 1.

Map Exam

weeks 3-4 **What is Comparative Politics?**

- * O'Neil, ch. 1.
- * O&R, pp. 1-2.
- * Larry Bartels, "Some Unfulfilled Promises of Quantitative Imperialism," O&R, pp. 13-17.

week 5 **The State**

- * O'Neil, ch. 2.
- * O&R, pp. 24-25.
- * Francis Fukuyama, "The Necessity of Politics," O&R, pp. 26-39.
- * Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," O&R, pp. 39-45.
- * Stephen Krasner, "Sovereignty," O&R, pp. 68-74.

1st Mid-Term Exam

week 6 **Nations and Society**

- * O'Neil, ch. 3.
- * O&R, 75-76.

weeks 7-8 **Political Economy**

- * O'Neil, ch. 4.
- * O&R, pp. 134-137.
- * Adam Smith, "The Wealth of Nations," O&R, pp. 137-143.
- * Douglass C. North, "Institutions," O&R, pp. 143-155.

week 9 **Democratic Regimes**

- * O'Neil, ch. 5.
- * O&R, pp. 186-187.
- * Arent Lijphart, "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies," O&R, pp. 213-222.

week 10 **Nondemocratic Regimes**

- * O'Neil, ch. 6.
- * O&R, pp. 265-266.
- * Erika Weinthal and Pauline Jones Luong, "Combating the Resource Curse," O&R, 279-294.

2nd Mid-Term Exam

week 11 **Political Violence**

- * O'Neil, ch. 7.
- * O&R, 314-315.
- * Theda Skocpol, "A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," O&R, pp. 316-333.
- * Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," O&R, pp. 333-349.

week 12 **Democracies**

- * O'Neil, ch. 8.
- * O&R, pp. 395-397.

week 13 **Communism and Post-Communism**

- * O'Neil, ch. 9.
- * O&R, pp. 467-468.
- * Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," O&R, pp. 469-481.

week 14 **Developing Countries**

- * O'Neil, ch. 10.
- * O&R, pp. 545-547.

week 15 **Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics**

- * O'Neil, ch. 11.
- * O&R, pp. 588-589.

Final Exam