

PSC 103: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Fall 2013

Class Time: 8:00-9:20 a.m.

Class Location: Capen 31

Office Location: 416 Park Hall

Email: jmsiever@buffalo.edu

Office Hours: 10:00-12:00 T,R; by apt.

Course Description and Objectives

The Introduction to Comparative Politics course is designed to introduce students to the major questions and issues in comparative politics, familiarize them with the field's best and most up to date answers to those questions, to give them the skills and tools to think critically about those answers, and guide them in the process of developing and answering their own questions to political phenomena.

This course be organized answering many of the major questions in comparative politics pertaining to the state and governance. Particularly we will focus on answering, what is democracy? Why are some states democracies, while others are autocracies? How does regime type effect the well being of its citizens? How do governments and states form; how do they change? Additionally, students will have the opportunity to ask and answer their own questions regarding comparative politics.

By the end of the semester students are expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes:

1. Demonstrate the ability to recognize and apply key concepts and major theories.
2. Be able to identify and critically evaluate the arguments of scholarly research in political science.
3. Engage in conceptual analysis and theoretical interpretation of political ideas and phenomena.
4. Develop the ability to analyze a scholarly question in political science by drawing logical inferences from qualitative and/or quantitative data.
5. Develop an awareness of the global dynamics that influence the context of domestic and international politics.
6. Develop the ability to apply social scientific reasoning in the analysis of a wide range of political issues and problems.

Required Text and Readings

Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder (2013). *Principles of Comparative Politics*, 2nd Ed. Sage CQ Press: Washington D.C.

Readings on Research Design will also be posted on UBLearns.

Assignments and Grading

Exams There will be three exams throughout the semester, two midterms held during class on October 1 and November 21, and one cumulative final held December 13 from 8:00-11:00 a.m. in Alumni 97. Each exam will be worth 20% of the overall grade, for a total of 60%. Exams may include multiple choice, short answer, oMake up exams will not be given. Exams will be drawn from material covered in lectures and assigned readings.

Research Design Throughout the semester the course will cover issues of conducting research, drawing inferences, and generalizing conclusions around contemporary issues in

comparative politics. Students will be guided through the research process through interactive class discussions and will produce a research design over the course of the semester worth a total 40% of the final grade. Each section of the research design will be due as follows:

Research Question	September 19	5%
Theory	October 17	10%
Hypotheses	November 14	10%
Completed Research Design	December 5	15%

Students may change their research question, theory, or hypotheses up until the time the completed research design is due and feedback on projects will be given in a timely manner. However, the steps of the research process are meant to build up one another so it is recommended that students decide on a topic and stick with it throughout the semester.

Assignments are to be typed and printed and will be due on the days listed above. An assignment is late if it is not handed in by the end of class on the due date. Late work will be accepted up to one week after the due date. The late work will be penalized 15% the first day that it is late, and 25% for each subsequent day.

Grading Note: Students who wish to discuss a graded assignment must wait 24 hours after the assignment is returned to discuss the grade.

A	100-94	C	76-74
A-	93-90	C-	73-70
B+	89-87	D+	69-67
B	86-84	D	66-64
B-	83-80	D-	63-61
C+	79-77	F	60-0

Learning Outcome	Assessment Measures
Demonstrate the ability to recognize and apply key concepts and major theories	Exams 1,2,3
Be able to identify and critically evaluate the arguments of scholarly research	Exams and Research Design
Engage in conceptual analysis and theoretical interpretation of political ideas and phenomena	Research Design
Develop the ability to analyze a scholarly question in political science by drawing logical inferences from qualitative and/or quantitative data	Research Design
Develop an awareness of the global dynamics that influence the context of domestic and international politics	Exams 1,2,3
Develop the ability to apply social scientific reasoning in the analysis of a wide range of political issues and problems	Exams 1,2,3, and Research Design

Academic Conduct

Students are expected to fully adhere to the academic integrity regulations set forth by the University at Buffalo, SUNY. Any violation of the regulations will result in appropriate disciplinary action as set forth in University policy. Additional information regarding University policy is available at: <http://www.advising.buffalo.edu/student/academicintegrity.php>.

Plagiarism in any and all forms will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of 'F' for the course. This includes, but is not limited to, copying or receiving material from any source and attributing it as one's own without acknowledging and properly attributing the material to the source, or in any other way representing the work of another as one's own work. Information regarding plagiarism and academic scholarship can be found the the UB libraries website, <http://library.buffalo.edu/help/research-tips/plagiarism/> as well as a guide for citing sources, <http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/guide/guide.asp?ID=156>. All written work submitted to this course must contain proper citations and conform to accepted citation styles.

Classroom Etiquette Please arrive to class on time, awake, and with your cell phone off or on vibrate. Repeated tardiness and interruptions (including ringing cell phones) will not be tolerated. Students are permitted to bring laptops to class and may occasionally be asked to bring or share a computer to complete in class work. However, Facebooking, tweeting, checking ESPN, or any other work not associated with the course that proves be distracting is not a good use of class time and will not be permitted.

Course Schedule

What is science? *Political Science?*

8/27/13: Introduction

8/29/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.19-47.

What is Political Science?

9/3/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.49-79.

9/5/13: No class; Rosh Hashanah

States, Democracy and Dictatorship

9/10/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.87-124

9/12/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.143-168

Research Questions

9/17/13: Discussion of Forming Research Questions

Economic Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship

9/19/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.171-209; **Research Questions Due**

Cultural Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship

9/24/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; 213-240

9/26/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; 240-259

10/1/13: **Exam 1**

10/3/13: Discussion of Forming and Using Theory

Democratic Transitions

10/8/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.265-307

Does Democracy Make a Difference?

10/10/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.326-346

Varieties of Dictatorship

10/15/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.350-374

10/17/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.374-403; **Theory Section Due**

Problems of Decision Making

10/22/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.414-446

Parliamentary, Presidential and Semi-Presidential Democracies

10/24/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.458-492

10/29/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.492-525.

Elections and Electoral Systems

10/31/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p. 536-564

11/5/15: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p. 564-597

11/7/13: Discussion of Forming and Testing Hypotheses

Social Cleavages and Party Systems

11/12/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.602-641

11/14/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.641-668; **Hypotheses Section Due**

Consequences of Democratic Institutions

11/19/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p.742-765

11/21/13: **Exam 2**

11/26/13: Discussion of Completed Research Designs

11/28/13: No class; Thanksgiving

12/3/13: Clark, Golder, and Golder; p. 788-825.

12/5/13: Wrap-up; **Final Research Design Dues**

Americans with Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination law that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. The legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the instructor immediately.

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