

POLS 260: INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Department of Political Science
Northern Illinois University
Tuesday & Thursday 11-12:15 pm
DU 461

Instructor: Dr. Kheang Un
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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 1:00-3:00 pm
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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course aims to introduce students to the comparative study of government and politics. It will examine the theoretical, methodological and empirical underpinnings of comparative politics—a subfield of political science. Lectures and readings will address theories, methods, and cases that illuminate the following topics: the state and its institutions, democracy, economic development, globalization, and social mobilization.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

1. The Learning Environment. Your instructor is committed to the principle of active learning. This principle requires students' active involvement in, commitment to, and responsibility for their own education. Hence, it is important that students conduct themselves in ways that indicate respect for the learning community and the learning process. Respect for the learning community should preclude such behavior as persistent tardiness, leaving the room during class time (unless prior advice was given to the instructor or in case of emergency), falling asleep, reading the newspaper, studying for another class, and chatting with others.

2. Readings and Lecture. Please purchase a copy of textbook for this course J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.), at the Student Center or at the Village Commons Bookstore. Assigned readings outside the textbook are available on course blackboard. Some short readings may also be distributed in class.

Lectures will parallel and compliment the readings. As such, students cannot just rely solely on lectures or readings.

3. Class attendance and Participation. Attendance at all class sessions is expected, and the instructor will check the attendance regularly. Students are allowed to have one unexcused absence during the semester. An additional absence without instructor approval will result in 5 point penalty. The total points for attendance is 50. Informed participation in class discussion will significantly help students in borderline grade situations.

4. Exams, and Written Assignments, Presentations.

A. Exams: This course will have two exams taken in class. The **midterm exam** will be on **October 05th**. The **final exam** will be on **December 12, 10-11:50 am**. Each exam will be worth **100 points**. The format of each exam will be a combination of essay and short answer. No make-up exam will be offered, except in cases of emergency, as defined by the instructor, and with advance notification.

B. Term paper: A paper of **7-9 pages** in length and double-space is required. The paper should be properly referenced, and typed. It will be worth **100 points**. Due dates: First draft **November 14th** and second draft **November 28th**.

C. Presentations: There will be **two** group presentations. These presentations will be based on the topics listed in the syllabus. Each presentation will be worth **40 points**.

D. Movie Reviews: A good review should include: 1) a brief description of the movie/documentary film; 2) analysis and interpretation of the movie/documentary film (how accurate is the movie/documentary film in depicting the subject according to the readings or your prior knowledge? Is the story told complete? Is the story convincing?); 3) evaluation of the movie/documentary film (what messages did the movie/documentary film convey? How was the message conveyed? How well are major parts connected to each other? and; 4) relating the movie/documentary film to the course. These papers should be **800-1,000** words in length. Each film review is worth **20 points**.

5. Course Grade. Course Grades will be distributed as follows:

Assignments	Scores
First exam	100 pts
Final exam	100 pts
Term paper	100 pts
Attendance	50 pts
Movie reviews	40 pts
Group presentations	80 points
Total <i>Raw Score</i>	470 points

Final Average	Final Grade
98-100%	A+
94-97%	A
90-93%	A-
88-89 %	B+
84-87%	B
80-83%	B-
78-79%	C+
70-77%	C
60-69%	D
<60%	F

6. Academic Integrity. Students are expected to know and comply with NIU policies on academic integrity (see p. 47 of 2001 Undergraduate Catalog). Any student found guilty of cheating or plagiarizing will receive an “F” for the examination and the course. He or she may also be subject to additional sanctions imposed by the university.

7. Undergraduate Writing Awards. The Department of Political Science will recognize, on an annual basis, outstanding undergraduate papers written in conjunction with 300-400 level political science courses or directed studies. Authors do not have to be political science majors or have a particular class standing. Winners are expected to attend the Department’s spring graduation ceremony where they will receive a certificate and \$50.00. Papers, which can be submitted by students or faculty, must be supplied in triplicate to a department secretary by February 28. All copies should have two cover pages – one with the student’s name and one without the student’s name. Only papers written in the previous *calendar* year can be considered for the award. However, papers completed in the current spring semester are eligible for the following year’s competition even if the student has graduated.

8. Statement Concerning Students with Disabilities. Northern Illinois University is committed to providing an accessible educational environment in collaboration with the Disability Resource Center. If you need an accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located on the 4th floor of the Health Services Building, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 (V) or drc@niu.edu. Also, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the sooner we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

9. Department of Political Science Web Site. Undergraduates are strongly encouraged to consult the Department of Political Science’s web site on a regular basis. This up-to-date, central source of information will assist students in contacting faculty and staff, reviewing course requirements and syllabi, exploring graduate study, researching career options, tracking department events, and accessing important details related to undergraduate programs and activities. To reach the site, go to <http://polisci.niu.edu>

10. Link to Citation

<http://libguides.niu.edu/content.php?pid=164220&sid=2027148>

COURSE OUTLINE: (May subject to change as needed)

August 29-August 31: Introduction to Comparative Politics
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- What and how comparative politics compares.
- What is the objective of theory in comparative politics?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapters 1 & 2.

September 5-September 7: Modern State

- What is a nation?
- What is a state?
- Does a nation precedes a state or vice versa?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapters 3; also pages 504-505; 546-547; 517-518.

September 12-September 14: Democracy and Democratization

- What is democracy? What is democratization?
- What factors contribute to democratization?
- What makes democracy endure?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapter 6; 408; 421-422
- Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy Is ... and Is Not?" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 2, no 3 (Summer 1991): 75-88.

September 19-September 21: Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Breakdown

- What is authoritarianism?
- Why are some authoritarian regimes resilient and others not?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapter 7; and pages 475-476;533-534;505-506.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. "The rise of competitive authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51-65.

September 26-September 28: Legislature, Legislative Elections, and Executives

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapters 8, 9, and 10 and pages 548-549; 476-477; 519-520; 549-550; 491-564-565; 534-535; 423-424.

October 3: Catch-up and Review

October 5: Midterm Exam

Please bring a blue book (big size please)

October 10-October 12: Revolution and Contestation

Viewing "*The Square*."

October 17-October 19: Group Discussion and Presentation

- **Group 1:** Mexico: What factors contributed to authoritarian breakdown in the country? What is the state of democracy in Mexico?
- **Group 2:** Is China destined for democracy?
- **Group 3:** Discuss Russia's procedural democracy and obstacles to further consolidation of democracy in Russia.
- **Group 4:** Compare the executive power of the head of government in a presidential system to that of a parliamentary system focusing on their domestic legislative agenda and foreign policy initiatives (suggested cases: the United States and the United Kingdom).

October 24-October 26: Revolution and Contestation

Discussion on research statement and research paper

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapter 12.

October 24-October 26: Revolution and Contestation (continued)

- Howard, P. and M. Hussain, "Egypt and Tunisia: The Role of Digital Media," in L. Diamond and M. Plattner eds. *Liberation Technology: Social Media and the Struggle for Democracy* (Washington DC: John Hopkins University, 2012), pp. 100-123.
- Khondker, Habibul Haque. "Role of the new media in the Arab Spring." *Globalizations* 8, no. 5 (2011): 675-679.

October 31-November 02: Political Economy and Development

- What is political economy?
- What is economic development?
- Why some countries are rich and some are poor?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapters 4; and pages 561-562; 547-548; 490; 449-450.
- The World Bank, *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* (Washington D.C: The World Bank, 2006), pp. 1-23.

November 07-November 09: Economic Growth, Regime Types, and Geography

- What role does geography play in economic development?
- Does regime types matter in promoting economic development?
- How important are institutions in economic development?

Required readings

- J. Tyler Dickovick, and Jonathan Eastwood, *Comparative Politics: Integrating Theories, Methods, and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.), Chapters 5, and pages 518; 420.

- Jeffrey Sachs, Andrew Mellinger, and John Gallup, "The Geography of Poverty and Wealth." *Scientific American* Vol. 284, No.3 (2001): 70-75.
- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail* (New York: Crown Business, 2012), 40-69.

Suggested Readings

- Mancur Olson, "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *American Political Science Review* vol. 87, no. 3 (1993): 567-576.
- Peter Evans, "Predatory, developmental, and other apparatuses: a comparative political economy perspective on the third world state," *Sociological Forum*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 561-587.
- Pippa Norris, *Making Democratic Governance Work: How Regimes Shape Prosperity, Welfare and Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapter 3.
- Norris Pippen, conclusion in *Making Democratic Governance Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 187-195. [Available on course Blackboard under content]

November 14-November 16: Globalization and Its Discontents

- Viewing: Movie: Fashion Crime <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/fashion-victims/>
 - Joseph Stiglitz, "Globalism's Discontents," in Mark Keselman, *The Politics of Globalization: A Reader* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), pp. 86-95.
 - Paul Krugman, "In Praise of Cheap Labor: Bad Jobs at Bad Wages are Better than No Jobs at All," in Thomas Oatley, *The Global Economy: Contemporary Debates* (New York: Pearson-Longman, 2005), pp. pp. 204-207.
 - John Miller, "Why Economists Are Wrong about Sweatshops and the Anti-Sweatshop Movements," in Thomas Oatley, *The Global Economy: Contemporary Debates* (New York: Pearson-Longman, 2005), pp. 208-224.
 - David Held, "Political Globalization," in Joel Krieger, *Globalization and State Power: A Reader* (New York: Longman 2006), pp. 94-102.
 - Amartya Sen, "How to Judge Globalism," in Mark Keselman, *The Politics of Globalization: A Reader* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), pp. 28-36.
- *First draft of term paper due on November 14th**

November 21: No Class Professor attending workshop in Taipei, Taiwan

November 23: No Class, Thanksgiving

November 28: Globalization and Its Discontents (continued)

Cover the same readings listed for November 14-16

***Final draft of term paper due**

November 30-December 05: Group Discussion and Presentation

- **Group 1:** Juxtapose the positions of the proponents and opponents of sweatshops. Take a position by providing evidence pertaining to at least two cases.

- **Group 2:** Discuss ways in which geography and institutions promote or hinder economic development. In your view, which of the two factors is more salient in promoting economic development. Please make reference to at least two countries in your presentation.
- **Group 3:** Do you agree with the statement that authoritarian regimes are better at promoting economic development than democratic regimes. Please make reference to at least two countries.
- **Group 4:** Is globalization good or bad for developing countries. Please make reference to at least two countries.

December 07: Catch-up and review

December 13: Final Exam

IN CLASS 10-11:50 am