

Introduction to Comparative Politics

POLI 2, Spring 2019

MWF 9:15 – 10:20am

Kenna Hall 310

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Office Hours:
Wednesday 2:15-4pm
Thursday 11am-12pm
and by appointment

This course introduces fundamental concepts in comparative politics by studying particular cases. As with all comparative politics, as opposed to international relations, emphasis will be placed on domestic and internal politics of different countries. In particular, the course will highlight puzzling instances of political variation across countries and within countries over time. Through lecture and discussion, students will be trained to identify political differences across countries and to consider the implications of those differences for important outcomes such as social stability, human rights, and economic development.

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- understand variation in political systems and institutional configurations found around the world
- apply comparative methods to generate questions and hypotheses about why countries have the political outcomes that they do
- analyze how interests, institutions, and ideas shape political outcomes

This course fulfills the Social Science Requirement in the Core Curriculum

Goals: Scientific Inquiry, Complexity, Critical Thinking, Mathematical & Quantitative Reasoning

Objectives: Students who have completed Social Science will—

- 1.1 Be able to apply deductive and inductive reasoning to analyze social science topics. (Scientific Inquiry, Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning) (*exams*)
- 1.2 Evaluate evidence used to validate theories, hypotheses, or predictions. (Scientific Inquiry, Critical Thinking, Complexity) (*exams, discussion, case study*)
- 1.3 Appreciate that theories and data analysis often admit multiple interpretations and will be able to evaluate the relative merits of alternative perspectives. (Critical Thinking, Complexity) (*exams, discussion, case study*)

This course fulfills the Cultures and Ideas 3 Requirement in the Core Curriculum

- 3.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures in their global and/or diasporic contexts. (Global Cultures, Diversity) (*discussion, case study*)

- 3.2 Identify, analyze and evaluate the challenges and complexities in an interdependent world using methods appropriate to the discipline. (Critical Thinking, Global Cultures, Complexity) (*case study*)
- 3.3 Reflect on their assumptions and ideas about geographically or culturally unfamiliar cultures and the connections to their own culture and society. (Perspective, Critical Thinking) (*discussion, case study*)

This course is also a part of the Democracy Pathway. Be aware that if you plan to use this course as part of your pathway you need to save a piece of work to submit online.

Required text: O’Neil, Patrick. 2017. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 6th edition. New York: Norton. ISBN: 9780393624588.

All other reading assignments are available on the course website.

Course requirements:

1. Attendance (5% of final grade)

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Please notify me in advance if you will miss class because of religious observance, participation in university-sponsored events, or other university-approved reasons for absence. I will calculate this grade as the percentage of classes that you attended, excluding excused absences. I will overlook one unexcused absence.

2. Participation (5%)

This class offers frequent opportunities for participation. For example, one class period per week will be dedicated to discussion of an important article in the field of comparative politics. These discussions are your opportunity to weigh in with your opinions! I will circulate questions to guide the discussion; you can also use these questions to guide your reading. I encourage everyone to participate during class discussion. Not only will I award participation credit, but speaking up and sharing your opinion is a skill that takes practice. Please take advantage of this opportunity to develop a very useful skill.

I will evaluate participation based on consistency, thoughtfulness, courteousness, and effort, among other things. Please note that I define participation broadly to include my interaction with students during class, at office hours, and by email.

3. Reading quizzes (5%)

Each of the course’s main topics is paired with an illustrative case study. On the day that we are scheduled to discuss each case study, there will be a reading quiz which asks you to answer one of the week’s reading questions (which I will have previously circulated—see point 2, above). The quizzes will earn a score of 1 if I am convinced that you did the reading, and a zero otherwise.

At the end of the quarter, I will sum the scores and divide by the total number of quizzes. I expect to administer 6 or 7 quizzes over the course of the quarter. You may make up any quiz for any reason by submitting responses to the full set of reading questions. More details on make-up policy are available on the course website.

4. Map quiz (5%)

During week 2, there will be a map quiz that asks you to locate on a map each of the country cases, their capital cities, and other important geographical features. I will circulate the locations ahead of the quiz for your reference.

5. Case study, part 1 (15%)

For the first writing assignment, you should select a country and one of the weekly topics, and make the case that the topic is worthy of further study in the case of the country. You must choose a different country than the one listed on the syllabus for a given topic. For example, if you were interested in democracy in the case of Myanmar, then you would need to describe Myanmar's political regime and explain why it interests you. When you are making your case, be sure that you clearly characterize the outcome you want to study. In the Myanmar example, you would need to state whether the regime successfully transitioned to democracy, and what standard you are using to make that judgment. This assignment not only lays the groundwork for the case study to follow, but it also is an opportunity for me to learn about your interests and for you to learn about my grading style early in the course. Part 1 of the case study is due on Monday, April 29.

6. Case study, part 2 (20%)

Picking up where part 1 left off, part 2 will propose an explanation, based on scholarly sources, for the outcome described in the proposal. Papers should make use of at least six scholarly sources, of which no more than two may appear on the syllabus.

While it is not required, I strongly encourage you to discuss your case study with me in person. You may attend my office hours or email me to arrange an appointment.

All papers should demonstrate original thinking, effective research, cogent analysis, and clear writing. Part 2 of the case study is due on Wednesday, May 29.

7. Exams (45%)

Three non-cumulative exams will cover all course material, including lectures, discussion, and assigned reading. I will administer exams during class; they will take the entire period. The first half of each exam will include multiple choice and short-answer questions. These questions will emphasize specific concepts and details from the course material. The second half of each exam will consist of an essay; essay questions will be circulated several days before the exam. These questions will ask students to formulate an argument, supplemented with evidence from specific cases, about the major topics of the course. Please bring green books.

Course policies:

Electronic devices

Laptop computers are powerful tools for learning if used appropriately. However, I reserve the right to ask students to put them away if I believe that they are distracting students from classroom activities. Smart phones, by contrast, have less functionality for typing and research, and more potential for distraction. If your device doesn't have a keyboard, please leave it at home.

Late assignments

Students, like faculty, juggle many responsibilities, which is why it's so important to meet your deadlines! Nevertheless, I am willing to negotiate extensions, but you must approach me before the assignment is due, not after. Otherwise, late work will incur penalties worth one-sixth of a letter grade per day (e.g. the grade is reduced from a B+ to a B after two days).

Academic integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of – and commitment to – a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see www.scu.edu/academic-integrity/.

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. The full university policy is available at www.scu.edu/disabilities.

Accommodations for pregnant and parenting students

Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments, or by requesting accommodations through Disability Resources.

Discrimination and sexual misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's [Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or contact [Belinda Guthrie](#). Reports may be submitted online through the [Office of Student Life](#) or anonymously through [EthicsPoint](#)

In-class recordings

The University has a new policy prohibiting in-class recordings “without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties,” except in cases of approved disability accommodations. The full policy is in the [Student Conduct Code](#) (p. 13).

Course schedule
(Subject to change)

PART ONE: States and Nations

Week 1: Introduction

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| Monday, April 1 | Introductions |
| Wednesday, April 3 | Variation and comparative politics |
| • O’Neil, Chapter 1 (pp. 3-7, 23-25, 28) | |
| Friday, April 5 | Why are some states strong and others weak? |

Week 2: States

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| Monday, April 8 | State development |
| • O’Neil, Chapter 2 (pp. 31-38, 41-46, 51-60) | |
| Wednesday, April 10 | The case of Chile |
| • Saylor, Ryan. 2014. <i>State-Building in Boom Times</i> , Chapter 3. | |
| Friday, April 12 | Under what conditions do disparate groups identify as a nation? |

Week 3: Nations

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|---|---------------------------------|
| Monday, April 15 | Imagined communities |
| • Anderson, Benedict. 1994. <i>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i> , Chapter 1. | |
| Wednesday, April 17 | The cases of Kenya and Tanzania |
| • Miguel, Edward. 2004. “Tribe or nation? Nation building and public goods in Kenya versus Tanzania.” <i>World Politics</i> 56(3): 327-362. | |
| Friday, April 19 | <i>Good Friday; no class</i> |

PART TWO: Democratic and authoritarian regimes

Week 4: Authoritarian regimes

Monday, April 22

Exam #1

Wednesday, April 24

Why do some authoritarian regimes transition to democracy but not others?

- Masoud, Tarek. 2015. "Has the Door Closed on Arab Democracy?" *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 74-79

Friday, April 26

Explaining transitions

- O'Neil, Chapter 6 (pp. 175-177, 184-195, 200-202 plus the table on p. 196)
- O'Neil, Chapter 5 (pp. 141-144)

Week 5: Democratic regimes

Monday, April 29

Case study, part 1 due

The case of Tunisia

- Ghannouchi, Rached. 2016. "From Political Islam to Muslim Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October

Wednesday, May 1

Why do some democracies collapse while others remain stable?

- Guaido, Juan. 2019. "Venezuelans, Strength Is in Unity," *New York Times*, January 30.

Friday, May 3

SEAREG conference; no class

Week 6: Populism

Monday, May 6

Global challenges to democracy

Wednesday, May 8

Characteristics of resilient democracies

- O'Neil, Chapter 5 (pp. 135-139, 150-157, 168-170)

Friday, May 10

Why is populism on the rise now and not before?

- Zakaria, Fareed. 2016. "Populism on the March," *Foreign Affairs*, October 17.

Week 7

Monday, May 13

The case of Venezuela

- Mainwaring, Scott. 2012. "From Representative Democracy to Participatory Competitive Authoritarianism: Hugo Chávez and Venezuelan Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* 10(4): 955-967.

Wednesday, May 15

Exam #2

Friday, May 17

Under what conditions does political violence occur, and why does it vary in its expression?

- van Klinken, Gerry. 2007. *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small town wars*, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-8)

PART THREE: Political economy and violence

Week 8: Collective violence

- Monday, May 20** Explaining violence
- O’Neil, Chapter 7 (pp. 205-217)
- Wednesday, May 22** The case of Indonesia
- van Klinken, Gerry. 2007. *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small town wars*, Chapter 6.
- Friday, May 24** Why do some countries provide many social services and others only a few?
- O’Neil, Chapter 4 (pp. 99-105, 110-116)

Week 9: Welfare states

- Monday, May 27** *Memorial Day; no class*
- Wednesday, May 29** **Case study, part 2 due**
Liberalism, social democracy and welfare states
- Reading TBA
- Friday, May 31** Why are some countries rich and others poor?
- Li Yuan. 2019. “China Transforms, and a Factory Owner Struggles to Follow,” *New York Times*, January 21.

Week 10: Economic development

- Monday, June 3** The middle-income trap
- O’Neil, Chapter 10 (pp. 308-309, 318-337)
- Wednesday, June 5** The case of China
- Rivoli, Pietra. 2006. “Sisters in Time, From the Farm to the Sweatshop and Beyond,” from her book, *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy*
- Friday, June 7** **Exam #3**