

SPRING 2021  
POL 160  
COMPARATIVE POLITICS  
MW 2:00-3:15

Instructor Information:  
Dr. Gregory Gunderson  
Room 313  
Office phone: 261-6257  
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If you have an emergency, questions, etc, the best way to contact me is through email.

Office Hours:  
MT 3:30-4:30pm

Required Textbook: Michael G. Roskin, Countries and Concepts: Politics, Geography, Culture, 13th edition

#### Description

Studies a select set of important states with different political, economic, and cultural characteristics. Compares economic, social and political issues and policy choices, in addition to governance. Recommended for Business, Journalism, Education, and Political Science majors. SS

#### Course Content:

Paraphrasing Harold Lasswell, a well-known political scientist, politics is the process of deciding who gets what, when, and how within a society. That society may refer to politics at the global, national, or local level. Along with American politics, international relations, political theory, and public administration, Comparative politics, the subject of this course, is a sub-field of political science where we study a particular foreign country or region or, conversely, study a particular subject -- such as women in politics -- across a number of countries or regions. During this semester we will do both; looking at the various structures and actions of government and politics across several nations, both comparing and contrasting them, as well as looking at the politics of particular nations from Nigeria to China to the UK and more. During the semester you will also learn about the methods -- the way -- that political scientists do research in comparative politics. Below you will find a list of learning objectives for the course during the semester. Please read the remainder of this syllabus carefully; it can be viewed as a contract of sorts, laying out what you can expect of me as well as what I will expect of you. I look forward to working with you this semester. Welcome.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester each student should be able to...

- Describe the world's major types of governments;
- Understand how different types of government respond to economic, political, and social challenges;

- Assess the differing ethical choices governments must face in making and implementing public policy;
- Define and apply key concepts – including methodology – in comparative politics;
- Compare and contrast the political, economic, and social systems of the various countries addressed in class;
- Explain how electoral systems work and impact differing democracies explored in the course;
- And investigate a wide range of competing views and ideals throughout the world in the areas of politics, economics, society, and theory.

Attendance: I believe, in general, that attendance policies should not be necessary at the university-level. Unfortunately, experience has shown that many students will only attend class regularly if it directly affects their grade. During the course, your discussion will be worth 50 points. Obviously, you cannot discuss if you do not attend. I will take attendance every day.

Additionally each student is responsible for (1) any announcements and handouts distributed in class; (2) the content of lectures and multi-media presentations in class; and (3) any changes to the class schedule announced in class. Let me repeat this - students are expected to attend all classes. A missed class is not an acceptable excuse for not knowing about changes in assignments, the content of class sessions, etc. It is the student's responsibility to find out. Do not call or email the instructor to inform him that you will miss a class or an exam. If you can be there, it is assumed that you will be there and if you cannot attend, a telephone call or email will not change my policy in any way.

All lectures will be recorded.

#### Academic Honesty

Please do not cheat – cheating does nothing but rob you of the chance for an education. As a college student, you are part of an academic community and are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful of that community, in part by being academically honest. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to “cheating on an examination,” “submitting a paper or assignment as one’s own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another,” and “submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas.”

#### Course Requirements:

1. Attendance is required. See the section above on attendance for a discussion of my policy.
2. Discussion is important. Don’t be afraid to speak up, ask questions, or challenge the information I give you. Education is not strictly a spectator sport -- you will find the class more interesting and informative if you participate.
3. Be nice, be patient, be tolerant.
4. Exams and stuff like that –

- There will be three exams given in this class; two “midterm exams” and the final exam. Each midterm exam will be worth 120 points and the final will be worth 160 points.
- Regular class attendance and participation will be worth 50 points.
- Each student will be expected to write a short country comparison paper. The paper will be 3-4 pages in length and will be worth 50 points. The assignment will be discussed in more detail (and directions will be provided in Canvas) during the first two weeks of the course.
- To review, the distribution of points will be as follows:  
Attendance and participation - 50 points  
Exams - 400 points  
Comparison Paper - 50 points  
Total - 500 points

There will be no make-up exams or assignments except in the case of a bona fide (and verified) emergency! All make-up exams will consist of essay questions only.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

- A = 93-100%
- A- = 90-92 %
- B+=87-89%
- B = 83-86%
- B-= 80-83%
- C+ = 77-79%
- C = 73-76%
- C-= 70-72%
- D+= 67-69%
- D = 60-66%
- F = 59% or below

Course Schedule: Subject to change. I will try to keep changes to a minimum and will announce them in class.

Day Date Subject Reading, Assignment, Etc.

Mon 1/25 Course Introduction

Wed 1/27 The State Roskin, Chapter 1

Mon 2/1 The State

Wed 2/3 Democracy

Mon 2/8 Democracy

Wed 2/10 Non-Democracies

Mon 2/15 Political Identity

Wed 2/17 United Kingdom Roskin, Chapter 2

Mon 2/22 UK

Wed 2/24 FIRST EXAM

Mon 3/1 Germany Roskin, Chapter 4

Wed 3/3 Germany

Mon 3/8 Japan Roskin, Chapter 5

Wed 3/10 Japan

Mon 3/15 Russia Roskin, Chapter 6

Wed 3/17 Russia

Mon 3/22 Spring Break

Wed 3/24 Spring Break

Mon 3/29 China Roskin, Chapter 7

Wed 3/31 China

Mon 4/5 India Roskin, Chapter 8

Wed 4/7 India

Mon 4/12 SECOND EXAM

Wed 4/14 Brazil Roskin, Chapter 10

Mon 4/19 Brazil

Wed 4/21 Political Violence

Mon 4/26 Political Violence

Wed 4/28 Nigeria Roskin, Chapter 11

Mon 5/3 Nigeria COUNTRY COMPARISON PAPER DUE BY 3PM

Wed 5/5 Politics and Religion

Mon 5/10 Iran Roskin, Chapter 12

Wed 5/12 ReviewE

FINAL EXAM: Due by 3pm on May 21. I encourage you to turn it in earlier! ☹