

# INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

21:790:203:60

Fall 2019

411 Hahne & Co. Building (HAH)

Mondays, 18:00-21:00

**Instructor:** Shu-Shan Lee, Ph.D.

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**Office:** 718 Hill Hall

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The Introduction to Comparative Politics surveys a basic set of concepts employed by political scientists to analyze politics *within* and *across* countries. Throughout this semester, we will study the politics *within* selected countries by analyzing each country's culture, institutions, economy, and its critical sociopolitical issues. We will also investigate the politics *across* countries in order to generate and evaluate alternative explanations for real-world phenomena such as democratization, authoritarian resilience, and globalization. Ultimately, the course will serve as a foundation for advanced comparative politics coursework in the Department of Political Science.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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1. Gaining core knowledge of comparative politics.
2. Cultivating habits of reading world news.
3. Acquiring the skills to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world political issues.
4. Using evidence to support arguments.
5. Practicing oral and written skills in order to convey political ideas to others.
6. Learning the importance of listening to and being tolerant of different viewpoints.

## IMPORTANT DEADLINE

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1. First Op-Ed— October 11, 17:00
2. Second Op-Ed— November 15, 17:00
3. Third Op-Ed—December 16, 17:00

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

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1. O'Neil, Patrick H., Karl J. Fields, and Donald Share. 2018. *Cases in Comparative Politics*. 6th ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (*Cases*)
2. O'Neil, Patrick H. 2018. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 6th ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (*Essentials*)

The required texts are available for purchase at the Rutgers-Newark University Bookstore. These books are also easily available in online stores (e.g., [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com), [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)).

Note: You are required to bring the assigned textbooks for the day to class.

## MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

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1. **Class Participation (10%):** You must attend classes. However, you will not receive a grade of "A" simply by coming to each seminar. In addition to reading and analyzing the textbook, you need to demonstrate the ability to listen to others and to contribute to the dialogue in real-time. Participation includes:
  - a. To ask questions about concepts and issues that you do not understand.
  - b. To ask participants (the instructor included) to clarify their ideas.
  - c. To provide constructive feedback to others.
  - d. To be respectful toward others and tolerant of different opinions during discussions.

You are allowed one unexcused absence without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will be penalized as follows: penalties for absences will be applied at the rate of 5 points per class. For example, if you have an 89 average for participation with 4 unexcused absences, your final participation grade will be  $89 - 20 = 69$ .

2. **World News Report (15%):** You are required to give one presentation on world news. News stories can be chosen from any reputable sources such as the BBC News, Economist, New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and so on. During your presentation, you should:
  - a. report one current event in a country of your choice,
  - b. state the source of the news story, and
  - c. explain how the event is relevant to the course materials.

Additionally, each presenter must give me a hardcopy of the presentation outline. The presentation time is six minutes.

I will split the students into several groups alphabetically by the last name and assign groups to different weeks. The presentation will begin by week 5, and the schedule will be available on Blackboard by September 23 at 17:00.

3. **Five Pop Quizzes (5 X 3% = 15%):** These quizzes are unannounced. You will be asked to define a concept or explain an argument of the assigned readings for the day. There are three types of grade: “satisfactory,” “in-between,” and “unsatisfactory.” You will get 3 points for each “satisfactory” mark; 2 for “in-between;” and 0 for “unsatisfactory.” For example, if you have two “satisfactory” and three “unsatisfactory” quizzes, your final grade for this part of your evaluation is (2 X 3 points) + (3 X 0 point) = 6 points.
  
4. **Three Op-Ed Essays (3 X 20% = 60%):** You are required to write three op-ed essays. An op-ed is an opinion essay typically published by a newspaper or magazine. As a student of comparative politics, your task for this assignment is to identify an important issue in a specific country, with the intention of offering an explanation and making a claim or suggestion. This assignment is an important opportunity for you to reflect upon how to convey political ideas to others with materials we have addressed in class. The op-ed essays are to be 1-2 pages long (12 point font, double spaced).

In each op-ed essay, you can discuss any country of your choice. Some questions that are useful to ask yourself when getting started:

- a. What specific political issue or controversy in this country am I responding to?
- b. What is my position on this issue?
- c. How do the concepts and ideas we have addressed in the class help explain the issue and support my position?

You can also refer to <https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/college-relations/news-office/op-ed-guidelines> for tips on writing an effective op-ed essay.

Finally, you must submit it to Turnitin on Blackboard. I will not accept email attachments. Penalties for lateness will be applied at the rate of 15 percentage points per day after the due date, up to a maximum of 3 days late. For example, if you have an 89 grade for a writing assignment with a 2-day late submission, your final grade for this assignment will be 89-30=59. After 3 days, the work will be counted as a non-submission (i.e., 0 point for this part of your evaluation). Note: submission after the deadline time on the submission day will count as 1 day late.

## **GRADING SCALE**

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A	90-100	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D+	67-69.99
B	83-86.99	D	63-66.99
B-	80-82.99	D-	60-62.99
C+	77-79.99	F	0-59.99
C	73-76.99		

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

<b>Week 1</b> Monday (Sep. 9)	<u>Basics</u> ➤ Review the Syllabus
<b>Week 2</b> Monday (Sep. 16)	<u>Basics</u> ➤ <i>Movie and Discussion</i> : Lord of the Flies ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : State, pp. 30-38, and Legitimacy, pp. 46-50
<b>Week 3</b> Monday (Sep. 23)	<u>Basics</u> ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Identity, pp. 62-77; Ideology, pp. 81-89; Political Culture, pp. 89-95; and Political Economy, pp. 96-110
<b>Week 4</b> Monday (Sep. 30)	<u>Basics</u> ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Political Economy, pp. 110-133 ➤ <i>Cases</i> : United States, pp. 92-149
<b>Week 5</b> Monday (Oct. 7)	<u>Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : Japan, pp. 274-335 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>  <b>**First op-ed due by Friday, October 11 at 17:00**</b>
<b>Week 6</b> Monday (Oct. 14)	<u>Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : France, pp. 150-213 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 7</b> Monday (Oct. 21)	<u>Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Democratic Regimes, pp. 134-171 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 8</b> Monday (Oct. 28)	<u>Non-Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : Russia, pp. 336-385 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 9</b> Monday (Nov. 4)	<u>Non-Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : China, pp. 386-449

	➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 10</b> Monday (Nov. 11)	<u>Non-Democratic Regimes</u> ➤ Movie and Discussion: <i>Brazil</i> (a 1985 film based on George Orwell's 1984) ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Non-Democratic Regimes, pp. 172-203  <b>**Second Op-Ed due by Friday, November 15 at 17:00**</b>
<b>Week 11</b> Monday (Nov. 18)	<u>Developing Countries</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : Brazil, pp. 620-673 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 12</b> Monday (Nov. 25)	<u>Developing Countries</u> ➤ <i>Cases</i> : South Africa, pp. 674-729 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 13</b> Monday (Dec. 2)	<u>Developing Countries</u> ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Developing Countries, pp. 304-337 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>
<b>Week 14</b> Monday (Dec. 9)	<u>Globalization</u> ➤ <i>Essentials</i> : Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics, pp. 338-367 ➤ <i>World News Report</i>  <b>**Third Op-Ed due by Monday, December 16 at 17:00**</b>

## **OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES**

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1. Office Hours Policy. Please use the URL link below to schedule a meeting with me during office hours. If you did not schedule a meeting in advance, you would have to wait until others with appointments are done.  
<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/selfsched?sstoken=UUpVUIhfckh2d200fGRlZmF1bHR8NzQ2ZDEzOWRjYjA1NTA0OGQzYzYwYWlzMmE4OWU>
2. Write a grade appeal letter. If you think that a grade you have received is unfair, you may appeal. To request a review, you must write a 1-page written statement. In this letter, you must respond to the comments on your paper and explain why you deserve a better grade. For the op-ed grade appeal, please send your letter to Dr. Shu-Shan Lee. For the pop quiz appeal, please send it to Mr. Murad Meshanni.

3. Rule for Excused Absence. You will be granted an excused absence, a make-up presentation, or a make-up quiz only if appropriate documentation can be provided.
4. No extra credit. I will not offer extra credit to anyone for rounding up their grades or for making up missed assignments under any circumstance.
5. Academic Integrity. As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here:  
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>