

## Introduction to Comparative Politics (writing intensive)

21:790:203

Mondays 2:30-3:50pm, Wednesdays 1:00-2:20pm

Hill 203

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**Instructor:** Dr. Morrison-Santana

**Contact Information:** [dm838@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:dm838@newark.rutgers.edu)

**Office Hours:** Virtual meetings available upon request

### Course Description:

This course provides a basic introduction to comparative politics by focusing on different types of governments and then looking at them in terms of conflicts in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is imperative to view conflicts through different lenses including all participants of the conflict, outside spectators, and even individual accounts. Thinking comparatively within political science requires one to ask two fundamental questions: How can we use a comparison of regimes (democratic, authoritarian, hybrid regimes) and cases (countries, regions, time periods, and culture) to derive general claims about how politics occurs? How can we apply general hypotheses to explain particular cases? For the sake of the future, an analysis of past conflicts is necessary.

### Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Attain a general understanding of the main themes, concepts, and methods within Comparative politics
- Understand the basic differences of political structures/regimes
- Apply understanding to historical and current episodes of conflict
- Develop and strengthen critical thinking and writing skills

### Readings: \*\*\* All available on Canvas \*\*\*

Please make sure you have access to the course on Canvas as soon as possible so that you are able to get the materials needed to successfully complete the course.

### Discussion Thread Contributions

Each week, I will post discussion questions or topics that you are expected to respond to based on the lectures, readings, links, and topics of the week. Your contributions must be more than just agreeing with someone else or simple reactions to what others say (“Wow,” “I didn’t know this,” etc.). In addition to your own response to the original post, you must respond to at least one other student’s posts each week for full credit. The questions will be posted after our last class of the week and be available until/due on Sunday nights at 11:59pm. You cannot make up missed discussion participation.

### Newspaper Article Essays:

You are required to write weekly papers throughout the semester comparing a recent news to our course topics. The full rubric for these essays is on page three of this syllabus. This is a writing intensive course, so please be prepared to write! If you need help with your writing, contact the Writing Center on campus.

**Unit Tests and Final Essay:** These tests will include a series of short answer essay questions (5-ish sentences per answer).

### Grading:

Discussion Posts (Participation) – (300 points total)  
Weekly Newspaper Article Essays (25 points each/300 points total)  
Unit Tests – 125 points each/250 points total)  
Final Essay (150 points)  
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100% - 1000 points total

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

- 1. Academic Dishonesty:** Taking the words and ideas of another and presenting them as your own without proper use of citation constitutes plagiarism and it is considered grounds for receiving an “F” for the course and suspension/expulsion from the university. All students are required to uphold the honor code. Please see Rutgers’ Academic Integrity Policy. All students are required to sign the **Rutgers Honor Code Pledge**. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment” ... Additionally, you cannot hand in any assignments that you have completed for a different course.
- 2. No personal technology devices allowed in class.** This means no cell phones, iPads, laptops, or any other kinds of electronic devices (unless needed for medical reasons, with the proper documentation). These devices are distracting not only to you, but to the rest of the class as well. If you are caught using your phone or another device, you will lose participation credit for the day. Continuous use of these technologies may result in being asked to leave the classroom and lose participation credit for the day. If you are caught using any personal technology during an exam, you will receive a zero for the exam, and the matter will be handed over to the Office of Academic Integrity.
- 3.** Students should present official medical or legal documentation if they cannot fulfill any part of the course requirements. Exceptions will only be made under extraordinary circumstances such as serious illness and/or legal obligations.
- 4. Open Communication:** I am always available to help you succeed in this course. You may see me during my office hours or reach me through email. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. Additionally, it is inappropriate for any parents to contact any professor about your grade, and there are laws that prohibit such communication.
- 5. Your grade is your responsibility and is non-negotiable.** If you need a specific grade for your GPA, financial aid, academic standing, personal reasons, etc., you need to earn that grade by following the guidelines presented in this syllabus. Please do not contact me after the semester asking/begging for a better grade.
- 6. DO NOT HAND IN WORK YOU’VE SUBMITTED IN ANY OTHER CLASS.** Even if you wrote it, it would still be considered plagiarism because you didn’t write it specifically for this class.
- 7.** Please be **respectful** of everyone in the class, including me. If you are being disrespectful, you will be warned one time. Any subsequent disrespect will be reported to the university.
- 8.** I cannot predict the future, and as we all know from these past few years, things can change overnight – this includes modality of courses taught, requirements for in person classes, etc. I will do my best to be as honest and upfront with you about what I know and to help ease whatever transitions we may need to make throughout the semester. We should all be prepared for everything.
- 9.** In order to protect the health and wellbeing of all members of the Rutgers-Newark community, masks must be worn by all persons inside campus buildings when in the presence of others, and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth. Masks must be worn during class meetings. Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app found at: **myRutgers Portal**.

## Weekly Newspaper Article Essays:

There are many critical international issues happening in the world today that are directly related to political issues and historical events we discuss in this class. For these essays, you must find a recent news article (from a credible source – email me if you are unsure of a source) about a current event (from 2020/2021) that is UNRELATED to our course material and write a paper about how the article relates to the topics discussed each week. These are not informative papers, but rather you must use critical thinking to discuss how the current event you choose is related to the topics we've discussed that week and how it differs using course readings and lectures to supplement your paper. This is also not meant for you to find a 2020/2021 article about our topic. Again, your news event should be UNRELATED to our course material in any way, and YOU make the connection. **You must use the week's course material in your paper (and cite it) - including lectures, readings, links, etc.**

Cite everything with **footnotes** (with full bibliographic information in them).

\*\*\* Your answer must be at least 3 full pages long (no less), typed, DOUBLE SPACED, and 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins. You will be graded on content, grammar, punctuation, and following directions. Remember, these essays make up a large portion of your grade, so it is important that you do them each week; failure to do so will result in failing the course. They should be well thought-out responses with a beginning, middle, and end in each.

**These papers are due weekly by Sundays at 11:59pm on a topic we covered that week.**

**\*\*\* SUBMIT YOUR PAPER THROUGH TURN-IT-IN ON CANVAS \*\*\***

**LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED for any reason. No exceptions.**

### **Guidelines:**

- Find an article from a credible source – avoid 24-hour news channels (NO Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, etc.)... If you are unsure of your source, please email me. Also, do not use op-eds (opinion pieces), as they are not investigative journalism.
- Be specific. I want you to really think about your articles and your responses to them and how they fit into our course.
- Avoid replacing arguments with examples. Use examples to illustrate a general claim, not as a replacement for them. Examples by themselves tend toward selection bias and hasty generalizations.
- I am interested in content, not clever rhetorical flourish. Thus, avoid filler material... DO NOT USE BLOCK QUOTES FROM THE ARTICLES OR READINGS. Direct quotes should be no longer than 2 sentences, MAXIMUM.
- **If you do not cite, even when you paraphrase, it will be considered plagiarism. PLAGIARIZED PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED EITHER BY AN F ON THE PAPER OR THE COURSE AND WILL BE REPORTED TO THE DEAN.**
- PROOFREAD YOUR PAPER. You will be marked off for typos, punctuation errors, and/or major disorganization... Read through it out loud before turning it in, which can help highlight errors.
- The heading of your paper should be your name ONLY – no title, date, course name, etc.
- 1-inch margins all around
- SINGLE SPACE FOOTNOTES
- The paper is to be 3 full pages long. Not less... (No cover page).
- **CITE EVERYTHING.**

	Topic	Reading(s) Due
	Introduction	
<b>Part One: Who Are the Actors?</b>		
1-Sep	Comparative Politics	What is Comparative Politics?
8-Sep	Democracy	"What Democracy is... and is not"
13-Sep	Authoritarian Regimes	"The Authoritarian Society"
15-Sep	Hybrid Regimes	"Thinking about Hybrid Regimes"
20-Sep	International Organizations	(Various links to read and explore on Canvas)
22-Sep	Regional Organizations	(Various links to read and explore on Canvas)
27-Sep	Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)	(Various links to read and explore on Canvas)
29-Sep	<b>Test #1</b>	
<b>Part Two: Comparative Wars</b>		
4-Oct	Defining War	Clausewitz - <i>On War</i> (chapter 1)
6-Oct	American vs. French Revolution	Rummel article
11-Oct	Interstate Conflicts - WWI vs. WWII	"Origins of World War I"
13-Oct	WWI vs. WWII (continued)	USHMM WWII Timeline
18-Oct	Korea vs. Vietnam	"Korea and Vietnam: Similarities and Differences in their Relationships to China"; "The Military and Diplomatic Course of the Vietnam War"
20-Oct	Soviet-Afghan War vs. U.S. in Afghanistan	"Comparing U.S. and Soviet Experiences in Afghanistan"; "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan"
25-Oct	Iraq I vs. Iraq II	"Afghanistan and Iraq: Taking Stock"; "Iraq Invasion"
27-Oct	Syria vs. Yemen	"Why Some Wars (Like Syria's) Get More Attention Than Others (Like Yemen's)"
1-Nov	Current Conflicts/Wars	TBD
3-Nov	<b>Test #2</b>	
<b>Part Three: Comparative Genocides (and Denial)</b>		
8-Nov	Defining Genocide	UNGC; Lemkin 1946
10-Nov	Early America vs. Colonization of Africa	"Genocide of Native Americans" and "The Herero-Nama Genocide"
15-Nov	Armenia vs. Ukraine	"The G-Word: The Armenian Massacre and the Politics of Genocide" and "Holodomor"
17-Nov	Cambodia vs. North Korea (?)	"Khmer Rouge's Slaughter in Cambodia..."
22-Nov	<b>Thanksgiving Week: NO CLASS</b>	
29-Nov	Yugoslavia	"Denying Genocide in the Face of Science"
1-Dec	Rwanda	Romeo Dallaire's Chapter in <i>Hard Choices</i>
6-Dec	Darfur	"Rwanda and Darfur: A Comparative Analysis"
8-Dec	Yazidi vs. Rohingya	"The 'Forgotten' People of an Unforgettable Story" and "Myanmar's Military Accused of Genocide..."
13-Dec	Uighur Muslims in China (?)	BBC: "Who are the Uyghurs and Why is China being accused?"; PBS Slideshow: <a href="https://www.pbs.org/newshour/features/uyghurs/">https://www.pbs.org/newshour/features/uyghurs/</a>