

Introduction to Comparative Politics

(writing intensive)

Mondays (2:30pm – 3:50pm) and Wednesdays (1:00-2:20pm)

CONKLIN 302

Instructor: D. Morrison-Santana

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm (Hill 720) or appointments 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 20th 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 Blackboard ***

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

Weekly Newspaper Article Essays:

Each week, you are required to write a 3-page paper comparing a recent news article (from within that week) to our week's topic. The full rubric for these essays is on page three of this syllabus and will be full explained in the class.

Grading:

Attendance/Participation – 20% (200 points)	A = 930 – 1000
Weekly Newspaper Article Essays – 30% (25 points each/300 points total)	B+ = 890 – 929 B = 850-889
Unit Essay Tests – 25% (125 pts. each – 250 pts. total)	C+ = 800 – 849 C = 750 – 799
Final <u>Essay</u> – 25% (250 points)	D = 700 – 749
----- 100% - 1000 points total	F = 699 - below

COURSE POLICIES:

1. **Attendance** is mandatory for this course and will be taken each class. Missing classes without proper documentation (i.e. a doctor's note) will affect your participation grade. Any student who misses **eight** or more sessions through any combination of **excused** and **unexcused** absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student on what you missed (do not email me asking what you missed). Excessive lateness will also affect your grade.
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). If you are caught using your phone or another device, you will lose participation credit for the day. Continuous use of these technologies will result in being asked to leave the classroom and lose participation credit for the day.
3. **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.
4. YOU CANNOT HAND IN PAPERS YOU COMPLETED FOR ANOTHER COURSE.
5. 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.
6. **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.
7. **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.
8. 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."
9. Please be **respectful** of everyone in the class, including me. If you are being disrespectful, you will be asked to leave.

Weekly Newspaper Article Essays:

There are many critical international issues happening in the world today that are directly related to historical events or eras we've discussed 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 (written within the week of the topics we are covering) and write a paper about how the article relates to the topics discussed that 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. Compare and contrast the present with the past using course readings, lectures, and outside sources if necessary, to supplement your paper. Any supplemental sources should not be the main focus of your paper; your analysis of the newspaper article chosen is.

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

*** Your answer must be about 3 pages (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 Fridays at 11:59pm
and must be on that week's topic – The course schedule is color-coated so that you
know which two topics need to be covered for each paper.
LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED for any reason. No exceptions.**

Guidelines:

- 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 PENALIED 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.
- The heading of your paper should be your name ONLY.
- 1-inch margins all around
- The paper is to be 3 pages long. Not less... (No cover page).

*** **SUBMIT YOUR PAPER THROUGH TURN-IT-IN ON BLACKBOARD** ***
(I will not accept it any other way)

	Topic	Reading(s) Due
W 9/4	Introduction	
Part One: Who Are the Actors?		
M 9/9	Comparative Politics	What is Comparative Politics?
W 9/11	Democracy	"What Democracy is... and is not"
M 9/16	Authoritarian Regimes	"The Authoritarian Society"
W 9/18	Hybrid Regimes	"Thinking about Hybrid Regimes"
M 9/23	International Organizations	(Various links to read and explore in Course Documents)
W 9/25	Regional Organizations	(Various links to read and explore in Course Documents)
M 9/30	Non-governmental Organizations (NGOS)	(Various links to read and explore in Course Documents)
W 10/2	Current World Leaders	Class Presentations on World Leaders
M 10/7	NO CLASS	
W 10/9	Essay Test #1	
Part Two: Comparative Wars		
M 10/14	Defining War	Clausewitz - <i>On War</i> (chapter 1)
W 10/16	American vs. French Revolution	Rummel article
M 10/21	Interstate Conflicts - WWI vs. WWII	"Origins of World War I"
W 10/23	WWI vs. WWII (continued)	USHMM WWII Timeline
M 10/28	Korea vs. Vietnam	"Korea and Vietnam: Similarities and Differences in their Relationships to China"
W 10/30	Soviet-Afghan War vs. U.S. in Afghanistan	"The Military and Diplomatic Course of the Vietnam War" and "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan"
M 11/4	Iraq I vs. Iraq II	Persian Gulf Facts; "Iraq Invasion"
W 11/6	Syria vs. Yemen	"Why Some Wars (Like Syria's) Get More Attention Than Others (Like Yemen's)"
M 11/11	Essay Test #2	
Part Three: Comparative Genocides (and Denial)		
W 11/13	Defining Genocide	UNGC; Lemkin 1946
M 11/18	Early America vs. Colonization of Africa	"Genocide of Native Americans" and "The Herero-Nama Genocide"
W 11/20	Armenia vs. Ukraine	"The G-Word: The Armenian Massacre and the Politics of Genocide" and "Holodomor"
M 11/25	Cambodia vs. North Korea (?)	"Khmer Rouge's Slaughter in Cambodia..."
W 11/27	NO CLASS (FRIDAY SCHEDULE)	
M 12/2	Yugoslavia	"Denying Genocide in the Face of Science"
W 12/4	Rwanda	Romeo Dallaire's Chapter in <i>Hard Choices</i>
M 12/9	Darfur	"Rwanda and Darfur: A Comparative Analysis"
W 12/11	Yazidi vs. Rohingya	"The 'Forgotten' People of an Unforgettable Story" and "Myanmar's Military Accused of Genocide..."