PSC 760R
Proseminar in Comparative Politics
Fall 2016

Professor:
Office:
Office Phone:
Office Hours:
Email:

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

Comparative politics is perhaps the broadest field of political science. This course will introduce students to the major theoretical approaches employed in comparative politics. The major debates and controversies in the field will be examined. Although some associate comparative politics with “the comparative method,” those conducting research in the area of comparative politics use a multitude of methodologies and pursue diverse topics. In this course, students will analyze and discuss the theoretical approaches and methods used in comparative politics.

Course Requirements

*Class participation and attendance.* Students must come to class prepared, having completed all of the required reading, and ready to actively discuss the material at hand. Each student must submit comments/questions on the assigned readings for six classes (not including the class you help facilitate). Please e-mail them to me by noon on the day of class.

Students are expected to attend each class. Missing classes will have a deleterious effect on this portion of the grade. Arriving late, leaving early, or interrupting class with a phone or other electronic device will also result in a drop in the student’s grade. Students are not allowed to sleep, read newspapers or anything else, listen to headphones, TEXT, or talk to others during class. You must turn off all electronic devices during class. Any exceptions must be cleared with me in advance. Laptop computers and iPads are allowed for taking notes ONLY. I reserve the right to ban laptops, iPads, and so forth. Students are not allowed to tape record, digitally record, photograph, video tape or otherwise electronically record any of the class. Of course, respect should be shown for all other class members at all times.

*Discussion papers.* Students are required to write three discussion papers. Discussion papers (approximately 8-10 pages) should analyze and critique, not just summarize, the assigned readings for a particular week. What are the authors’ main arguments or findings? Are these arguments compelling? Why or why not? Are there flaws in the evidence, methodology, or logic used to support these arguments? Is the methodology employed in the study appropriate for testing the hypotheses or answering the research questions? What are the implications of the author’s findings? How does this relate to other research in the field and material covered in the class? What contribution does this work make to the topic being studied? Be sure to use examples when appropriate and explain and justify your points. The discussion paper grade is based on 1) the quality of the ideas and arguments, 2) how well one covers the topics and questions outlined above, 3) writing style and grammar, 4) organization, 5) incorporation of course material and the literature in the field, and 6)
presentation. (Please note that a discussion paper is not a response paper.) Late papers will not be accepted. You must provide me with both a hard copy and an electronic copy (not in PDF) of your paper.

All papers must conform to the Style Manual for Political Science. A copy of the Style Manual for Political Science will be made available to you. Beyond the guidelines outlined in the Manual, which primarily detail proper in text citations, organization, and formatting of references, students work should be formatted as follows:

1. 12 point Times New Roman font.
2. Include a proper title page and references.
3. One inch margins, with no additional spacing between paragraphs.
4. Footnotes should be used for clarification or the development of points noted in the text that are of interest, but are not central to the paper’s main thesis. Footnotes are not used for citations.
5. Page numbers located at the bottom center of each page. The title page does not receive a page number.

Facilitating class discussion. Each student will be responsible for helping to facilitate class discussion on the assigned readings for one class. A sign-up sheet will be distributed during the first class to allow students to select the topics of most interest to them. Please have your outlines and written questions to me by noon on the day of the class you are facilitating. A two-page handout should also be distributed to all of the members of the class. Of course, everyone should read all assigned readings and come to class with questions and comments.

Final examination: A take home examination is due during finals week.

Grades

Discussion papers (worth 20% each): 60%
Class participation and discussion questions: 15%
Facilitating class discussion: 10%
Final Exam: 15%

94 and above = A  80-83 = B-  68-69 = D+
90-93 = A-  78-79 = C+  64-67 = D
88-89 = B+  74-77 = C  60-63 = D-
84-87 = B  70-73 = C-  59 and below = F

I reserve the right to modify the course syllabus. Students will be responsible for knowing any changes made to the syllabus during class time whether they were in attendance or not. The instructor’s lecture notes are not available to students; it is the student’s responsibility to obtain class notes from a classmate, should class be missed.
Other Policies and Information University

and Department Policies and Resources:

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Academic Misconduct Policy (approved December 9, 2005) located at: https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct.

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)—Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, http://drc.unlv.edu/, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning

https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time
indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

**Tutoring and Coaching**—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit [http://www.unlv.edu/asc](http://www.unlv.edu/asc) or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

**UNLV Writing Center**—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: [http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/](http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/).

**Rebelmail**—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

**Final Examinations**—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: [http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars](http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars).

**Library statement:**
Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is [https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject](https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students’ access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at [https://www.library.unlv.edu/](https://www.library.unlv.edu/).

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course Calendar</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 31</td>
<td><strong>Class Introduction</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Select Topic to Facilitate</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
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<td>Overview of the Field of Comparative Politics: Debates, Approaches and Methods</td>
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<td>James Mahoney, “Debating the State of Comparative Politics: Views from Qualitative Research,” <em>Comparative Political Studies</em> 40, 1 (January 2007): 32-38;</td>
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<td>Erik Wibbels, “No Method to the Comparative Politics Madness,” <em>Comparative Political Studies</em> 40, 1 (January 2007): 39-44;</td>
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</tbody>
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| Week 3 | Wednesday, September 14 | Methods in Comparative Politics: Case Selection, Process Tracing and Case Studies  
Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton:  
Geddes, Barbara. 1990. “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get:  
Selection Bias in Comparative Politics” *Political Analysis* 2.1, (pp. 131-150).  
Dion, Douglas. 1998. “Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study,”  
Comparative Politics 30.2. 127-145.  
|---|---|---|
| Week 4 | Wednesday, September 21 | Civil Society and Social Capital  
| Week 5 | Wednesday, September 28 | Political Culture  
82: 1203-30.  
Granato, Jim, Ronald Inglehart, and David Leblang. "The effect of cultural values on  
Jackman, Robert W., and Ross A. Miller. "A renaissance of political culture?."  
Granato, Jim, Ronald Inglehart, and David Leblang. "Cultural values, stable  
Feldman, Stanley. "Structure and consistency in public opinion: The role of core  
Richard, Wilson, “The Many Voices of Political Culture: Assessing Different  
**Discussion Paper 1 Due.** |
| Week 6 | Wednesday, October 5 | The State  
R: Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” Chapter 5 in |
**Week 7**

### Wednesday, October 12

**Political Development and Modernization**


**Week 8**

### Wednesday, October 19

Alternative learning experience TBA

**Week 9**

### Wednesday, October 26

**Institutionalism**


- Diermeier, Daniel, and Keith Krehbiel. "Institutionalism as a Methodology." *Journal*
| Week 10 | Wednesday, November 2 | **Electoral Systems**  
Chapters 1-8, 11, 15.  
**Discussion Paper 2 Due.** |
|---|---|---|
| Week 11 | Wednesday, November 9 | **Political Parties and Party Systems**  
| Week 12 | Wednesday, November 16 | **Institutions: Executive Forms**  
### Week 13

**Wednesday, November 23**  
Work Independently on Discussion Paper 3

### Week 14

**Wednesday, November 30**  
**Political Economy**  


### Week 15

**Wednesday, December 7**  
**Ethnicity, Ethnic Politics, and Contentious Politics**  


**Discussion Paper 3 Due.**

### Week 16

**Wednesday, December 14**  
**Final Exam Due by 6 p.m.**