University of Alberta

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
POLS 235 (X50): Introduction to Comparative Politics
Winter 2017

Course Instructor: Navid Pourmokhtari
Office: Tory 11-07
Office Hours: Monday 3-5 p.m.
E-mail: npourmok@ualberta.ca

Time: Monday 6-9 p.m.
Place: Tory Building 1 103
or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This introductory course is intended to provide students with a solid foundation in the field of Comparative Politics. Guy E. Swanson once famously asserted that "thinking without comparison is unthinkable and in the absence of comparison, so is all scientific thought and scientific research." Faithful to this view, Pols 235 introduces students to theories, debates, concepts and methods that underpin the study of Comparative Politics. The course progresses from a discussion of methods to a survey of theories to an examination of concepts, concluding with a reflection on the field's direction in an increasingly globalized world. On completion of the course, students will possess a critical understanding of comparative politics, along with a sense of its future direction as the new millennium unfolds.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to

- demonstrate knowledge of some of the most important theories and perspectives, concepts and debates currently informing our understanding of comparative politics;
- demonstrate knowledge requisite for completing upper-level courses in comparative politics;
- discuss and critique competing theories, issues, and methods pertaining to the study of comparative politics;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the methods of comparative politics and their limitations;
- demonstrate an ability to use various conceptual tools in the field of comparative politics to understand, analyze and explain significant geopolitical events and processes.

CLASS FORMAT

Students are required to attend a three-hour class every Monday from 6 to 9 p.m. This will include a one-hour lecture by the instructor and a short break, followed by two 15-20 minute seminar presentations by two students, the purpose of each is to provide a
critical overview of the topic assigned for that week. The presenters will then each pose four questions to be discussed during the remainder of the class, with each student having an opportunity to respond. Please note that participation in the seminar is mandatory and will count toward the final mark for the course. Thus, students are expected to attend every class, complete all the assigned readings and be prepared to participate in class discussions.

REQUIRED TEXT


This text is available at the University bookstore. Note that journal articles, along with individual chapters excerpted from major works, will be assigned for specific weeks. This material will be made available on e-class. The journal articles will also be made available in the university library, listed under the 'journal' tab. Students are also encouraged to keep abreast of current affairs by reading newspapers, magazines and other material focusing on international relations and by viewing BBC, CNN, and Aljazeera, among other television networks. Moreover, scholarly articles on comparative politics are to be found in a host of academic journals, including *American Political Science Review, Comparative Politics, Comparative Political Studies, Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Studies, Journal of Democracy, Third World Quarterly, International Affairs, World Politics.* Still other journals or annual reports are published by aid agencies such as the World Bank, IMF, European Union, or UN specialized agencies. The annual reports can be extremely important sources of data and analysis. See, for instance: *Finance & development* (IMF), *Refugees* (UNHCR), *Choices* (UNDP), *Economic and social progress in Latin America: Annual Report* (Inter-American Development Bank), *Economic Bulletin for Latin America* (UN Economic Commission for Latin America), *Economic Bulletin for Africa* (UN Economic Commission for Africa).

REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

Note that in all but exceptional circumstances course requirements must be completed to receive a passing grade. University policy regarding missed assignments is outlined in Section 23.4(3) of the *University Calendar.* Examinations and assignments will receive both a letter and a percentage grade. Instructors will not 'curve' or adjust final grades according to some preset formula. Grades will be assigned as follows:

- Class Participation: 15%
- Seminar Presentation: 20%
- Research/Position Paper: 30% (March 6 (week 9))
- Final Exam: 35% (April 10 (week 14))
Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.3(1) and 23.5.6 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

1. Class Participation (15%)

Students are required to participate in class discussions. This requires reading the texts assigned for each class. The final grade for this component of the course is based on both attendance and participation. Note that the latter entails both regular and meaningful contributions to class discussions in a manner respectful of one's peers. Thus, attendance will not, in and of itself, suffice to ensure a passing grade. Should any student be unable to attend a lecture for any reason, it is his/her responsibility to inform the instructor and discuss with him ways and means of making up that lecture.

2. Seminar Presentation (20%)

Each week, the instructor will supervise two 15-20 minute seminar presentations/discussions on the two required readings assigned for that week. Each will be led by a student who will be responsible for selecting one of the two readings, which are listed in the course syllabus, as the basis for his/her seminar presentation. 

Format: The presenter will provide a brief summary (no more than 3-4 minutes) of the selected reading, followed by a critique, i.e., a discussion of its strengths and weaknesses, including what, if anything, of relevance is missing from the work. He/she will then explain how the reading contributes to our understanding of comparative politics. Lastly, each presenter will pose four questions for discussion. The remainder of the class will be taken up with either a class discussion or group discussions, aimed at addressing these questions. The presentation must reflect the presenter's knowledge of the topic for that week. A good presentation is one that includes all the above components and stimulates discussion. This means the questions must be insightful and thought provoking.

At the conclusion of the class, each presenter is required to submit a single-page, typed and double-spaced summary of the presentation, which must draw on at least one academic, peer-reviewed source. Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends. Note that Wikipedia and online magazines and newspapers do not qualify as peer-reviewed sources.
3. Research/Position Paper (30%) due Monday, March 6th (in class)

A major component of academic work is writing. This assignment aims at preparing students to engage in creative writing and the critical thinking this demands. Students are required to choose one, and only one, question from 3 sets of questions, pertaining to comparative politics. Alternatively, should you wish to write on a topic of your choice, permission is required from the instructor early in the course. Regardless of which question you choose to answer, all papers must be 8-9 pages in length, including the title page, typed and double-spaced. You are also required to cite a minimum of four academic works, i.e., journal articles and books. The textbook can be used and therefore cited, but it does not count as one of the four sources. Papers must follow the APA format (See http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/apa.php for examples).

A marking scheme, which can be accessed on e-class, lists the marks assigned for content, organization, grammar and punctuation, respectively. Those interested in improving their academic writing can access the requisite learning materials on e-class. In addition, the Centre for Writers and library staff members may be invited to some of the earlier lectures to walk students through the process of accessing peer-reviewed materials and citing works as well as advise on writing academic papers. Lastly, term papers submitted late will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends. Those submitted more than two weeks late will not be accepted.

A good research/position paper will include the following elements:

- a cover page, that includes the title, your name, student number, course number;
- relevant sub-headings;
- an introduction, body and conclusion;
- a clear thesis statement provided in the introduction;
- a clear topic sentence for each paragraph;
- a well-organized argument to ensure the logical flow of ideas;
- compelling evidence to support the thesis statement, drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles and/or books;
- a minimum of four sources, excluding newspaper articles and but including peer-reviewed works, i.e., journal articles and books. Note that while your textbook may be used, it is not be included among the four academic sources; nor are book reviews, online research and other such material.
- a bibliography listing all the works cited in your paper. Refrain from including entries for works not used in your paper.

All research/position papers must meet the following requirements:

- The work of others used in your paper must be quoted and the sources cited.
- Paraphrasing the work or ideas of others without acknowledging the source is plagiarism.
- consistent use of the APA format for citing references.
6. Final Examination (30%) Monday, April 10th

The final exam will be held on Monday April 13th, which is the final day of class. While it will primarily cover the final six weeks of the course, students are expected to be conversant with all the course materials. A review session will be held one-week prior the exam to ensure that students are in no doubt as to what will be expected of them.

Grading Scheme:

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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Percentage</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>F</td>
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Required Notes:

"Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar."

Academic Integrity

"The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/ CodesofConductandResidenceCommunity Standards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx ) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University."
Learning and working environment

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern;
- or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Student Ombuds Office: (http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/).

Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110.

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the Office of Judicial Affairs regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook and Information for Students). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” Students in language courses should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, excessive editorial and creative help in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the Academic Discipline Process.

LATE PENALTIES, PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC HONESTY

Late assignments: It is your responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as it becomes clear that your work will be submitted late. Should you fail in this regard and
your reasons for failing prove unsatisfactory, you will be penalized, including weekends. Assignments submitted more than two weeks after the deadline will not be accepted.

**Plagiarism & Academic Dishonesty:** The University of Alberta is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards and adhere to the relevant policies of the University. All students are urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.ualberta.ca/secretarial/appeals.htm](http://www.ualberta.ca/secretarial/appeals.htm)) and avoid any behaviour that could raise suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts or any related offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that can lead to suspension or expulsion from the University. Be advised, in this regard, to familiarize yourself with an important excerpt from the Code of Student Behaviour appended to the end of the syllabus. Additional information and resources are available through the UofA’s Truth in Education project: [http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/).

**Excerpts from the Code of Student Behaviour** (Updated Effective May 12, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30.3.2(1) Plagiarism</th>
<th>30.3.2(2) e No Student shall submit in any course or program of study any academic writing, essay, thesis, report, project, assignment, presentation or poster containing a statement of fact known by the Student to be false or a reference to a source the Student knows to contain fabricated claims (unless acknowledged by the Student), or a fabricated reference to a source.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student’s own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.</td>
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</table>

**30.3.2(2) Cheating**

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<th>30.3.2(2) a No Student shall in the course of an examination or other similar activity, obtain or attempt to obtain information from another Student or other unauthorized source, give or attempt to give information to another Student, or use, attempt to use or possess for the purposes of use any unauthorized material.</th>
<th>30.3.6(4) Misrepresentation of Facts</th>
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<tr>
<td>30.3.2(2) b No Student shall represent or attempt to represent him or herself as another or have or attempt to have himself or herself represented by another in the taking of an examination, preparation of a</td>
<td>No Student shall misrepresent pertinent facts to any member of the University community for the purpose of obtaining academic or other advantage. See also 30.3.2(2) b, c, d and e.</td>
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**30.3.6(5) Participation in an Offence**

| No Student shall counsel or encourage or knowingly aid or assist, directly or indirectly, another person in the commission of any offence under this |  |
paper or other similar activity. See also misrepresentation in 30.3.6 (4).

30.3.2(2) c No Student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as the Student's own work.
30.3.2(2) d No Student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course Instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project, assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has previously been obtained by the Student or which has been or is being submitted by the Student in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

Code.

The Truth In Education (T*E) project is a campus wide educational campaign on Academic Honesty. This program was created to let people know the limits and consequences of inappropriate academic behavior. There are helpful tips for Instructors and Students.

Please take the time to visit the website at: http://www.ualberta.ca/tie

SPECIALIZED SUPPORT & DISABILITY SERVICES

Students with disabilities or special needs that might interfere with their performance should contact the instructor at the beginning of the course with the appropriate documentation. Every effort will be made to accommodate such students, but in all cases prior arrangements must be made to ensure that any special needs can be met in a timely fashion and in such a way that the rest of the class is not put at an unfair disadvantage. Students requiring special support or services should be registered with the office of Specialized Support & Disability Services ( 2-800 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB www.ssds.ualberta.ca ).

This is particularly important for students requiring special exam arrangements. Once you have registered with SSDS, it is your responsibility to provide the instructor with a "Letter of Introduction" and, if necessary, an "Exam Instruction & Authorization" form.

FEELING OVERWHELMED? (In need of student, social, financial or security services?):

The Student Distress Centre is there to listen, offer support, supply information and provide services:

- Call: 492-HELP (492-4357)
- Drop in: 030-N in the S.U.B.
- Visit: www.su.ualberta.ca/sdc
Chat: http://www.campuscrisischat.com/

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor.

Course Modification Statement

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her e-mail and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Mannerisms and Expectations

- It is mandatory students respect their instructors and peers. A high degree of professionalism, in particular regarding the use of language, must be maintained throughout the course of class discussions and/or question periods.
- Students must refrain from using cell phones and/or personal computers during lectures, unless such use pertains to class material.
- Emails will be responded to within one business day.
- Engaging in class discussions is not only mandatory but constitutes part of the overall grade assigned for participation. Students must regularly and productively contribute to class discussions, and in a manner respectful of instructors and peers.
- In order to receive a passing grade for assignments, students must follow the instructions provided, which are available in the course syllabus as well as on e-class.
- Those students wishing to appeal the grade obtained on an assignment are free to do so, bearing in mind the caveat that the final grade received may be lower.
CLASS SCHEDULE

(Winter 2017)

Week 1- Introduction  January 9

- Course outline
- Review of course requirements.
- Seminar Presentation Sign up Sheet

Week 2- The Comparative Approach  January 16

Reading 1: Chapter 1: The Comparative Approach: An introduction

Reading 2: Chapter 2: Theories, Hypotheses, and Evidence

Week 3- The State in Historical Context  January 23

- Public Services Librarian Grant Kayler
- Librarian Presentation on how to do conduct research in academia by

Reading 1: Chapter 3: The State


(1972): 59-81

Week 4- Political Economy and Development  January 30

Reading 1: Chapter 4: Political Economy

Reading 2: Chapter 5: Development

Week 5- Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Historical Context  February 6

Reading 1: Chapter 6: Democracy and Democratization

Reading 2: Chapter 7: Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Breakdown

Week 6- Constitution and Constitutional Design--Legislatures and Legislative Elections  February 13

Reading 1: Chapter 8: Constitutions

Reading 2: Chapter 9: Legislatures and Legislative Election
Week 7- No Class-Reading Break   February 20

Week 8- Executives-Political Parties   February 27

Reading 1: Chapter 10: Executives

Reading 2: Chapter 11: Political Parties, Party System, and Interest

Week 9- Revolutions and Contention (Position Papers Due in Class)   March 6

Reading 1: Chapter 12: Revolutions and Contention


Week 10- Ideology, Culture and Religion I   March 13

Reading 1: Chapter 15: Ideology and Religion in Modern Politics


Week 11- Ideology, Culture and Religion II   March 20


Week 12- Comparative Politics and the Global I   March 27

Reading 1: Chapter 16: Comparative Politics and International Relations

Week 13- Comparative Politics and the Global II


Exam Review Session

It is expected that students will review notes from earlier lectures and readings so that they can take full advantage of this session.

Week 14 Final Exam (venue TBD)
AND PARTICIPATION IN AN OFFENSE

NOTICE TO INSTRUCTORS REGARDING PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS

Amendments to the Code of Student Behavior occur throughout the year. For the most recent version of the Code, visit:
| **DR. CARL AMREIN** |
| **PROFESSOR STEVEN PENNEY** |

**The Campus Law Review Committee 2019-2020**

**Chair:**

- "The data protection principles are essential for ensuring the security of personal data processed by organizations. Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the principles of lawfulness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimization, accuracy, storage limitation, integrity and confidentiality, and accountability are fundamental.

- "The purpose of data protection is to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals, ensuring that personal data are processed fairly and in a transparent manner.

**Possible Sanctions**

- Exclusion from the Code of Student Behavior and the Code of Student Conduct
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**FOR REVIEW WITH EACH CLASS AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERY TERM**

**EXCEP**

- The Code of Student Behavior and the Code of Student Conduct
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**Procedures for Incident Reporting:**

- The procedures for incident reporting are designed to ensure that incidents are reported promptly and appropriately.
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