

University of Montana
Department of political science

PSCI 220: Introduction to Comparative Government
Spring 2018
MWF, 10:00-10:50 am, LA 11

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Course Description and objectives

As the title indicates, this is an introductory course in a sub-field of political science that tends to study the “politics,” and “government” of various countries—including the United States—“comparatively.” The quotes around some of the words above indicate that we will be collectively thinking a bit more deeply than perhaps usual about these terms. So for instance we shall be asking about both, what constitutes “politics” or “government,” and why we need to “compare” to understand politics and government. We will discover that the study of comparative politics includes the investigation of questions such as, “why are certain states ‘democratic,’ and others ‘authoritarian?’” and “why do certain countries have governments that can easily tax people, educate, and even relatively swiftly punish citizens, while others struggle to do all three?” and a final example, “why is the difference between the rich and the poor greater in some countries than others?” in each of these examples—as in many others—we aim to derive some general propositions about (roughly speaking) the causes of, respectively, democracy and authoritarianism, strength or capacity of governments to do things, and income and wealth inequality. It further turns out that comparing is an especially good—perhaps even natural—way of answering certain general questions about the social and political world. We shall therefore also try to learn what it means to rigorously and systematically compare, and perhaps start developing the habit ourselves when we ask similar questions.

None of the above precludes learning about particular countries; indeed it allows one to ask “good” questions about the countries one is interested in, and as such provides a framework for learning. It is for this reason that instead of focusing on a particular group of countries, we will range widely across time and space in ways that illuminate the questions we ask.

Requirements

Reading assignments should be completed by the date listed on the syllabus. You are expected to attend every lecture. Note that the lectures are very important because many of the readings are not necessarily self-explanatory.

Your grade will be based on the following assignments:

1. **10%** of your grade will be based on a weekly/biweekly writing assignment. These assignments will not be graded; that is, you will get full credit as long as you complete them in the manner described as follows. You are required to write a brief (about one page) summary of the readings marked below with an asterisk. These summaries should be tightly compressed, concise summaries of the main arguments of the readings. In your own words, you should state the main claim of the reading: what is the phenomenon being discussed? What are the main concepts employed? And what are the main hypotheses proposed by the author? I think you will find that writing these short papers is excellent exercise: it will force you to concentrate while reading, and you will find that, with practice, you can distinguish between central and peripheral material and focus on the former, even while reading difficult articles. And, if all that were not enough, when it comes time to study for examinations, you will have summaries of many of the readings at your fingertips. As long as you

make a good faith effort to capture the essence of the readings, you will receive full credit. You are to hand these to your teaching assistant at the beginning of the lecture under which it is listed. Finally note that you don't have to do the assignment every week (i.e. you have to do it only for the readings marked with asterisks, and there are no such readings some of the weeks).

2. **10%** of your grade will be based on 2 take home quizzes (**5%** each). These will be given on **February 29, and April 13**.

3. **25%** of your grade will depend on a take home midterm exam on **March 21**

4. **25%** of your grade will be based on a 5-page paper due on **April 18** (the topic/question for the paper will be distributed on **April 11**)

5. **30%** of your grade will depend on a take home, cumulative final exam, which is to be handed in (in the classroom) between **10:10 am and 12:10pm**.

Readings

The following books have been ordered through the bookstore. All other readings will be available on moodle under the corresponding date/week listed in the schedule below.

Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics* (4th edition), W.W. Norton, 2013

Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999)

Office Hours

You are all welcome-- even encouraged--to stop by, introduce yourselves, discuss any problems you might be having, talk about course material, and even, hopefully, argue about course material. I will also address specific questions sent to me by email. Please keep in mind, however, that I cannot summarize in an email the lecture that you missed.

Disability Services

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, contact either of us at the beginning of the semester so that proper accommodations can be provided. Please contact Disability Services for Students if you have questions, or call Disability Services for Students (DSS) for voice/text at 406.243.2243. You may also fax the Lommasson Center 154 for more information at 406.243.5330.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the university. All students need to be familiar with the student conduct code: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Schedule

WEEK 1

Part I: Basic Approaches to Comparative Politics (and the social sciences in general)

January 22: introduction and overview of the class

January 24: Political or social ‘science’

- Daniel E. Lieberman, “Upending the Expectations of Science,” *The New York Times*, July 14, 2002, 4/15
- Robin Dunbar, *The Trouble with Science* (Cambridge: Harvard university Press, 1995), 12-33

January 26: Comparative politics and the comparative Method

- Todd Landmann, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics, An Introduction* (NY: Routledge, 2008), 3-16
- O’Neil and Rogowski, 3-7, 9-12, 18-22

WEEK 2

Part II: The State

January 29: What is the “state” and why is it important?

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 26-39
- *Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in Peter B. Evans et al., *Bringing the State Back In* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985)

January 31: More about the state

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 39-57
- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999), Introduction, and Chapter 4

February 2: Sovereignty, a closer look

- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999), Chapters 8 and 10.
- O’Neil and Rogowski, 68-74

WEEK 3

February 5: Subjects/citizens and the state: exertion of power

- John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (Urbana Champaign: University of Illionis press, 1982) 3-32

- *Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results," *European Archive of Sociology* 25 (1984): 185-212

February 7: How states make citizens, and (sometimes) vice-versa

- Martin Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) 205-222.

February 9: Nationalism

- O'Neil and Rogowski, 77-85
- Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2000) 24-33, 56-69

WEEK 4

Part III: The State and the Regime

February 12: Democratization, how and why?

- O'Neil and Rogowski, 203-12
- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999), Chapter 5.

February 14 Democratization: The historical background (in Europe)

- *Theodore Hamerow, *The Birth of a New Europe* (UNC Press, 1989), 285-309

February 16: Historical background, continued

- John Markoff, *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change* (Pine Forge, 1996), Selections

WEEK 5

February 19: No Class, President's Day

February 21: Some general propositions

- O'Neil and Rogowski, 405-430
- *Evelyn Huber, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens, "The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7 (Summer 1993): 71-85

February 23: Authoritarianism, a closer look

- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999), Chapter 6.
- O'Neil and Rogowski, 267-90

WEEK 6

February 26: Contemporary authoritarianism (**Hand in first quiz before class**)

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 303-12

February 28: Democratization and authoritarianism, some puzzles

- Alfred Stepan and Graeme Robertson, “An ‘Arab’ More than ‘Muslim’ Electoral Gap,” *Journal of Democracy* 14 (July 2003), pp. 30-44
- *Jason Browlee, "The Transnational Challenge to Arab Freedom," *Current History* (November 2011)

March 2: Puzzles, continued

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 250-64

WEEK 7

Part IV: Challenges to the state and regime

March 5: Revolutions

- *O’Neil and Rogowski, 316-30

March 7: Revolutions, continued

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 349-63, 366-72

March 9: Civil wars

- Stathis N. Kalyvas, “Civil Wars,” in Boix & Stokes: *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*

WEEK 8

March 12: Civil wars continued

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 86-94

March 14: Review session for midterms

March 16:

- *John Bowen, “The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict,” *Journal of Democracy* 7 (1996): 3-14

WEEK 9

Part V: The state and the economy

March 21: “Rich” states and their economies

- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Rienner, 1999), Chapter 7
- O’Neil and Rogowski, 440-48

March 23: Continued

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 450-64

WEEK 10

Spring Break, March 26-30

WEEK 11

April 2: The wealth and poverty of nations

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 137-59

April 4: Institutions and development, an example

- *O’Neil and Rogowski, 160-80

April 6: Some finance (**paper topic distributed**)

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 134-36, 184-85

WEEK 12

April 9: Development and development strategies and another view on how the “rich” got “rich”

(Hand in second quiz before class)

- Ha-Joon Chang, “Kicking Away the Ladder”

April 11: Continued

- *Kiren Chaudhry, “The Myths of the Market and the Common History of the Late Developers,” *Politics and Society*, 21:245 (1993)

April 13: Development strategies, successes, and failures (**paper due**)

- Vivek Chibber, *Locked in Place: State Building and Late Industrialization in India* (Princeton, 2003), chapter 1

WEEK 13

April 16: Development, underdevelopment and growth

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 547-69

April 18: Continued

- *Giovanni Arrighi, “The African Crisis: World Systemic and Regional Aspects,” *New*

Left Review15 (May-June 2002): 5-36

Part VI: Globalization

April 20: What is globalization?

- O’Neil and Rogowski, 595-608

WEEK 14

April 23: Is globalization “new?”

- Herman Schwartz, “Globalization, the Long View,” in in Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey Underhill, *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005

April 25: A critical view of globalization-talk

- *Immanuel Wallerstein, “After Developmentalism and Globalization, What”, *Social Forces* 83:3, March 2005

April 27: Globalization and the state

- Walter C. Opello, and Steven J. Rosow, *The Nation State and Global Order* (Lynne Reinner, 1999), Chapters 11 and 12

WEEK 15

April 30: Catch up day

May 2: Wrap up

May 4: Review session for final exam

Final Exam: To be handed in (in class) on Wednesday, May 9th