

**PSCI 220S – INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT**  
**Spring 2021 – The University of Montana**  
**Tu & Th 11:00 - 12:20, via Zoom**

Professor Christopher Muste

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Office / office hours: via Zoom - Tuesday 12:30 - 1:30 and Thursday 10 - 11

Weekly Review Session: Thursday 12:20-12:50 via Zoom

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the major types of political systems in different countries, and to examine how the types of political systems affect the way countries are governed and the lives of their people. This course will also introduce you to the major concepts and theories that political scientists use to understand the wide variety of political systems in the world, and that you will learn to use during the class.

The course begins by introducing and exploring the principal concepts & theories used in comparative politics to study countries' political systems. We then apply these concepts to analyze major characteristics of the political systems of industrialized democracies in general, and more intensively analyze the political systems of three democracies – the United States, Great Britain, and France. Next, we examine the political systems of communist and post-communist countries, and the changes taking place in Russia and China. Then we will examine the political systems of the large group of nations called “global south” or “developing” or (formerly) “third world” and focus on India, Iran, and Mexico. We will conclude by exploring some of the problems and opportunities citizens and countries across the globe will face in the coming years.

**GENERAL EDUCATION SOCIAL SCIENCES:** this course fulfills the General Education Social Sciences (S) requirement. At the end of this course you should be able to 1) describe the nature, structure, and historical development of human organizations and/or relationships, 2) comprehend the role of theory in explaining social phenomena, 3) generate and/or interpret social science data, 4) assess and evaluate the significance of social science phenomena.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:**

Introductory courses are intensive by nature and build on the knowledge gained in earlier parts of the course, which means that your investment in keeping up with the class will pay off in terms of how much you will learn, how interesting class will be to you, and how well you will do on the assignments. This requires doing the readings before each class and being prepared to participate in class discussion and ask questions – even in a large Zoom class such as this, intelligent questions and discussions are critical components of learning. The graded assignments will be: 1) participation via Zoom chat or Moodle discussion (10%), 2) four Quiz-Project assignments – the first 2 worth 15% each (30% total), the last two worth 10% each (20% total); 3) a research & analysis paper (25%), and 4) a final exam (15%). Tentative dates are on the Schedule on page 3. **Assignments and due dates may be changed by the instructor.**

Course Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages, as is UM policy:

A = 93-100	B+ = 87-89.9	C+ = 77-79.9	D+ = 67-69.9	below 60=F
A- = 90-92.9	B = 83-86.9	C = 73-76.9	D = 63-66.9	
	B- = 80-82.9	C- = 70-72.9	D- = 60-62.9	

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE:**

- \* **Makeup quizzes and exams will be permitted only if you notify me prior to or ASAP after the missed quiz or exam and if your absence was necessary due to a serious, documented emergency.**
- \* **All quizzes, exams and the research & analysis paper must be completed in order to pass the course.**
- \* **Check your calendar now to be sure you do not have any conflicts with the quiz & exam dates.**

**\*\*\* Contact me with any questions, or if you miss or will miss any scheduled assignments.**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to academic penalties by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. You must be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, online at <http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/default.php>

The University of Montana Student Conduct Code prohibits plagiarism, which is “representing another person’s words, ideas, data, or materials as one’s own” and other forms of academic misconduct. These are serious academic violations that can result in penalties up to suspension or expulsion from the University.

**I take academic honesty very seriously, and do my utmost to prevent, uncover, and penalize any form of dishonesty.** Read Section V, “Academic Conduct” on pp. 5-12 of the Student Conduct Code above. **Please contact me with any questions or concerns about academic honesty.**

### **CLASS COURTESY:**

In order to have a pleasant and effective learning environment in a class this size on Zoom, we need to observe a few basic courtesies. Please arrive in our Zoom class on time; arriving late or leaving early disrupts the class. **Please mute your Zoom audio unless you are asking a question, and when you’re “unmuted” to talk, please turn off cell phones and all other audio devices so we can hear you better.** Please stay focused on class during the class period, so we’re not distracted by your dog catching a Frisbee in your apartment! If you have a question or comment about the material, please raise your hand on Zoom (the yellow hand icon) or type it into the Chat function of Zoom – Christa will keep track of comments on Chat and I will look for raised hands, so that we can have more of an interactive discussion during class. **We can all contribute to creating a positive and effective learning environment in our class.**

### **DROP POLICY AND INCOMPLETES:**

You can drop on Cyberbear through February 1, and then from February 2 to March 18 (5 pm) using a drop form signed by me and your advisor. From March 19 – April 23 (5 pm), you must go through the more difficult “late drop” petition process. I will sign late drop petitions until April 16, and after that only if necessitated by accident, illness, or family/personal emergency as stated on the Drop form here: <http://www.umt.edu/registrar/PDF/Course-Drop-Form.pdf> Incompletes will only be permitted when all the conditions set forth in the official University policy are met – this policy and other official UM academic policies are at <https://catalog.umt.edu/academics/policies-procedures>

### **GENERAL EDUCATION SOCIAL SCIENCES REQUIREMENT:**

In order for this course to fulfill your University of Montana General Education Requirement in the Social Sciences, you must take the course for a letter grade, and must earn a C- or better.

### **DSS STUDENTS:**

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations on exams, papers, notes or other course requirements should contact me, and must provide me with a copy of, your DSS letter of accommodations as soon as you can. The DSS office is in Lommasson Center 154, their website is <https://www.umt.edu/disability-services/> .

### **E-MAIL AND MOODLE:**

Every registered UM student has an official UM e-mail account, and students registered for this course have a Moodle course account. I may use your official UM e-mail to send you important announcements, and I will post course readings, exam and paper grades on Moodle. At <https://umt.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/Home/> there are instructions on how to access your UM e-mail and Moodle accounts.

**READINGS: the readings will be from *Concepts and Cases in Comparative Politics, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, by Patrick O’Neil et al. You must get the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.** It’s available from the UM Bookstore as a paperback, rental, or e-book at <https://montanabookstore.bncollege.com/shop/montana-bookstore/page/find-textbooks> You can also get it from the publisher, WW Norton, or online, but buying at the UM Bookstore keeps prices down. Whatever format works best for your study habits & budget, you must have the book to succeed in this class!

**News! News! News!** Keep up with a reliable source of news with in-depth coverage, such as the *NY Times*, *Washington Post*, or *Wall Street Journal*. *The Economist* magazine has great coverage of other countries. I will also post other articles on Moodle for you to read at various times in the course.

**SCHEDULE: Dates & Assignments - Subject to Change by Professor Muste**

January 12 – 14	Course Introduction and Chapter 1 (Introduction)
January 19 -- 21	Introduction, Chapter 1, and States, Chapter 2, (pp. 27-43)
January 26 – 28	States, Chapter 2 (finish), & Chapter 3, Nations & Society (all)
<b>* <u>January 28 – Quiz/Project #1 on Chapters 1-3 - tentative date</u></b>	
February 2 – 4	Democratic Regimes, Chapter 6
February 9 -- 11	Developed Democracies, Chapter 7 (pp. 192-217 only)
<b>* <u>February 11 – Quiz/Project #2 on Chapters 6-7 (thru pp. 217) – tentative date</u></b>	
February 16 – 18	United States, Chapter 7 (pp. 250-275) –after UK/GB in the book!
February 23 – 25	United Kingdom / Great Britain, Chapter 7, pp. 218-249
March 2	France, Chapter 7 (pp. 276-303)
<b><u>MARCH 4 – UM STUDENT BREAK – NO CLASSES!</u></b>	
<b>* <u>March 9- Quiz/Project #3 on Chapter 7 (218-303 only – US, UK/GB &amp; France) - tentative date</u></b>	
March 9 - 11	Nondemocratic Regimes, Chapter 8 (all), and Communism and Post- Communism Chapter 9 (pp. 390-424)
<b><u>March 11 (tentative date)</u></b>	<b><u>Discuss Research Paper Assignment - ATTENDANCE IS CRUCIAL</u></b>
<b><u>MARCH 16 – UM STUDENT BREAK – NO CLASSES!</u></b>	
March 18	Russia, Chapter 9 (pp. 426-449)
March 23	China, Chapter 9 (pp. 450-481)
March 25 – 30	Developing Countries, Chapter 10 (pp. 482-513)
<b>* <u>March 30 - Quiz/Project #4 on Chapter 8, Chapter 9 &amp; Chapter 10 (pp. 482-513) - tentative date</u></b>	
April 4 – 6	India, Chapter 10 (pp. 514-543)
April 8 – 13	Iran, Chapter 10 (pp. 544-569)
<b>* <u>APRIL 13, TUESDAY -- RESEARCH &amp; ANALYSIS PAPER DUE BY 5 PM</u></b>	
April 15 – 20	Mexico, Chapter 10 (pp. 570-599)
April 22	Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics (pp. 690-715)
<b>* <u>APRIL 28 – WEDNESDAY – 8:00 – 10:00 AM – FINAL EXAM - TENTATIVE DATE (TBD)</u></b>	

\* = graded assignment (4 Quiz/Projects, Research Paper, Final Exam)