POLS-120-01A: Comparative Politics

Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 1:15 - 2:20 Library Classroom 201

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 – 3:00 and by appointment

Introduction:

This course introduces the comparative study of modern political systems. It outlines the major concepts and methods of comparative political analysis. It then applies these methods to the study of political institutions in democratic and non-democratic countries, as well as the challenges that these regimes confront. The focus of the class is on simultaneously learning about how the game of politics is played in different countries while also discovering *how* differences in the 'rules of the game' influence political outcomes in those countries. The course is divided into three sections. Sections one and two focus on exploring how political conflicts between competing groups are managed by the political institutions (parties, legislatures, etc.) of democracies and non-democracies, respectively and concludes with a comparison of policy outputs in dictatorships and democracies. The final section of the course explores ethnicity as a source of political instability and concludes with an in-dept comparison of how racial and ethnic divisions have influenced politics in Northern Ireland and the United States.

A sample of the questions you will be able to answer at the end of this course:

- 1. Why do countries like Israel, Ireland, South Africa and Germany have *so many* political parties while the United States has so few?
- 2. What's the difference between a proportional electoral system and a majoritarian electoral system? What in the world is STV-PR (It's not a tropical disease)?
- 3. Why is the policy making process so often slow and frustrating in the United States? Is it more efficient in other countries? Why/why not?
 - a. Relatedly: Why do our European friends have such difficulty understanding things like the 'fiscal cliff?'
- 4. I just joined a local soccer club, why is that good for democracy?
- 5. What is a political party and what functions do parties serve in a democracy?
 - a. Why do political parties exist in non-democracies?
 - b. Why can't John Boehner and Harry Reed always get their way? Do party leaders in other countries have these same problems?
- 6. What's the difference between a presidential democracy and a parliamentary democracy?
- 7. [Name of a parliamentary democracy goes here] just changed their prime minister without having an election! Is that even legal? Isn't that some kind of coup?
- 8. The US Supreme Court seems pretty influential. What gives the USSC its power/influence? Do other countries have similar courts? How does the presence/absence of a Supreme Court affect policy making?
- 9. I always thought economic growth led to democratization. What's the deal with countries that have lots of oil wealth but are still ruled by monarchs or other dictators?
- 10. What is a public good? Why are they so difficult to produce?
- 11. Why is Dr. B. so obsessed with Ireland?

To begin answering these, and many other, questions about the political world we will use a variety of tools and techniques, including open ended discussions, simulation games, debates and, where necessary, the occasional lecture. My goal in this class is to provide you with opportunities to actively engage with the concepts, principles and ideas outlined below. The first step in that engagement is

careful and active reading of the assigned texts. Beyond reading the text carefully, I encourage you to ask a lot of questions. If you encounter something in the text or in class that seems confusing or unfamiliar ask about it; chances are that someone else also feels confused and uncertain. Additionally, do not feel limited to the materials on the syllabus as topics of discussion. If you have unique knowledge or experiences that are related to what we're talking about in class, I encourage you to share them and ask questions about how the concepts we're discussing apply to cases with which you are familiar.

In addition to answering your questions in class, I am also available for individual consultations, both in person and online (see details below).

Email Policy

All official communication related to this course will be sent via email to your @emory.edu email address. Please check this account regularly. If you do not know how to access your emory.edu account, then please contact OCIT (additional information available at http://oxford.emory.edu/operations/informationtechnology/students/student-email-office-365/).

I check email regularly Monday - Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. I will usually respond to any emails I receive within one business day (it's typically a lot faster than that, but please do try to be patient).

Office Visits

Generally, I maintain an 'open door' policy and welcome you to drop in when you have questions or concerns related to the class. I also maintain regular office hours (see details at the top of page 1) throughout the week. I am also available for consultations, both in person and via Skype, outside of those hours by appointment.

Oxford College Honor Code

An abbreviated text of the Oxford College Honor Code is provided below. The excerpt is taken from the Honor Council website, where you can find the full text (http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/oxford-honor-council/studenthonor-code/).

Student Honor Code

The responsibility for maintaining standards of unimpeachable honesty in all academic work and in campus judicial proceedings falls upon every individual who is a part of Oxford College of Emory University. The Honor Code is based on the fundamental expectations that every person in Oxford College will conduct his or her life according to the dictates of the Honor Code and will refuse to tolerate actions in others which would violate the Honor Code.

Article 1: Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is an offense generally defined as any action or failure to act which is contrary to the integrity and honesty of members of the academic community.

- **A.** Such offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:
- 1. Seeking, acquiring, receiving, or giving information about the conduct of an examination, knowing that the release of such information has not been authorized
- 2. Plagiarizing
- 3. Seeking, using, giving, or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination
- 4. Intentionally mis-shelving, damaging or removing library materials without authorization
- 5. Intentionally giving false information to professors or instructors for the purpose of gaining academic advantage
- 6. Intentionally giving false testimony in an Honor or Conduct Board hearing or refusing to give evidence when requested by the Honor Council
- 7. Intentionally giving unauthorized information regarding hearings of the Oxford College Conduct Board or Honor
- 8. Breach of any duties prescribed by this code

Article 2: Honor Pledge and Obligation

- A. A student's submission of any work to be evaluated for course credit constitutes a declaration that he or she has neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work, nor has condoned the giving or receiving of unauthorized information by others.
- B. Each student at Oxford College of Emory University agrees to abide by the honor pledge and takes upon himself or herself the responsibility of upholding the Honor Code. Each student is urged to inquire of the Honor Council about any doubtful case at any time throughout the year.
- C. Each professor shall explain to his or her classes at the beginning of each semester any special aspects of the Honor Code as it pertains to that course.

Evaluation:

Grades will be determined in the manner described below.

Response Papers 20% (Due via Blackboard; Rolling Deadlines)

Country Wiki 20% (Rolling Deadlines)

Mid-Term Exam 25% (Review Session 8 October; Exam Date 10 October)

Final Exam 25% (Review Session TBD: Exam Date 12 December - PLAN ACCORDINGLY and see note below regarding taking exams earlier or later than the scheduled date)

Participation and Attendance: 10%

General Grading Standards

The following standards will be adhered to in this course.

Α Exceptional Performance.

Consistently outstanding work on all course-related tasks at a level that distinguishes the student from other members of the class. A comprehensive and incisive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. demonstrated exceptional capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. The ability to master and integrate large amounts of factual material and abstract theories. An outstanding ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

A-**Excellent Performance**

Consistently strong work on all course-related tasks. A comprehensive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A clearly demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands well and can integrate the relevant factual and theoretical material central to the course. A strong ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B+ Very Good Performance.

Consistently above average work on all course-related tasks. A very good grasp of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A generally demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical, and logical thinking. A very good command of factual and theoretical material, and some capacity to integrate the two. A solid ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

В Good Performance.

Good and generally consistent work on all course-related tasks. A general understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Modest evidence of the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. A good understanding of factual and theoretical material, but limited evidence of the capacity to integrate the two. A basic ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B-Satisfactory Performance

Satisfactory work on course-related tasks. A reasonable understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. An infrequently demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands at a basic level the facts and theories related to the course, but demonstrates weak integration skills. A limited or inconsistent ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

C+/C/C-Adequate Performance

Adequate performance on course-related tasks. An understanding of the basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. An inability to go beyond a recitation of basic factual material related to the class. Demonstrated weaknesses in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

D/D+ Minimal Passing Performance.

Barely acceptable work on course-related tasks. A generally superficial and often inconsistent familiarity with the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A failure to demonstrate the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking related to course content. An uneven understanding of basic factual material related to the course; no evidence of fact/theory integration. Demonstrates significant gaps in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

F Unacceptable Performance

Fails to meet minimum course expectations. Unable to understand even the most basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Demonstrates an inability to engage in coherent written or oral discussion of course material. Does not satisfy specific course expectations with respect to attendance, deadlines, participation, etc.

Response Papers

Over the course of the term, you will be required to write four response papers, each approximately two pages in length. There will be one topic for each week of the class. Generally, topics will be posted each Monday and papers will be due via Blackboard by 5:00 PM one week from the day that the topic is posted.

At least two of your papers must be written in response to topics assigned for weeks prior to the midterm exam.

Each paper will be worth five percent of your final grade and will be scored on a scale from zero to five. Two points will be awarded on the basis of spelling, grammar, mechanics and usage. Three points will be awarded on the basis of the quality/adequacy of the response.

Once the deadline for a topic has passed, it will no longer be possible to submit a paper on that topic.

Participation and Attendance

Students must attend all lectures for this course. Attendance will be taken during every lecture by means of an attendance sheet, which will be circulated at the beginning of class. Each unexcused absence in excess of the third unexcused absence will result in one 'minus' in the student's final grade (e.g. an A becomes an A-).

Students are expected to contribute actively to the debates and discussions in class. Discussion will focus on helping the students apply the concepts covered in lecture and will use activities such as simulations and debates to accomplish this goal. These activities will largely be based on the reading materials provided, but they may also require additional light reading, typically in the form of news items relevant to the issue being discussed, which will be forwarded to you by the instructor. It is vital that you arrive ready to talk about and debate the theoretical issues and questions that have been raised by the readings and during lectures.

Exams

All exams are cumulative. The Mid-Term will contain a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final will contain a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions as well as an essay question.

Course Text Books and Materials

Paul Brooker. 2009. Non-Democratic Regimes. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan). (Hereinafter

Michael Gallagher, et al. 2011. Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties and Governments, 5th Edition. (Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education). (Hereinafter Gallagher et al)

Reserve Materials

Reserve materials, indicated in the syllabus by a parenthetical (Reserve), will be made available electronically via the course Blackboard website.

Reading and Discussion Schedule

27 August (W): Introduction and Political Knowledge Quiz

There are no required readings for this meeting. A short lecture introducing some of the fundamental concepts in the study of comparative politics will be preceded by a brief (10 fill in the blank or multiple choice questions) political knowledge quiz. This quiz will not count toward the final grade in the class and will be submitted anonymously. It is intended as a diagnostic tool for the instructor, to assess the level of knowledge incoming students have of modern political systems.

29 August (F): What is Political Science, anyway?

- 1. Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, "Chapter 1: The Science in Social Science." pp. 3-19 and 28-33 (Reserve)
- 2. Gabriel A. Almond and Stephen J. Genco. "Clouds Clocks and the Study of Politics." pp. 489-490 and 492-497 (Reserve). **SKIP the last paragraph on page 490 (below the dashed line) and the first two paragraphs on page 492 (above the dashed line).
- 1 September (M): NO CLASS LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
- 3 September (W): What is Democracy?
- ***Writing Assignment***

Before you complete the assigned readings spend a few minutes thinking about 'democracy.' Specifically, think about how you would define this term. After reflecting for a few minutes compose a definition of democracy in your own words.

Once you've composed your own definition of democracy, proceed to the readings. Then, choose one of the definitions of democracy used in the assigned texts and write a paragraph comparing and contrasting that definition with the one you composed prior to doing the reading.

Your definition of democracy and your paragraph should be emailed to Dr. Beaudette no later than 8:00 PM on 2 September.

1. Michael Coppedge, John Gerring et al, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach." READ ONLY pp. 252-261 (Reserve)

Part I: Political Institutions in Western Democracies

5 & 8 September (MW): Civic Culture, Civic Associations and Social Capital

- 1. Clark, Golder and Golder "Chapter 7: Cultural Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship." Pp. 217 223 (Reserve)
- 2. Robert Putnam Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, pp. 287 290 and 336 - 341 (Reserve)
- 3. Ray Fisman "Maybe Bowling Alone Isn't So Bad" (Reserve)

10 September (W): Electoral Rules I: The Rules of the Game

- 1. Gallagher et al, Chapter 11
- 2. Richard Sinnott, "The Rules of the Electoral Game" (Reserve)

12 September (F): Electoral Rules II: Simulation Game

No required readings – Prepare for simulation using guidelines distributed in class.

15 September (M): Electoral Rules III: Discussion of Simulation ***Writing Assignment***

Prior to the start of class write a brief essay (250-300 words, double spaced) reflecting on the electoral rules simulation and how it played out. Was your group able to obtain its desired result? If not, how might the electoral institutions adopted by the class affect your group and its chances of attaining political power? Beyond the immediate consequences for your group, how do you think the institutions adopted by the class will influence political competition more generally in our 'country?'

17 & 19 September (WF): Political Parties

- 1. Gallagher et al, Chapter 10
- 2. Gallagher et al Chapter 7, SELECTED PAGES (TBD)

22 September – 26 September (MWF): Executives

- 1. Gallagher et al Chapter 2 pp. 27 33 (skim the rest of the chapter) and Chapter 12 pp. 416 437 a. (skim the rest of the chapter)
- 2. Coalition Formation Simulation (9/26):
 - A. Prepare for the coalition formation simulation to be held on 26 September using guidelines distributed in
 - B. Prior to the start of class on 10/1 write a brief essay (250-300 words, double spaced) reflecting on the government simulation and how it played out. Was your group able to obtain its desired result? If not, why not? Was your group part of any potential winning coalitions? If so, why did your coalition not win?

29 September – 1 October (MW): Legislatures

- 1. Gallagher et al Chapter 3
- 2. Michael Gallagher, "Parliament" In *The Politics of the Republic of Ireland* (Reserve)

3 October (F): Legal Systems and Judicial Review

- 1. Gallagher et al Chapter 4
- 2. The 'X' case in Ireland and the power of international courts (reading TBD)

6 October (M): Politics in the UK

1. Richard Rose, "Politics in Britain" (Reserve)

8 October (W): Review Session

10 October (F): Mid-Term Exam

Part II: Non-Democracies and Transitions to Democracy

15 - 17 October (WF): Types of Dictatorship

1. NDR, Chapter 2

20 October (M): Authoritarian Elections

1. Jennifer Gandhi and Ellen Lust-Okar, "Elections Under Authoritarianism" (Reserve)

22 & 24 October (WF): The Search for Legitimacy

1. NDR, Chapter 5

27 October – 31 October (MWF) The Resource Curse

- 1. Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy," pp. 325-337 & 356-357 (Reserve)
- 2. Moises Naim, "The Devil's Excrement: Can oil-rich countries avoid the resource curse?" (Reserve)
- 3. Louise Arbour, "No Exit" (Reserve)
- 4. Freedom House "Country Report: Nigeria" (Reserve)

3 – 7 November (MWF): Transitions to Democracy

- 1. NDR, Chapter 7
- 2. Clark, Golder and Golder "Chapter 8: Democratic Transitions," pp. 277 290, skip Box 8.5.

10 – 14 November (MWF) Democratization and Conflict

- 1. Selection from: Ed Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and War" (Reserve)
- 2. Selection from: Erica Chenoweth, "Terrorism and Democracy" (Reserve)

Part III: Ethnicity, Conflict and Instability

17 - 21 November (MWF): Ethnicity as a Cause of Civil War

- 1. Selection from: Monica Duffy Toft, "The Origins of Ethnic Wars" (Reserve)
- 2. Paul Collier, "The Market for Civil War" (Reserve)

24 November (MW): Managing Ethnic Conflict I - Partition

1. Brendan O'Leary, "Debating Partition: Justifications and Critiques" (Reserve)

26 - 28 November (WF): NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

1 & 3 December (MW): Managing Ethnic Conflict II – Internal Settlements

- 1. Donald Horowitz, "The Many Uses of Federalism" (Reserve)
- 2. Rene Lemarchand, "Consociationalism and Power Sharing in Africa: Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (Excerpt - Reserve)

5 & 8 December (FM): Ethnic Conflict in Northern Ireland – A Simulation Approach Reading material TBD

12 December 2:00 - 5:00: Final Exam

****SPECIAL NOTE ON THE TAKING OF EXAMS FROM THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

"Students must have the permission of the Dean of Academic Affairs to take an exam earlier than scheduled. Permission is normally granted for medical reasons or for participating in educational programs.

Leave early for rides or flights, vacations, relatives' or friends' weddings or graduations, jobs, or having more than one exam on one day, are not considered valid reasons to request an earlier or later exam.

CONFLICT EXAM - If a student has three exams on the same day, the student in conjunction with their professor may schedule one exam on the CONFLICT EXAM day.