

**GOV 105C: Comparative Politics**  
**Lectures: Tue. & Thu. 12:40-2:10**  
**Hepburn 112**

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### **Overview**

This course is a general introduction to the comparative study of political systems. It is intended to give students a basic understanding of some of the ideas and theoretical approaches used in comparative political studies, using theory to explain individual cases and using cases to refine our theories of political behavior. The structure of the course is **thematic** rather than geographic. We examine various states representing the political systems discussed, thereby applying the theoretical framework to particular cases.

In the first part of the course we will discuss the nature of comparative political analysis and explore themes in comparative politics such as the relationship between ideology and political behavior, the impact of cultural forces on politics, the articulation of political interests, and explanation for political change. Next we will use our knowledge of these concepts to help us understand the political development in different countries that are representative of groups of states with roughly similar political and economic institutions. First we will look at examples of democracies and advanced democracies. Second we will examine authoritarianism and totalitarianism. Next, we will look at countries representing the "Communist bloc"; states that are either presently ruled by Communist party regime or are in transition from them. We will then consider states representing "less developed countries" and "newly industrialized countries." Finally we will conclude by examining several key issues in contemporary world politics, representing the nexus between comparative politics and international relations, namely, political violence and the connection between terrorism and globalization.

### **Objectives:**

The focus throughout the course will be on understanding the core ideas in political science and applying those ideas to particular cases. You should come away from the course with both an understanding of the diversity of the world's political systems, as well as an appreciation of the questions and concepts that inform the work of professional political scientists in analyzing those systems.

This course stresses the importance of comparison, thinking comparatively within political science means continually asking yourself the following two questions:

- How do "big ideas" relate to particular cases? That is, applying theoretical knowledge to the cases discussed throughout the semester. How do these theories inform the political behavior in the cases discussed?

- What are the challenges facing the individual countries discuss and what common elements can we extract from these cases to identify general trends in global politics?

This course is designed with the stated objective of helping students answer these two questions. The following sections will describe the reading material and assignments for this course that are designed to facilitate and stimulate a learning process which will help you achieve the stated objectives of the course.

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### **Reading Assignments:**

There are three required textbooks for this course which may be purchased either at the bookstore or online. There are very little additional readings aside from those included in the textbooks and thus students will not be required to purchase an additional reading packet or print articles. Any additional reading that is not included in the textbooks is available online and links are included in this syllabus.

The required readings are:

- Patrick O’Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (W.W. Norton Book, 2007). Referred to in syllabus as **O’Neil**.
- Patrick O’Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (W.W Norton, 2006) referred to in syllabus as **O’Neil and Rogowski**.
- Patrick O’Neil, Karl Fields, Don Share, *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (W.W. Norton, 2006). Referred to in syllabus as **Cases in Comparative Politics**.
- Additional readings will be provided on Angel or an online link will appear in the syllabus.

Current Events: the following are suggestions on where to find current events:

- BBC <http://news.bbc.co.uk>
- CNN <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/>
- NYT <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/index.html>
- For country news reports:  
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/index.html>

### **Requirements and Expectations:\***

1. Attendance is mandatory. Students are required to complete the reading assignments **before** the discussion in class.
2. Students will be tested several times during the semester with a short quiz on material correlating to a specific section of the syllabus. The quizzes will consist of multiple-choice questions or true or false questions and will test generally your comprehension of the material in your text book (**O’Neil**)
3. In-class midterm examination
4. 3 Policy Analysis Memos: 2-3 pages, double-spaced 12 font standard margins. Student will be asked to identify the challenges facing one or two of the forms of

governments discussed in class and make policy recommendations to deal with identified challenges.

5. Small group case study presentations: Class will be divided into several small groups with each responsible for presenting a different country that we will be covering throughout the semester. Groups and country assignments will be distributed in the first two classes.
6. Final 48-hour take home exam. The final will consist of three essay questions. You will be required to answer only *two* questions. The final will be comprehensive and thus draw on the material from **the entire semester.**

### Grading:

Class participation:	10%
Quizzes	15%
Midterm examination:	15%
Policy analysis paper	10% each for a total of 30%
Group presentation	5%
Final examination	25%

All grades are based on a 4.0 scale.

- ❖ **Class participation:** the semester grade will reflect your level of attendance and the quality of your contribution to class discussions. You should demonstrate that you have read your assigned reading critically and engage other students who disagree with your views. Attendance is mandatory, students who miss more than **two classes** in the course of the semester without advanced approval or a doctor's note will receive a reduction of 0.25 (on a 4.0 scale) for every unexcused absence. If you miss class – **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to get the notes from other students or to contact me to know what you missed and if there were any handouts and/or important notifications made while you were absent.
- ❖ **Policy Memos:** You will be asked to submit three policy memos. In the memo you will be asked a specific question or a series of questions relating to material covered that week in the syllabus. The memo entries may summarize reading assignments, evaluate the author's model and analyze the article's findings.
  - You will be asked to ***apply the knowledge*** you accumulate through the readings. Each memo will cover a different section of the syllabus.
  - Each memo should be ***no longer than*** three typed pages in length. Detailed guidelines on writing a strong analysis will be distributed in class.
  - This assignment requires theoretical rigor and attention to accuracy and detail. The assignment offers the opportunity to connect matters of current interest in one country to the historical experiences of similar countries, or to contrast with differing experiences in other countries. **The goal is to become comfortable comparing political phenomena across a variety of cases.**
- ❖ **Small Group Project:** Participants in this course will divide into small groups to collaborate on a project. Each group will be asked to detail a case study of a current

political challenge in one of the countries we study in this course. The presentation should briefly outline this challenge, but should primarily focus on presenting **potential solutions**. The group will present an argument for how to best meet the selected political challenge, and will lead a debate or discussion with the class, defending their position. More detailed information will be covered in class, and guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

- **Each student should submit a brief individual written report on the day of the presentation, outlining their contribution.**
  
- ❖ **Exams:** There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. These exams will test your comprehension of the concepts, content and vocabulary of the materials covered in the readings and in class. The midterm exam will have identification of concepts, short answer and essay components. The Final Exam will include three essay questions of which you will have to only answer two. More detailed information will be offered in class.
  
- ❖ **Classroom Conduct:** cell phones and other electronic devices should not be used during class. Socializing with classmates during lectures is also unacceptable.
  
- ❖ **Academic Honesty:** St. Lawrence University does not tolerate academic dishonesty in its students, nor do I. Cases of cheating on exams or plagiarizing papers, arguments, or any material that is not your original thought but is attempted to be passed as your own will result in a **ZERO** for the assignments and will be referred to the Dean of Students for further action.
  
- ❖ If you are stressed-out and panicking over an assignment or exam, ***COME SEE ME AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE*** and don't risk your academic standing by cheating. It will not be tolerated. Please note that drawing from readings or other sources in exam essays and papers without citing the source is plagiarism, this means you are stealing someone else's work and trying to pass it as your own, this will result in a failing grade. Please use the multiple sources I provide in class, on angel, or from your own research but be sure to acknowledge the works of others.
  
- ❖ **Penalty for late paper submissions:** your grade will be penalized by 0.25 points (on a 4.0 scale) for every 24 hours after the deadline. This means that a grade of 3.0 will be 2.75 if you submit your work within the first 24 hours after the deadline, and will be 2.5 if you submit between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline.  
**I will not accept work that is submitted more than 72 hours after the deadline.**  
The due date of assignment is clearly stated in this syllabus and it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to know when assignments are due.
  
- ❖ **Health and family emergencies during midterm and final examination:** only health and family emergencies will exempt you from taking the midterm and final examination at the appointed time. Such emergencies include serious medical illness and a death in the family, and must be explained in a written and signed letter by the academic dean and/or health provider. If you miss your exam at the appointed time without the written consent, you will receive a failing grade on the exam.

\* Requirements are at the discretion of the instructor and may be subject to change

## **Readings:**

### **1. Introduction\_(Jan. 20)**

Review of course objectives, requirements and expectations.

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### **2. What is comparative politics? (Jan. 22)**

**O'Neil:** chapter 1.

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### **3. Origins of states, nations and societies**

January 27: The state

#### **❖ QUIZ**

**O'Neil:** chapter 2.

**O'Neil and Rogowski:** Robert Rotberg, "The New Nature of Nation-State Failure. pp. 61

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January 29: The nation and society

**O'Neil:** chapter 3

**O'Neil and Rogowski:** Eric Hobsbawm, "Nationalism" pp. 70; Mark Juergensmeyer, "The New Religious State" pp. 37.

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February 3: Political Culture

**O'Neil and Rogowski:** Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" pp. 105; Amartya Sen, "Civilizational Imprisonments: How to Misunderstand Everybody in the Word," pp. 118.

#### **❖ FIRST POLICY MEMO DUE**

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February 5: Political Economy

**O'Neil:** chapter 4.

**O'Neil and Rogowski:** Adam Smith, "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" pp. 129; Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote, "Why doesn't the US Have a European Style Welfare State?" pp. 155.

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February 10: Globalization

**O’Neil:** chapter 10.

**O’Neil and Rogowski:** “Is Government Disappearing?” pp. 343  
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February 12: Globalization and its Challenges

**O’Neil and Rogowski:** James Galbrath, “A Perfect crime: Inequality in the Age of Globalization, 480; Stanley Hoffman, “Clash of Globalization,” in pp. 474; Joseph Nye, “Globalization’s Democratic Deficit” pp. 492; “Grinding the Poor” pp. 501.  
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**NO CLASSES FEBRUARY 17,19**

[I am presenting a paper at the International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Conference]

**FEBRUARY 24: MIDTERM** (in class)

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**4. Forms of Governments: Democracy**

February 26: Democracy

**O’Neil:** chapter 6.

**O’Neil and Rogowski:** Fareed Zakaria, “A Brief History of Human Liberty” pp. 231; Philippe C. Schmitter, “What Democracy Is... and Is Not” pp. 247  
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March 3: Advanced Democracies

❖ **QUIZ**

**O’Neil:** chapter 7.

**O’Neil and Rogowski:** Robert Putnam, “Turning in, Turning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America” pp. 266.  
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March 5: Great Britain

**O’Neil, Fields and Share:** *Cases in Comparative Politics*, chapter 2.

❖ **Group presentation of challenges facing GB today**  
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March 10: France

O’Neil, Fields and Share: *Cases in Comparative Politics*, chapter 4.

❖ **Group presentation of current challenges facing France**

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**5. Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism**

March 12: Authoritarianism

❖ **QUIZ**

O’Neil: chapter 5.

Fareed Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracies,” *Foreign Affairs* (November 1997). Available at:

<http://www.fareedzakaria.com/ARTICLES/other/democracy.html>

Azar Gat, The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers, *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2007) available at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070701faessay86405/azar-gat/the-return-of-authoritarian-great-powers.html?mode=print>

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**SPRING BREAK**

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March 24: Iran

O’Neil, Fields and Share: *Cases in Comparative Politics*, chapter 9.

O’Neil and Rogowski: M. Stevan Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” pp. 214.

❖ **Group Presentation on current Challenges facing Iran**

❖ **SECOND POLICY MEMO DUE**

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**6. Communism and Post-Communism**

March 26: Communism and its Challenges

❖ **QUIZ**

O’Neil: chapter 8.

O’Neil and Rogowski: Lucien W. Pye, “Traumatized Political Culture: The After Effects of Totalitarianism in China and Russia” pp. 381; Valerie Bunce, “Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons From The Post-Communist Experience” pp. 371.

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March 31: Russia

O’Neil, Fields and Share: Cases in Comparative Politics, chapter 6.

❖ **Group presentation of current challenges facing Russia**

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April 2: China

O’Neil, Fields and Share: Cases in Comparative Politics, chapter 7.

❖ **Group Presentations on current challenges facing China**

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**7. Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries**

April 7: The challenges

❖ **QUIZ**

O’Neil: chapter 9.

O’Neil and Rogowski: Adam Przeworski et al, “Political Regimes and Economic Growth” pp. 448.

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**NO CLASS APRIL 9** [I celebrate Passover]

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April 14: India

O’Neil, Fields and Share: Cases in Comparative Politics, chapter 8.

❖ **Group presentations on current challenges facing India**

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April 16: Nigeria

O’Neil, Fields and Share: Cases in Comparative Politics, chapter 13.

O’Neil and Rogowski: Paul Collier and Jan Willem Gunning, “Why Has Africa Grown Slowly” pp. 428.

❖ **Group presentation on current challenges facing Nigeria**

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**8. Political Violence**

April 21: What is Political Violence

**O’Neil**, Chapter 11.

**O’Neil and Rogowski**: Theda Skopol, “France, Russia and China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions,” pp. 509.

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April 23: Terrorism

**O’Neil and Rogowski** : Jack A. Goldstone, “States, Terrorists, and the Clash of Civilizations,” pp. 552; Martha Crenshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism,” pp. 527; Avishai Margalit and Ian Buruma, “Occidentalism,” pp. 544.

**❖ THIRD POLICY MEMO DUE**

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**9. Future Trends and Challenges**

April 28: Globalization of Terror: The Case of Al Qaeda

Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, (Beverly Book, NY, 2003). EXCERPTS, [On Angel]

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April 30: Future Prospects and Final Review

**O’Neil and Rogowski**: Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” pp. 459. Also review Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations” pp, 105.

Dominique Moisi, “A Clash of Emotions,” *Foreign Affairs* (Jan/Feb 2007). Available at: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/12/14/opinion/edmoisi.php>

**Final Exam TBD**