**RPOS102M Comparative and International Politics**

**Fall 2010**  
**TTH 08:45 AM-10:05 AM LC0018**  
**Professor:** Victor Asal  
**Email:** vasal@email.albany.edu  
**Phone Number:** 518 591 8729  
**Office Hours:**  
Uptown: Humanities basement 16, Tuesday 1130-130 or by appointment (ph) 442-3112  
Downtown Campus: Milne 217: Tuesday 5:40-640 or by appointment (ph) 591-8729

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Office hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ozlem Savas</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ozlem.savas01@albany.edu">ozlem.savas01@albany.edu</a></td>
<td>Friday 1:40-2:35; 2:45-3:40; 3:50-4:45</td>
<td>Tuesday 10:30-12:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiaoye She</td>
<td><a href="mailto:x429323@albany.edu">x429323@albany.edu</a></td>
<td>Monday 12:35-1:30; 1:40-2:35; 2:45-3:40</td>
<td>Tuesday 1130 - 1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Truby</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kmtruby@gmail.com">kmtruby@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Wednesday 1:40-2:35; 2:45-3:40; 3:50-4:45</td>
<td>11-1:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Sin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:steve_sin@alumni.utexas.net">steve_sin@alumni.utexas.net</a></td>
<td>Monday 3:50-4:45</td>
<td>Tuesday 1130 - 1330</td>
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<td>Thursday 2:45-3:40; 3:50-4:45</td>
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**Course Description:** The course is an introduction to the actors, issues and processes of international relations and comparative politics and the theories that attempt to explain them. We will examine several of the central questions that interest political scientists when they explore international relations and comparative politics. Why are there wars? How is peace achieved? What are the implications of anarchy for world politics? How do states and decision-makers choose between conflict and cooperation? How does politics interact with economics on the global scene? Do morality and norms effect international relations and if so how? Why do some countries protect human rights and others not? How does democracy develop? The goal of the course is to create a familiarity of the elements that make up international relations and comparative politics and a critical understanding of the theories that explain them. The course will stress analytical thinking. Each student will be encouraged to identify the theories that he or she feels best explains comparative politics and international relations and to justify those choices. As a University General Education requirement for methods we will also discuss methods used in comparative and IR to analyze politics and students will do an exercise in hypothesis testing in the last paper.

**Course Objectives** The course is structured with multiple assignments that will convey a great deal of information both in theory and empirical knowledge in a relatively short time frame of a semester. By the end of the course students should: 1) have a strong overview of the theories of international relations and comparative politics, 2) understand how to apply these theories to better understand political interactions, 3) have an understanding of the rudiments of research in comparative politics and international relations.

In order to achieve these ambitious goals a great deal of effort both on the part of the students and faculty will have to be put into the class. This will require a great deal of effort from you and from the instructor and the TAs. If you do not come to class and section and take notes as well as do the reading you will not do well. The lectures and sections are not a regurgitation of the reading and it is assumed that you have read the material and if something is unclear you will ask questions. If you do the reading come to class and section and put the appropriate effort into the class the professor and the TAs will spend as much time as necessary helping you understand the material. If you do not want to put in this effort -

**DO NOT TAKE THIS CLASS. – Really**

On the other hand if you are willing to put in the effort for a challenging class we will put in the effort to make sure that it is worth your time.

The course fulfills the following General Education requirements (under each are listed relevant course objectives:
General Education Social Sciences  [http://www.albany.edu/gened/dp_socsci.shtml]
1. an understanding that human conduct and behavior more generally are subject to scientific inquiry
2. an understanding of the difference between rigorous and systematic thinking and uncritical thinking about social phenomena
3. an understanding of the kinds of questions social scientists ask and the ways they go about answering these questions
4. knowledge of the major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences
5. an understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, such as observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, employment of mathematical analysis, employment of interpretive analysis

General Education Global and Cross-Cultural Studies Courses [http://www.albany.edu/gened/ch_global.shtml]
1. an understanding of the impact (e.g. economic, political, historical, cultural) of nations, regions, and cultures upon other nations, regions, and cultures
2. an understanding of the reciprocal interactions between individuals and global systems
3. an ability to see cultural groups from their own points of view
4. an ability to use the analytic tools of a specific discipline to engage in comparative analyses of cultures, nations, and regions

Ground Rules This class is challenging and it is important that it remain fair for all the students and that everyone plays on an even playing field. In order to insure that the policies of the class are clear they are spelled out below. If you have any questions about what the policy means please ask before it becomes personally relevant.

Questions: Education is about learning. This class is about material you have probably not covered before in this context. If you have questions or things are unclear – ask questions. Ask them in section, ask them in lecture and feel free to email the TA’s or call (if I am in my office at 10pm I will answer the phone) or email the instructor or TA’s whenever to ask for further clarification. When you email me, please send me your phone number and I will be happy to call you back. This includes any problems you might have about e-reserve, blackboard or any other technical aspect of the course. (Please note – I always respond to emails. If I do not respond to your email within a reasonable time please email me again because I did not get your first email.)

Attendance: This is a labor intensive course. The course has a great deal of in-class and collaborative work. You have to come to lecture and to section. While there will be no attendance taken in lecture there will be no make ups of quizzes without a specific medical excuse (Religious observance will be a reason for a make up but this need to brought to my attention before the student plans on being absent). As far as section goes, each person is allowed one unexcused absence. Any other absence must be excused by the TA before the absence or excused afterwards based on a medical note. Any unexcused absence after the second one will result in a half grade penalty per absence for the course. Really. Repeated late arrivals will result in a warning and then also result in a half grade penalty per absence

Accommodations: “Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations ([http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html](http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html)].” If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course please also inform the instructor as soon as possible. In addition, the instructor will make every effort to accommodate difficulties arising from religious observance. You are asked to bring any possible conflicts to the instructor’s attention as soon as possible. “Students should not expect that, if they do poorly on an exam or other assignment, to claim, at that time, the need of an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately (Harwood 2003).”

If you are sick in order to make up an exam or to remove an absence for section please bring in a note from the dean of undergraduate studies (Lecture Center 30 Phone: 518-442-3950) who is responsible for excused absence certification. Without such a note any absence from section or missed exams will count against you.

Plagiarism Please familiarize yourself with the description in the undergraduate bulletin [http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/2003-2004/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/2003-2004/regulations.html) if you are involved in plagiarism the penalty will be
failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs with the suggestion that you be expelled from the university. In this one regard there are no second chances. If you are not sure if something violates standards – ask. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite – cite. Every Student is expected to go through the following tutorial http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html All papers will be judged with the knowledge that you have taken the online tutorial. NOTE – ALL PAPERS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO SAFE ASSIGN.

Late Assignments. Unless you have gotten prior approval from a TA through email or have a note from the undergraduate dean, all late work will be penalized. All grade appeals should be made in email and should explain exactly why you think the grading was mistaken. The email should be emailed to me and your TA. Your first discussion about the grade should be with your TA and then with the instructor of the course.

Office hours Office hours are your opportunity to get personalized guidance for assignments as well as help better understanding the course material. Take advantage of it. Both the instructor and the TA’s will have weekly office hours and will meet with you as long as necessary to help you understand the material. If these times are not good then please email the TA’s or the instructor your phone number and we will call you to set up a time that works in order to meet.

Ombudsperson “A government official, especially in Scandinavian countries, who investigates citizens' complaints against the government or its functionaries (www.answers.com).” One student will be asked to volunteer to act as an ombudsperson and will meet with me on a regular basis to offer feedback from students in terms of the direction the course is going and bring to my attention any problems with reading, assignments or other material.

Assignments

6 -10 quizzes (bottom two quizzes or two absent quizzes subtracted from total) Quizzes will be made up of short answer questions or multiple choice questions and occasionally short essay questions. Each quiz will be about 10 minutes and you should plan your answers accordingly. The two lowest grades will be dropped when the grade for this component is tallied but make ups will not be given except in exceptionally extenuating circumstances. Please note the quizzes will focus on whether you are reading and coming to lecture – i.e. it will test whether you are taking notes and remembering the facts and theories from the material covered in reading or lectures. Four quizzes are listed in the syllabus – the rest will be unannounced.

Short Papers Short papers provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the material in a less pressured format and for us to provide you with feedback on your application of theory to reality. Each paper should be about 5 pages long. All material should be cited. The first assignment is posted at the bottom of this syllabus. NOTE –

1. SOFT COPIES OF ALL PAPERS NEED SENT TO SAFE ASSIGN BY MONDAY AT NOON.
2. IN ADDITION YOU MUST EMAIL A SOFT COPY TO pos102@gmail.com. TO GET CREDIT FOR THIS YOU MUST PUT THE PAPER INTO THE TEXT OF THE EMAIL. IN ADDITION, YOU MUST PUT THE FOLLOWING INTO THE HEADER: POS102 FALL 2010 YOUR NAME YOUR TA’S LAST NAME AND THE ASSIGNMENT CODE FOR THAT ASSIGNMENT (FOR THE FIRST ASSIGNMENT PUT IN P1 FOR THE FIRST PAPER, P2 FOR THE SECOND PAPER AND P3 FOR THE THIRD PAPER.) for example:

   POS 102 2008 John Smith Savas P1

3. FINALLY ALL PAPERS NEED TO BE TURNED IN THE DAY THEY ARE DUE AT THE END OF CLASS IN HARD COPY.

Participation – attendance, reading, active participation –see attendance section above

Hypothesis analysis paper Students will identify a hypothesis, frame it theoretically and test it empirically. There will be a handout that explains exactly what needs to be done in this assignment and we will devote considerable time to this effort. The paper itself will be between 4-6 typed pages long. The hypothesis paper will be due December 7 Tuesday in class.
Midterm & Final: The midterm and the final will both be cumulative covering the material in the books, the material in lectures and in sections. Both exams will be made up of combinations of short answer and/or multiple choice questions and an essay. Instructions on the best way to answer such an essay will be handed out prior to the exam. The Final will be Tuesday 14 of December 3:30pm – 5:30pm

Out of 1000 points

| 1.       | Midterm October 7 Thursday | 200   |
| 2.       | Final Tuesday 14 of December 3:30pm – 5:30pm | 200   |
| 3.       | Participation – attendance, reading, active participation | 100   |
| 5.       | Short Paper: Is Democracy Possible In Iraq? due November 2 Tuesday | 100   |
| 6.       | Hypothesis analysis paper due December 7 Tuesday | 100   |
| 7.       | Quizzes 6 -10 quizzes (bottom two quizzes or two absent quizzes subtracted from total) | 200   |

Library Tutorials: In addition to the graded assignments there are three library tutorials that you need to complete. You do not get a grade for completing them but completing them by the date cited is a requirement of the class. These tutorials are:

Plagiarism: http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html Completion date: September 17 Friday
Website Evaluation: http://library.albany.edu/usered/webeval/index.html Completion date: Friday October 15th
Using Library Catalogs: http://library.albany.edu/usered/tut/index.html Completion date: Friday October 29th

Reading: All reading is either in the books, on electronic reserve in blackboard or accessible through links provided in the syllabus. If you cannot find a reading or it will not open you need to contact the TA's or the lecturer to get the material. You will be asked to watch 2 online documentaries from the frontline website.

Books
  A useful review tool (especially for quizzes) can be found at http://www.wwnorton.com/web/ir/
- Timothy C. Lim Doing Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Approaches And Issues second edition Lynne Rienner Publishers 1588263452
- A Newspaper – you should read at least the front page of a newspaper and the relevant international stories every day while taking the course. Here are websites for four newspapers available online for free. The papers suggested here run the gamut from left wing to right wing so if you scan their front pages and editorial sections you should get a good sense of what is happening in the world from a variety of viewpoints.
  - www.nytimes.com
  - http://online.wsj.com/public/us
  - www.washingtonpost.com
  - http://www.chicagotribune.com/

for a digest of newspapers from around the world from dramatically different political points of view see: http://www.worldpress.org/

All other reading are on Blackboard which can be accessed here:
http://bls.its.albany.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading and Assignment</th>
<th>Section</th>
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</table>
| **August 31 Tuesday** | Introduction and review of Syllabus | **Sections for Wed-Friday**  
Introduction & Expectations and explanation of first writing assignment  
http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtoread.pdf  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html  
(you need to do this and register for credit before you turn in your first paper) |
| **September 2 Thursday** | Mingst - Chapter 1: Approaches To International Relations  
Mingst - Chapter 2: The Historical Context Of Contemporary International Relations | **Sections for Monday – Tuesday**  
Introduction & Expectations and explanation of first writing assignment  
http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtoread.pdf  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/research/process.html |
| September 7 Tuesday | Mingst - Chapter 3: Contending Perspectives: How To Think About International Relations | **Sections for Monday – Tuesday**  
Introduction & Expectations and explanation of first writing assignment  
http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtoread.pdf  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/research/process.html |
| September 9 Thursday | No class | **Sections for Monday – Tuesday**  
Introduction & Expectations and explanation of first writing assignment  
http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtoread.pdf  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/research/process.html |
| **September 14 Tuesday** | Mingst - Chapter 4: The International System  
Sept 15 last day to drop class without w Quiz A | Prisoner’s Dilemma Game |
| **September 16 Thursday** | Mingst - Chapter 5: The State | Why Iraq War of 2003?–  
Paper I- Apply Theory  
Snyder, Jack. 2004. One World, Rival Theories. In Foreign Policy:.
http://www.firstworldwar.com/origins/causes.htm |
| **September 21 Tuesday** | Mingst - Chapter 6: The Individual Think different, CIA  
http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2010/01/17/think_different_cia/  
?campaign=8315 | Why Iraq War of 2003?–  
Paper I- Apply Theory  
Snyder, Jack. 2004. One World, Rival Theories. In Foreign Policy:.
http://www.firstworldwar.com/origins/causes.htm |
| **September 23 Thursday** | Mingst - Chapter 8: War And Strife  
Paper I- Apply Theory  
Snyder, Jack. 2004. One World, Rival Theories. In Foreign Policy:.
http://www.firstworldwar.com/origins/causes.htm |
| **September 28 Tuesday** | Mingst - Chapter 7: International Organizations, Nongovernmental Organizations  
Quiz B | Midterm prep  
For midterm prep Carins “The Great War of 1918” in The Twentieth Century e-reserve  
Recommended  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/webeval/index.html  
by Friday October 15th |
| **September 30 Thursday** | Carol Cohn “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals “  
Srieg Vol. 12, No. 4, Within and Without: Women, Gender, and Theory (Summer, 1987), pp. 687-718 | Midterm prep  
For midterm prep Carins “The Great War of 1918” in The Twentieth Century e-reserve  
Recommended  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/webeval/index.html  
by Friday October 15th |
| **October 5 Tuesday** | Lim Chp. 1 Doing Comparative Politics and an introduction to methods | No sections |
| **October 7 Thursday** | Midterm covers up to sep 30  
Carins “The Great War of 1918” in The Twentieth Century e-reserve | No sections |
| **October 12 Tuesday** | Lim Chp. 2 Comparing to Learn, Learning to Compare: An Introduction to Comparative Methods | No sections |
| **October 14 Thursday** | Lim Chp. 3 Thinking Theoretically in Comparative Politics: An Introduction.  
for sections complete  
http://library.albany.edu/usered/webeval/index.html | How To Compare? Examples and an assignment for the end of the semester - Hypothesis analysis paper  
and  
http://instructional1.calstatela.edu/tclim/weblog/stossel.htm  
Good Writing in Political Science: An Undergraduate Student's Short Illustrated Primer  
http://www.henryfarrell.net/pol_sci_essay.html |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Preparation for Dacia Simulation and brief discussion of website evaluation&lt;br&gt;Read Material on Dacia Simulation on blackboard&lt;br&gt;Read extra material for our version at end of syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Dacia Simulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 28</td>
<td>Dacia Simulation for sections complete&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://library.albany.edu/usered/tut/index.html">http://library.albany.edu/usered/tut/index.html</a> by Friday October 29th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>Lim Chp. 7 What Makes a Terrorist? Explaining Political Violence. Quiz D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11</td>
<td>Lim Chp. 8 What Makes a Social Movement: Understanding the Rise and Success of Social Movements. Also watch&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/view/">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/view/</a> (section 1,2,3, and section 6)&lt;br&gt;also look at&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/06/remembering_tiananmen_20_years.html">http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/06/remembering_tiananmen_20_years.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Examples of research: Terrorist Lethality Asal and Rethemeyer&lt;br&gt;Terrorist Networks Asal Nussbaum and Harrington</td>
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</table>
**FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT**

**Paper 1:** Why Iraq War?  
**Due date:** September 20 Monday  
**Format:** Typed, double spaced

Your first paper should apply the theory you think best explains the Iraq war. The key effort here is the systematic application of theory to empirical evidence – in this case the 2003 Iraq war. You have plenty of empirical evidence about the war in the Mingst test book. Mingst gives very good examples of how one might apply different levels of analysis to explaining the war (p. 61) and she also applies the theories to the war as well (76-80). You need to focus on one particular theory and cover it more in detail. REMEMBER THIS IS AN ANALYTICAL PAPER NOT A NORMATIVE ONE. The question you need to answer is:

**Which theory best explains the outbreak of the 2003 Iraq war?**

To answer the question you need to systematically apply the theory to the case of the Iraq war and then address why other theories do not do as good a job. Below I give you an outline for doing this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 1</th>
<th>Introduction paragraph:</th>
<th>Which theory is best and why in two sentences – i.e. boil your argument down to its essence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to theory</td>
<td>Brief (1-2 paragraph max) overview of theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3 pages</td>
<td>Application of theory to case</td>
<td>For each key assumption of the theory, explain what the theory says and present evidence that this case that fits or violates these assumptions. Make sure to explain why the supportive empirical evidence outweighs the contradictory evidence when there is both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last page</td>
<td>Comparison to one other theory</td>
<td>In one to three paragraphs point out how another theory explains less of the case than your chosen theory.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>In a final paragraph, restate your argument about why your chosen theory gives the best analytical leverage for this case – citing the material you have presented in the previous pages.</td>
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</table>

In terms of identifying key assumptions and organizing the application of theory to case you may find the table below helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory Assumptions about:</th>
<th>Supportive empirical evidence</th>
<th>Contradictory evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key actor:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International System:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change:</td>
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**Grading**

Your grade for this assignment will depend on the following:

- Do you explain your chosen theory well?
- Is the paper analytical as opposed to normative?
· Do you apply the theory coherently and provide appropriate evidence?
· Do you explain why this theory fits “best”?
· Is your comparison to another theory well done and appropriate?
· Generally, does the paper work together coherently?
· While this is not an English paper you are expected to spell check and meet minimal grammatical standards. Please use the APA style for citations
  ◦ [http://library.albany.edu/usered/cite/index.html](http://library.albany.edu/usered/cite/index.html)

Note: your grade will NOT be affected by your choice of theories or the political implications of your analytical choices.

**Dacia Simulation**  *(Prep week of October 18 In Class October 26, October 28)*

Team role sheets can be found on blackboard

**Rules**

Read the simulation narratives paying particular attention to your team sheet. Also take a look at the Examples of Preambles in Ethnically-Divided States

1) The goal of the simulation for each group is to try and achieve a constitution that suits your group.

2) Before your section next week (sections the week of October 18th):
   a. Identify the 2-5 key issues that your team would like to achieve in the creation of the new Dacia constitution.
   b. Identify which groups are likely to be key allies and which are likely to opponents.
   c. Possible issues include:
      i. What kind of democracy should the country be (ex. socialist or liberal)?
      ii. Should there be an official language or languages?
      iii. Official religion? If so, what type?
      iv. Form of state? Unitary? Autonomy (territorial)
      v. Should Dacia be a presidential or a parliamentary system? How should the legislature be designed?

3) In Section
   a. Develop a priority list of what your team is trying to accomplish.
   b. Two people should be chosen as spokespeople. Decisions for each group though will be made through consensus.
   c. For each issue identify 2-4 possible outcomes—and order each outcome from least favorite to most favorite.
      i. Make sure someone takes notes and email the priority list to your TA. When we play the simulation in class the TA will print out your priority list to have guidelines for negotiations.

4) Class
   a. In the first class each group’s spokespeople will need to give a five minute presentation about the interests of your group and what you think should be in the constitution.
   b. After this, negotiations will begin and periodically parties will be asked if there is a constitution that is ready for adoption which will then be voted on.
      i. Each student represents 10,000 Dacians and will be able to vote for or against the constitution.
   c. Students can change parties or form new parties as long as they remain true to what they believe is the basic interest of their constituency.
d. Students should feel free to adopt whatever view they want on any issue not in their role sheet.

e. Students can conduct protests, use violence or assassinations after getting approval from the professor.

In addition to the constitution the group as a whole needs to decide how revenue generated from the huge oil reserves just discovered in the Anarti dominated area of the Sylvanian Basin will be controlled – by the state, by the provinces where it is located or by some other arrangements.

**Extra credit:** At the end of the simulation all the teams will vote on the most effective team. All members of that team will receive a 20 point bonus. In addition each team will vote for the most effective person on their team – that person will receive a 20 point bonus. Finally if a constitution is actually voted on and approved by a majority of participants, the team that achieves most of its goals will receive 30 points bonus for each of its players.

**Note:** If requested assassinations may be permitted.