

RPOS102 Comparative and International Politics

Online Winter 2016-7 Syllabus

Department of Political Science

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University at Albany

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Course description

Why are some countries more democratic and wealthy than other countries? How do we define democracy and development? How does the politics work? Does government need to allocate more money to social welfare? How does global politics influence the national politics and vice versa? How are the international norms made and by whom? In this class, we are going to try to find the answers to these questions by exploring the classic and modern literature in Comparative Politics and International Relations. **Gen. Ed: International Perspectives.**

Course Objectives

The goals of this course relate both to the specific content presented and to critical thinking and communication. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explain why we compare and how we compare the different political systems
- Explain key issues of the Comparative Politics literature
- Compare major theories of International Relations
- Demonstrate ability to think critically and to analyze and contextualize current affairs using relevant theories and frameworks of both Comparative Politics and International Relations

Reading Materials

Textbook:

1. Lim, Timothy C. *Doing comparative politics: An introduction to approaches and issues*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006. (both 2nd and 3rd editions are good)
2. Art, Robert J., Robert Jervis. *International politics: enduring concepts and contemporary issues*. Pearson, 2014. (both 12th and 13th editions are good)
3. Additional articles will be available on Blackboard in each week's Readings folder.

Course Activities & Method of Assessment

1) Ice breaker & map quiz: no grade but if not complete, -5 points from the entire grade

This class is the online class but I want everyone feel that we're sitting in the virtual classroom together. So let us know about you. On the ice breaker, write a brief self-introduction. I want to know about you and your motivation of taking this class. Feel free to say hello to your classmates by replying the introduction blogs. In the icebreaker module, there will be a map-quiz section too. You can find the detailed instruction on how to finish the map-quiz. This is not to test your knowledge (so no grade for it) but to prepare you regarding some basic geography of the world before we start off the class. Both Ice breaker and map quiz are due by **Saturday 24th 11pm**.

2) Four Warm-up quizzes: 20 %

Every Friday morning the quiz questions will be uploaded and you'll have two days until Saturday 11pm to complete the quiz (First week's due is on Monday the 26th December 11pm and this is exceptional.). The aim of this weekly quiz is to see if you are on the track in terms of reading and the structure of the course. **Students are expected to independently complete these quizzes by Saturday 11pm**, after which students will not be able to answer the quiz questions. Quiz questions will be a mixture of multiple choice and short answers.

All four warm-up quizzes will receive a numerical grade, based on the quality of the answers. Only the best three quiz grades of each student will be counted toward her or his overall quiz grade. Students will receive the numerical grade and comments on each quiz by Monday 11pm (by Wednesday 11pm in case of the first week.)

3) Participation in group discussion: 20%

Before December 21st (Wednesday), students will be put into groups of five to six. You will first get to know your group members through an icebreaker on the first day of the class (December 23rd).

There will be three online group discussions in total. Students must participate in ALL three of them; otherwise the overall discussion grade will be automatically downgraded by 30%. Every week, each group will have to respond to one discussion question by using and referencing what they learn from the readings and other course materials.

The discussion questions will be available on Blackboard by every Monday 11:00pm under the section of "Group Discussion" and each group will be assigned one question randomly. The group discussions are scheduled between every Monday 11:00pm and Wednesday 11:00pm. Each student must post one carefully-thought-out and cautiously edited message in the group discussions. **Each student must post this individual message by Tuesday 11:00pm**. Failure to do so will automatically lose 10 points on that week's group discussion grade. The quality as well as the timing of the posts would play a role in your grade. After reading the messages that are posted by your group members, **you need to reply to their messages by Wednesday 11:00pm**. Failure to do so will automatically lose a half point of that week's group discussion grade. In your reply, you can agree or disagree with the message writers but make sure to identify why you agree or disagree. This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate both their understanding of the course materials AND their ability to engage in discussions with their peers. There

will be in total three rounds of online discussions. All of them will receive feedback and a numerical grade from the instructor by Thursday 11:00pm. Half of your discussion grade will be based on your individual messages and another half of your grade will be based on the response that you made to your group peers.

4) Two current event application papers: 30%

Students will write two short papers (5 pages or 1500 words), one for Comparative Politics and the other for International Relations. You will have opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of theories and also to apply the theories that we learn to the current events of global politics. Detailed guideline on paper writing can be found under the module 2 and module 4. **First short paper is due by Saturday December 31, 11pm and the second paper is due by Saturday January 14 11pm.**

5) Final exam: 30%

In the final exam, you will need to demonstrate your ability to define key concepts of the Comparative Politics and International Relations, to compare various perspectives, and to apply the theoretical arguments into the real life examples. A Final Exam module will be available on Blackboard between January 16th 11pm and January 18th 11pm. Please make plans to access to the final exam question as well as other related learning material ahead of time. Students must open the module to read and then answer the exam question. To respond to the question, students have to write a 3-4 page double-spaced essay, and submit the essay to Blackboard by **Tuesday January 17th 11pm.**

Grading Scale

Start of letter grade range	Letter grade	Start of letter grade range	Letter grade
0	F	77	C+
60	D-	80	B-
63	D	83	B
67	D+	87	B+
70	C-	90	A-
73	C	93	A

Courses are A-E graded (there are S/U - Pass/Fail options). The conversion of a numerical grade to a letter grade is at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Overview of Course Schedule

Module	Sub-themes	Start date	End date	Assignment	Due Date
				Self- introduction	
				Map quiz	
	Why and how to compare?			Warm-up quiz 1	Mon, Dec 26, 11pm
	Approaches in Comparative Politics			Upload individual message to group discussion	Tue, Dec 27, 11pm
	What to compare 1: Regime type			Reply to group members' individual messages	Wed, Dec 28, 11pm
	What to compare 2: Development			Application paper 1	Sat, 31, 11pm
	What to compare 3: Political Violence			Warm-up quiz 2	Sat, Dec 31, 11pm
	What to compare 4: Nationalism			Upload individual message to group discussion	Tue, Jan 3, 11pm
	Beyond the nation-state			Reply to group members' individual messages	Tue, Jan 4, 11pm
	What is anarchy?			Warm-up quiz 3	Sat, Jan 7, 11pm
				Upload individual message to group discussion	Tue, Jan 10, 11pm
				Reply to group members' individual messages	Wed, Jan 11, 11pm
	Global security			Application paper 2	Sat, Jan 14, 11pm
	International Political Economy			Warm-up quiz 4	Sat, Jan 14, 11pm
	International organization			Final Exam	Tue, Jan 17, 11pm

Policy on Accommodating Disabilities

Policy Statement

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, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (BA-120, 442-5490). That office

will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.

How to find out more

The University provides a great deal of information on the services it offers to disabled students which can be found on the [Disability Resource Center](#) page.

Contact information

Carolyn Malloch, Director of Disabled Student Services

cmalloch@albany.edu

BA-120

Phone: (518) 442-5490

Fax: (518) 442-5589

TTY: (518) 442-3366

University Policies

[Academic Integrity](#)

It is essential that students understand, appreciate and model the highest standards of academic integrity. The University's policy regarding what constitutes plagiarism and the penalty is available at <http://www.albany.edu/eas/104/penalty.htm>. There is also a useful tutorial available at the University library website that can clarify the issue and provide strategies and best practices to avoid it <http://library.albany.edu/usered/ncplaga/index.html>. Violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Office of Undergraduate Education and will result in failure of this course. If you are not sure the limits of borrowing someone else's idea or acceptable team collaboration, please ask me.

Netiquette

Please observe proper "netiquette" -- courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (within your online course). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

For more information about Netiquette feel free to visit the following

site: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

NOTE: The instructor of this course reserves the right to remove any questionable or offensive material from public areas of this course.

Getting Technical Help

TBD

Weekly Reading Schedule

(*Read pages that are marked only)

(**Pages are marked based on the second edition of Lim book and twelfth edition of Art&Jervis but the corresponding section titles will also be marked. If you have different edition and not sure what pages you need to read, do not hesitate to send an email to instructor.)

(***There might be some additional readings. In that case bibliographical info of the reading will be notified and the reading will be uploaded via blackboard one week before at the latest.)

(****BB means that the reading is uploaded on the BlackBoard)

W1. Why, how, and what to compare?

Required Readings:

1. (BB) OECD (2014) "OECD Health Statistics 2014 How does the United States compare?" (<https://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/Briefing-Note-UNITED-STATES-2014.pdf>)
2. Lim. ch.1 What is Comparative Politics
3. Lim. ch. 2 Comparing to Learn, Learning to Compare: A Primer on Comparative Methods
4. (BB) Skim Chapter 1 of King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton university press, 1994.
5. Lim ch. 3 Thinking Theoretically in Comparative Politics (Skip 67-71, focus on the part thereafter (From p.72, Defining Theory))
6. Lim ch. 6 What Makes a Democracy
7. (BB) Dahl, Robert Alan. *Polyarchy: Participation and opposition*. Yale University Press, 1973. (ONLY pp.1-10)
8. (Optional) watch the Youtube video clip here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx4pN-aiofw>

W2. Major themes of CP

Required Readings:

1. Lim. ch. 5 Why Is East Asia Rich?
2. (BB) Jinguo, Wang, Russell Smyth, and Tan Dai Hwee. "The role of Confucian values in East Asian development: before and after the financial crisis." *Journal of International and Area Studies* (2000): 115-135. (focus on the pp. 123-128 and skim the rest)
3. Lim. ch. 7 What Makes a Terrorist?
4. (BB) NPR's interview with Peter Bergen, "Who Are America's 'Homegrown Terrorists'?" in February 2, 2016
5. Lim. ch. 8 What Makes a Social Movement? (only pp.253-273, no need to read Cultural explanation part if you have third edition)
6. Lim. ch. 9 Globalization and the Study of Comparative Politics

7. (BB) Wolf, Martin. "Will the nation-state survive globalization?." *Foreign Affairs* (2001): 178-190.

W3. Assumptions and theories of IR

Required Readings:

1. Walt, Stephen M. "International relations: one world, many theories." *Foreign policy* (1998): 29-46.
2. Art & Jervis. Ch. 2 The Nature of Anarchy
3. Art & Jervis. Ch. 3 The Mitigation of Anarchy (Ch. 4 The Mitigation of Anarchy in 13th edition)
4. Carlos A. Martínez-Vela's summary of Wallerstein

W4. Major themes of IR

1. Art & Jervis. 13th edition, Ch. 7 The Nuclear Future
*** If you have 12th edition, read the uploaded chapter below, not chapter 6 on your book.**
- (bb) Losing Control in Crises (Robert Jervis)
- (bb) Our Not So Peaceful Nuclear Future (Henry D. Sokolski)
- (bb) A World without Nuclear Weapons? (Thomas C. Schelling)
2. Art & Jervis. Ch. 13 Transnational Actors and New Forces (Ch. 13 Transnational Actors and New Forces)
 - Transnational Activist Networks (Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink)
 - Cyber Conflict and National Security (Herbert Lin)
3. Art & Jervis. Ch. 7 Perspectives on Political Economy (Ch. 8 Perspectives on Political Economy)
 - The Nature of Political Economy (Robert Gilpin)
 - Why Doesn't Everyone Get the Case for Free Trade? (Dani Rodrik)
4. Art & Jervis. 12th edition, Ch. 14 The Global Commons and Global Governance
***If you have 13th edition, read the uploaded chapter below, not chapter 14 on your book.**
- (bb) The Climate Threat We Can Beat (David G. Victor, Charles F. Kennel, and Veerabhandran Ramanatahn)
- (bb) The United Nations and International Security (Adam Roberts)
5. (bb) Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. "International norm dynamics and political change." *International organization* 52.04 (1998): 887-917.