

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
PLSC 211 INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT
SECT. 01
FALL 2013**

Instructor: Dr. Genevieve E. Meyers
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Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am – 12:15pm
Location: Porter 301BC
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30pm – 4:30pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to the study of politics and political issues in countries around the world, with particular focus on cases selected to reflect the diversity of societies and political systems. In comparing specific national responses to common problems, we will be learning not only about how governments work and how people change their form of government, but also about methods of comparative analysis (i.e., how to gain perspective through comparison) and about how the global context shapes and interacts with diverse peoples and governments. From the fall of the Berlin Wall to the rise of ethnic and religious nationalisms to the new challenges of a global marketplace, the world's politics are in transition. As people and events around the world become more interconnected, it is increasingly vital to understand the dramatic political changes going into the 21st century in order to gain global awareness and perspectives on the diverse world in which we live. This course develops conceptual tools for comparative analysis of diverse political systems, examining selected nation-states to identify and explain similarities and differences in regime types and patterns of politics. The course material is organized thematically; countries of diverse economic, social and cultural types will be compared regarding a variety of topics (such as democracy, authoritarianism, capitalism, socialism, nationalism, development and globalization). The course also examines the interaction of global forces (such as colonialism, the Cold War, and global markets) with domestic social and political change.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The format of this course combines lectures, discussions, quizzes, and assignments based on readings. In order to have an informative and fun class, you should cover the assigned readings, attend class, contribute to discussions and ask questions when you feel the need to. To advance this process, each student is expected to have short notes about the assigned readings to use in the discussion.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Patrick H. O'neil. 2013. *Essential of Comparative Politics* (4rd edition) New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

The textbook can be found at the University bookstore or from various online bookstores such as Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble.com etc.

COURSE REQUIRMENTS AND GRADING

Readings

The syllabus indicates the required readings. **Students are expected to have completed the required readings before each class.** Take time to read them analytically, carefully, and reflectively. You are expected to make short notes as you read noting in particular the major thesis of the reading, points that impress you the most, answers to some questions that you have, and remember you do not have to agree with the readings; so write down your critiques as well. Bring your notes to class for the discussion. Success in the course requires a demonstrated familiarity with and understanding of the material presented in the class discussions and the readings. Needless to state, regular class attendance is necessary.

Assignments

- a) Class quizzes will be held at my discretion and if missed will not be made up.
- b) A midterm exam

The midterm will cover the first five chapters of the book and will be an in-class exam.

- c) A final exam

The final exam will cover the next six chapters of the book and will be an in-class exam.

- d) Class participation

Active participation in discussions is critical. Therefore, regular class attendance is necessary. Each student is expected to be able to write a short paragraph on each of the topics being covered and use it in the discussions.

A more detailed description of the above-mentioned assignments and exams shall be given during the course.

COURSE GRADING:

Class participation and attendance	20%
Quizzes	20%
Midterm exam	30%
Final exam	30%
Total	100%

Grading scale:

GRADE	TOTAL POINTS
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B	85-89
B-	80-84
C	75-79
C-	70-74
D	65-69
D-	60-64
F	0-59

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICIES:

- Students are encouraged to keep time and keep their cell phones off during class time. If a student is unable to come to class, she/he is advised to inform the instructor in advance and will bear the responsibility of obtaining missed material from classmates.
- As a courtesy to fellow students, everyone is expected to arrive ready for class at 11:00am. If you anticipate not being able to attend the class, please notify the instructor and plan to acquire notes and/or handouts from another student.
- Students should refrain from class abstentions and late coming. Students are to remain in class until the completion of the class period. Habitual absence, lateness, and leaving class before time shall result in low final grades. All students are expected to read the required chapters before class.
- All take home written assignments are due at the end of the class period of the date specified in the course syllabus. Late assignments will lose 1 point grade for each late submission day. Students are advised to undertake extensive research in answering take home assignments. Where other books, journals and newspapers are used, care should be taken to indicate so by offering footnotes or citations in inverted comas with the source of the information. Failure to indicate source or failure to acknowledge cited work as not your own will be cause for a charge of plagiarism.
- Assignments **should not** be electronically mailed.
- If a student cannot attend class when an examination is given, she/he must make arrangements to take the test **BEFORE** the assigned date.
- The deadline to withdraw from the course with a “W” grade is November 12, 2013.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

There are no computer requirements for this course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY: All students should be familiar with the university’s policy concerning academic dishonesty. This policy can be found at:

http://www.emich.edu/studentconduct/facultylinks/academic_integrity.php

POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

The University has a disability resource center. For more information go to the following website:

www.emich.edu/drc/

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY: Students can find information concerning the university’s policy regarding inclement weather on:

<http://www.emich.edu/univcomm/emuclosings.html>

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week of Sept. 3th

- Introduction to the course and a walk through the course outline.

Week of Sept. 10 Introduction

- O’neil, Chapter 1

Week of Sept. 17 States

- O'neil, Chapter 2

Week of Sept. 24 Nations and Society

- O'neil, Chapter 3

Week of Oct. 1 Political Economy

- O'neil, Chapter 4

Week of Oct. 8 Democratic Regimes

- O'neil, Chapter 5
- Give students guidelines for midterm exam

Week of Oct. 15

- MID-TERM EXAM

Week of Oct. 22 Nondemocratic Regimes

- O'neil, Chapter 6

Week of Oct. 29 Political Violence

- O'neil, Chapter 7

Week of Nov. 5 Advanced Democracies

- O'neil, Chapter 8

Week of Nov. 12 Communism and Postcommunism

- O'neil, Chapter 9

Week of Nov. 19 Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries

- O'neil, Chapters 10

Week of Nov. 27 Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics

- O'neil, Chapter 11
- **28 No Class – HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

Week of Dec. 3 Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics

- O'neil, Chapter 11
- Give guidelines for final exam

Week of Dec. 16 – Exam Week

- **FINAL EXAM: Tuesday Dec. 17, 11:00am – 12:30pm.**