

# Comparative Politics Syllabus

(POLS 3351-900)

3 credit hours

Spring 2024

January 16, 2024 to April 29, 2024

Thursdays

12:30 - 1:45pm

Classroom: Classroom Hall 201

## Instructor Information

Emily Naasz, PhD

E-mail: enaasz@tamusa.edu

Virtual office hours: Fridays, 1:00 - 4:00pm

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to comparative politics. We'll begin the course with discussion of the study and practice of political science, including how political scientists form questions and evaluate hypotheses in order to generate knowledge about a range of political phenomenon.

From there, we'll move onto the most important and compelling questions in the study of comparative politics. How would we know a democracy if we saw one? When and under what conditions do countries democratize? Why do some countries have numerous political parties whereas some only have a few (or only one)?

Instead of turning to historical narratives about specific countries, political scientists seek to understand general patterns of similarities and differences between countries. At the end of this course, students should have an appreciation of the variety of approaches political scientists take to identifying and explaining variations between countries and what they mean for policy outcomes.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Patrick O'Neil *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 7th edition. (W.W. Norton & Company), 2021 ISBN: 978-0393422948

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### GRADING

**Grade scale.** To calculate your grade at any point in this class, divide the number of points you currently have by the total possible points (as found in Blackboard).

Your letter grade in this class will be based on the following scale:

- 90 and above: A
- 80-89: B
- 70-79: C
- 60-69: D
- 59 and below: F

**Summary of Graded Work.** There are **650** possible points available in this class. All assignments are weighted evenly. Please see the Blackboard course homepage for a more detailed explanation of each assignment. The points are broken down as follows:

- Syllabus activity (4%) 25 points possible
- Final project components (21% total): 125 points possible
- Final project (17%): 100 points possible
- Participation (25%): 150 points possible
- Discussant (33%): 200 points possible

### Other Grading Policies.

- Grades are based on both ability to follow instructions and on demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of course concepts.
- Final grades are final and non-negotiable. If you have a legitimate issue with an individual assignment or grade, I am happy to provide additional feedback and/or correct legitimate issues, but I do not bump grades up based on student requests.

### COURSE POLICIES

**Academic Integrity.** Cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of academic dishonesty will result in at minimum a 0 for the assignment, and including penalties as serious as receiving a zero (0) for the course. Academic integrity is just as important in an online course as it is in face-to-face classes. Your syllabus states that cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of academic dishonesty may result in a zero (0) for the course.

For the purposes of this course, **cheating** is defined as, but not limited to:

- Incorporating any part of an AI generated response in an assignment
- Working with another student on course content
- Taking pictures, screen shots, or making record of graded content

- Using quiz or exam questions or answers provided by another student
- Allowing anyone else access to your Blackboard course to view or complete course content

For the purposes of this course, **plagiarism** is defined as, but not limited to:

- Using a copyrighted resource for research without properly citing its use
- Quoting from any source without properly citing
- Paraphrasing from any source without properly citing
- Presenting the work of another person as your own

Please note that lying or misrepresenting facts is a violation of Texas A&M University-San Antonio Code of Conduct. Claiming that you completed an assignment when you did not is lying and can result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct for adjudication as a “Misrepresenting the Facts” offense. Blackboard provides extensive records on everything you access when you are in this course. Do not lie about your course participation.

By entering and completing assignments in this course, you agree you will not cheat or engage in any form of academic dishonesty.

### Course Rules.

- Always maintain professional and respectful language, both in emails and in your online coursework.
- Any disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in a loss of credit for the assignment and possibly a referral to the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities. Racism, sexism, homophobia, or any other forms of bigotry are not acceptable in this class.
- You are responsible for all information and announcements made in the course. Prepare to log onto Blackboard every day to check for updates, changes, or new information. Read the course home page thoroughly and check announcements daily. Course rules and expectations are subject to change as needed.
- Late work will **not** be accepted for any reason.
- Students may not print, save, photograph, or make any record of graded content in this course.

**Course Recommendations.** These are distinct from the rules above but should be read and understood for students who want to be successful.

- Complete all of your work *prior* to the deadline. I recommend completing work at least *four days* before any deadline. There is no late work accepted in this course for any reason. The primary reason students do not succeed in this course is missed work.
- Read and follow all directions. Students who do poorly on assignments have typically not followed all instructions. Read the directions, complete

your work, then read the directions again and make sure you've followed all of them.

- Read all content before asking questions. Try to find the answers on your own before contacting me.
- Pay close attention to the Academic Honesty policy. Do not cheat. Do not plagiarize. Do not lie about having completed an assignment when you haven't.

**Professionalism.**

- Don't ask a question that you could have answered yourself. Read all information and instructions in Blackboard before you send an email.
- Use an appropriate subject line that identifies yourself and your concern (don't just say, "Help!")
- Your first sentence should introduce yourself and include your course and section number. Please let me know if you prefer to go by a different name than what appears in the gradebook/roster, but be sure to include your full legal name as it appears in the roster.
- Be specific about what your request is. Demonstrate that you have read and understood course information and instructions.
- Use proper grammar and spelling.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND DUE DATES**

All assignments are due by 11:59pm central time on the indicated date, no exceptions.

Unit	Week	Dates	Topic	Reading	Graded Work (due date)*	Notes
		Face-to-face meeting			*All graded work is due by 11:59pm CT on the indicated date	
I. Introduction	1	January 14 – 20 January 18	Course Introduction	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus reconnaissance activity (January 20) <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up for discussant weeks (January 20)	Familiarize yourself with the course
	2	January 21 – 27 January 25	Introduction	*Chapter 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Final project part 1 (January 27)	
	3	January 27 – February 3 February 1	States	*Chapter 2		
	4	February 4 – 10 February 8	Nations and Society	*Chapter 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 2 (February 10)	
II. Regime Type	5	February 11 – 17 February 15	Nondemocratic Regimes	*Chapter 6		

	6	February 18 – 24 February 22	Democratic Regimes	*Chapter 5		
	7	February 25 – March 2 February 29	Developed Democracies	*Chapter 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 3 (March 2)	
III. Conflict	8	March 3 – 9 March 7	Political Violence	*Chapter 7		
	9	March 10 – 16	(SPRING BREAK)			
	10	March 17 – 23 March 21	Asymmetrical Warfare – Civil War	Denny, Elaine K., and Barbara F. Walter. "Ethnicity and civil war." <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> 51, no. 2 (2014): 199-212  → Posted in this week's folder		
	11	March 24 – 30 March 28	Asymmetrical Warfare – Terrorism	Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter. "The strategies of terrorism." <i>International</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 4 (March 30)	

				<i>security</i> 31, no. 1 (2006): 49-80. → Posted in this week's folder		
IV. CPE	12	March 31 – April 6 April 4	Political Economy	*Chapter 4		
	13	April 7 – 13 April 11	Communism and Post-communism	*Chapter 9		April 13: Last day to drop with an automatic 'W'
	14	April 14 – 20 April 18	Developing Countries	*Chapter 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 5 (April 20)	
V. Conclusions; Wrapping Up	15	April 21 – 27 April 25	Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics	*Chapter 11		
	(16)	N/A	N/A	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Final projects (May 4)</b>	April 29: Last day of classes