Introduction to Comparative Politics
Poli 2053
Fall 2011
218 TUREAUD HALL
300-430 T TH

Instructor: James Gilley
Office: 311 Stubbs Hall
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Office Hours: 1-230pm T Th

Course Description

This General Education course is designed to introduce lower level undergraduate students to the subfield in Political Science of Comparative Politics. This field looks at the domestic political institutions which make up the governments of the world. This course will introduce students to several useful tools and concepts which can be used to examine the governments of foreign countries. These tools will also be applied to several countries, allowing students to see these concepts in action in the world today. Students should also gain an understanding of the levels of association ranging from friends and family to civilizations of global significance and an understanding of the diversity of cultures across time and space, as well as universal social characteristics and global networks. As this is an introductory course, no prior Political Science classes are required in order to succeed.

Course Requirements

The graded work for this class will fall into 3 categories: Exams, Quizzes, and Papers

1) There will be two exams given in this class: October 6 in class and December 8 at 12:30pm
Each of these exams will be worth 30% of your final grade for a total of 60%. The format will be multiple choice, short answer, and short essay.

2) There will be one quiz each week. These quizzes will cover both the material for the week and current events questions. These quizzes will make up a total of 10% of your final grade.

3) There are two papers. First paper will take the form of a plan of government paper, derived from reading a work of fiction and describing the government featured in the novel. This will test student’s abilities to examine the linkages of complex systems given broad strokes of information. Further detail will be forthcoming. This paper is worth 15% of your final grade. The Second paper is a two country paper examining events in two countries of your choice (which we do not cover). More details will be forthcoming. This paper will also be worth 15% of your final grade.

EXAM 1 30%
EXAM 2 30%
QUizzes 20%
PAPER 1 15%
PAPER 2 15%
TOTAL 100%
Makeups will only be available for medical emergencies with a physician’s note and participation in University Sponsored or military affiliated events with official notification provided in advanced.

There will be bonus opportunities announced throughout the semester. Further details will be forthcoming, so stay tuned.

The grading for this class will be conducted on the 10 point scale. 
A= 100-90 B= 89-80 C= 79-70 D= 69-60 F= 59-0

**Required Text**


This book should be available at all campus booksellers as well as online. While this book is the 10th edition, the 9th edition should also suffice.

As it is very important to be aware of world events, students are also required to read the news from a well-regarded source. The preferred sources from which the current events questions will be drawn are BBC News, the New York Times, and the International Herald Tribune. All of these have online versions, and students are expected to stay apprised of events in the world every day.

Further supplemental material will be provided as needed, placed on the moodle page for the class.

**Special Notice**

As attendance and participation in class are highly important to student success, **Laptops, mobile devices such as iPads, and Cellphones are banned during class time.** The only exception to this is in the event of a specific dispensation from the office of Disability Services. I am well aware of the benefits and drawbacks of using laptops in class, and have come to the decision that they are not worth the trouble they cause in a classroom.

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated, and all matters will be automatically referred to judicial affairs. All students must know and abide by LSU’s plagiarism policy.
http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/Plagiarism.htm
Schedule

Week 1 Jan 17&19- Introduction, What is Comparative Politics, What is a State

Week 2 Jan 24&26- Political Culture, Party Systems and Cleavages Jan 24 is the last day to drop without a W

Week 3 Jan 31&Feb 2 Leadership Selection and Voting Regimes (PR v Majoritarianism)

Week 4 Feb 7&9- Democratic Regimes

Week 5 Feb 17&16 – Authoritarian Regimes

Week 6 Feb 20&23- No Class (Mardi Gras)

Week 7- Feb 28 &Mar 1 Democratization and Development (The Political Economy)

Week 8 Mar 6&9 – Catch up, Exam Review, Exam 1

Week 9 Mar 13&15- England (Majoritarian Parliaments)

Week 10- Mar 20&23 France (Semipresidentialism)

Week 11 Mar 27&29– Germany (PR)

Week 12 Apr 1&3 - Russia (Semipresidentialism?) April 2 is the last day to drop/withdraw from the university

Week 13 April 10&12 - No Class (Spring Break)

Week 14 April 17&19- China

Week 15 April 24 & 26 - Iran

Week 16 May 1&3 - Singapore and Final Exam Review

Week 17- Monday May 7- FINAL EXAM 3-5pm in the classroom

Readings will be assigned at the end of class, due in time for the beginning of the next class. Any supplemental readings will be placed on the moodle page for the class. This syllabus is subject to change based on events in the world, as well as the speed with which we are able to cover the material. The graded assignments, however, are not subject to change, and the dates on these are firm. Please refer to my previously stated policy regarding makeups.
Political Science 7940: Seminar in International Politics

Spring 2012
Class Meeting: Thursday 1:10-4:00
Class Location: 210 Stubbs

Instructor: David Sobek
Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00-10:00
Thursday 9:00-10:00

E-mail: dsobek@lsu.edu
Office Location: 211 Stubbs
Office Number: 578-2134

Summary:
This class is the introduction to the study of international politics at the graduate level. It is important to keep in mind that this course does not present a comprehensive coverage of international politics (no course could do that), but it will introduce you to a number of the most important debates within the field and force you to develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

This course divides into three main topics: the original debates, the original debates today, and the new debates. Aside from giving you a broad coverage of the literature and ideas, this setup is meant to highlight the fact that scholarly debates are dialogues across time. People do not write articles and books in isolation from one another; rather, they are responses to the previous literature. This will become clearer when you are able to trace ideas across time and through the literature.

Because this course is a seminar, its main job is to expose you to the literature and prepare you for more advance courses. As such you will be required to read and assimilate a large amount of the literature in a short period of time. In addition to the readings, you will have a number of writing assignments meant to reinforce the readings and further your knowledge of the literature.

Ultimately, at the end of the course you should have a broad knowledge of international relations. In addition, you will have developed the skills needed to succeed in more advance courses. Thus, it is important for you to use this class not only as an introduction to international relations, but also, an introduction to graduate work.

Brief Overview of Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: 20% of final grade.
Three Reviews and presentations: each is 10% of final grade.
Final Paper Assignment: 20% of final grade.
Final Exam: 30% of final grade.
Reading assignments

Many of the readings for this course come from the books. Significant portions of the readings, however, come from articles that you will need to acquire. For each week the assignments are listed in a specific order meant to demonstrate the development of the literature. Please read them in the order that they are listed.

Required Books:


Optional Books:


Grading System:

Attendance and Participation (15%): Attendance and participation account for 20% of your final grade. It is vitally important for you to come to class prepared, i.e. having carefully read the assignments. Simply showing up for class is not sufficient. You will need to consistently contribute to class discussion in order to satisfy the participation aspect of this part of your grade.

3 Reviews and Presentations (10% each): Three times in the semester you will be required to read and discuss the optional readings. During these weeks you need to prepare a summary for each of the required and optional readings (roughly a half page single-spaced for each article/about 1-2 pages for a book). You will also be expected to present the optional readings to the class (about 15-20 minutes). The written reviews need to be sent to the class and me by 5:00 PM the Wednesday before the class.

Paper Assignment (25%): During the semester you will be required to write one 10-12 page paper on one of the course topics. This paper is essentially the first half of what would be in a research paper. You will be required to have a literature review and theory section. The additional readings provide a starting place to learn more of the literature but you will need to move outside of the course readings.

Final Exam (30%): At the end of the semester you will be given a final exam. The format of the exam will attempt to mimic the comprehensive exams that you will eventually have to take in graduate school.
Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Meta-Theoretical Debates
Required Readings


Optional Readings:

Additional Readings:

The Original Debates

Week 3: Violence in the International System
Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

Additional Readings:


Week 4: Classical Realism
Required Readings:

Thucydides. The Melian Dialogue.


Optional Readings:

Additional Readings:
Week 5: Structural Realism
Required Readings:

Optional Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 6: Realism and Change
Required Readings:


Optional Readings:

Additional Readings:

Week 7: Liberalism and Beyond
Required Readings:


Optional Readings:

Additional Readings:

**Week 8: Neo-Liberalism**

**Required Readings:**

**Optional Readings:**


**Additional Readings:**

**The Original Debates Today**

**Week 9: Power and War**

**Required Readings:**

**Optional Readings:**

**Additional Readings:**


**Week 10: Democratic Peace Debates**

**Required Readings:**


Optional Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 11: Information and War

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:


Additional Readings:
The New Debates

Week 12: Rational Choice 1
Required Readings:

Optional Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 13: Rational Choice 2
Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


Additional Readings:


**Week 14: Social Constructivism**

Required Readings:
Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Chapters 5-8

Optional Readings:


Additional Readings: