

# Introduction to Comparative Politics: Real Politics Around the World

## Y107

Section # 7577

Spring 2017

Mondays and Wednesdays

1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Ballantine Hall 204

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Office hours: Mondays 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.;  
or by appointment.

### Course Description:

This course looks at a variety of regions around the world in order to investigate some of the most important and fundamental questions about politics:

*Why are some countries democracies and others dictatorships?*

*Why are some countries wealthy and others desperately poor?*

*Why do different ethnic or religious groups massacre each other in some countries and not in others?*

By learning about political life in different countries and comparing their different experiences, students will develop the skills to think critically and begin to answer these big, important questions.

This course is designed as an introductory course and does not assume any prior background in political science or knowledge in any of the areas of the world that we will discuss (even the U.S.!). We will read, discuss, and apply our growing knowledge of the issues and concepts together. The objective of the course is not to learn a myriad of teeny facts about a million different places but rather to give students a foundation from which to continue to read and learn about politics around the world. Through this course, some students may discover a new passion for political science that leads them to consider a major in the department; while others, may use their enhanced skills to gain greater enjoyment from reading, watching and talking about the news with their friends and family.

The course will focus on several countries from the above regions, including: China, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Russia, Rwanda, the U.K., and the U.S.

**Course Requirements:**

Students are required to: attend all classes; do all assigned reading; participate in class discussion and small group activities; and, take five quizzes, one mid-term and one final exam.

Class Attendance and Participation. My experience and analysis of student grades show that students who attend classes earn higher grades and report greater satisfaction with the class overall. I will take attendance. While you are expected to attend every class, there are legitimate reasons to miss a class. You thus have three “excused absences” to use at your discretion. I do not wish to receive an e-mail about why you may need to miss a class. The exception to this is if you have a health or family emergency that causes you to miss a significant number of classes or be absent for a major class assignment. Please communicate this information as soon as possible IN ADVANCE of the absence(s).

The mid-term and final exam will assess what we have read and discussed in class. You should take notes during class. If you are absent from class, please arrange to get the lecture notes and find out about any announcements from another student in the class. The Powerpoint slides that I will post before class will not have nearly enough detail to be adequate. These slides are meant as a guide to organizing your own notes, not a substitute!

Participation is obviously a critical component of this class. Because there is no separate discussion section for this class, I will include questions and discussion as an integral part of each class. Frequently, we will break into smaller groups for specific activities and discussions, but not every session. It is thus very likely that you may have a nagging question, burning point, or uncertainty that you need to share with our entire class. Whether it’s in small groups or in the class as a whole, your participation is important and valued. Every one of us needs to listen respectfully and tolerate the differences of opinion that will undoubtedly be present in our group. This mutual respect and tolerance does not preclude lively debate, questions, and even challenges, but all of this should be done appropriately.

In order to encourage participation from a wider group of students, I will frequently call randomly on students. This is not designed to embarrass anyone, but rather to provide more opportunities for a broader group of students to participate than might normally be the case in a larger lecture. You can feel free to “pass” on the opportunity and pass the baton to the next person of your choosing or allow me to proceed to another classmate. If you opt to pass, your participation grade will not be penalized but it will obviously not be improved. Even marginal efforts at responding to the discussion question will be recorded more positively than a “pass.” Thus, you have every incentive to come prepared and to try to participate to your best ability.

Another opportunity to earn participation points is during the frequent individual and small group activities in class. You will often be charged with a discrete task and asked to summarize your discussion or write out your response.

In order for any of this to happen, you must come to class PREPARED to discuss the readings. We will not spend all of our time going over the basic arguments in the readings. You must have digested these already in order to move beyond the basic content and get to the bigger issues and points of dialogue. While there are many, many more articles and books that I think are terrific, I have tried very hard to trim the reading to several good pieces so that we can better focus our time and effort. This means I think these readings are critical, and so they will certainly be discussed and reinforced on quizzes and exams.

Finally, you are all expected to behave in a professional manner in the classroom and in all communications with the professor. Treat this class as you would a job. Please arrive on time; do not leave early unless it is an absolute emergency and/or you have cleared this in advance with the professor;

do not bring food into class; and remember to turn off cell phones and any non-class related web-access during class so we can all focus and concentrate on our discussion. I will ask any student who cannot behave professionally to leave our class. If you would like to use a laptop for note-taking, please use it strictly for class purposes. Any inappropriate use of the laptop is not only distracting to your concentration but to everyone sitting behind you.

Lastly, for all communication, use a proper form of address, and appropriate language, grammar and punctuation. In professional environments, such as our class, it is better to err on the side of formality than informality. Also, please note that I may not be available after normal day time business hours due to the demands of caregiving for my family. Our work and sleep schedules will likely not align perfectly so please plan ahead and send your questions well in advance of any due date. I will try my best to respond within 24 hours but it may be impossible due to meetings and other university commitments so the bottom line is to stay organized and plan ahead.

#### Quizzes:

You will take five quizzes, and keep the top four grades. The quizzes will be multiple choice questions covering a relatively small amount of material each time, usually from the section most recently completed in class. In most cases, I will provide you with a list of terms, concepts and names that I expect you to become familiar with for each quiz. The quizzes are designed to give you the opportunity to apply some concepts that we are learning in class to new examples in order to secure the concepts in your brain. You will receive rapid feedback on the quizzes. The lowest grade on your quizzes will be dropped. There will be NO make-ups for the quizzes unless I receive a signed medical excuse or other validated explanation.

#### Exams.

The mid-term examination will be held during class on Wednesday, March 8, and will cover the first two sections of the course. The final examination will take place IN CLASS on the last Wednesday of our usual class time on Wednesday, April 26. The final will be cumulative; however, the content will be more heavily weighted on the second half of the course material.

Exams will be based on material covered in the assigned readings, films, lectures, and discussions. Both exams will likely include a combination of multiple choice, identification, and short essay questions. For both exams, I will give you a study guide one week in advance. I will take the actual exam essay questions from this significantly larger set of questions. (Of course, the exactly worded multiple choice questions will not be provided in the study guide; only the relevant concepts and terms.) While you are encouraged to study with another student from the class, your in-class work must always be solely yours. If you create a Google Doc for study purposes, please send me the link. The goal here is to help you learn the material, so, if you study, you could all do very well!

Make-up exams will not be given except in the case of a medical emergency or other extreme circumstances. If you miss an exam due to illness and need to take a make-up exam, please notify me in advance of the exam time and provide me with a doctor's note saying that you were too ill to sit for the exam. Make-up exams will not necessarily be the same in format or have the same exact content as the in-class exams.

#### Canvas system/E-mail Combo.

In this class, we will be using the IU Canvas system to post the syllabus, any presentation materials from class, and any outside articles/resources as they appear (i.e., newspaper articles). To disseminate any class announcements or information of potential interest to the class, I will use e-mail.

**Required Books and Readings:**

There is only one book that you are required to purchase for this class:

1) Patrick O’Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

All other readings are available online through the “Files” and/or “Assignments” tab of our Canvas site. A small number of the readings are available through links embedded directly on the syllabus.

If you have trouble downloading a reading, please search for it yourself. Then, ask a friend in the class. If you are still having troubles after demonstrating this initiative and resourcefulness, please contact me WELL IN ADVANCE of the class session.

**Grading:**

Midterm examination (25%)

Final examination (35%)

Top Four Class Quizzes (drop the lowest of the five) (24%)

Attendance and Class Participation (16%)

A+	=	97-100	Truly exceeds expectations in numerous ways; innovative, insightful, etc.
A	=	93-96	Very exceptional or outstanding work.
A-	=	90-92	Excellent work of an unusually strong quality.
B+	=	87-89	Very good work.
B	=	83-86	Good work that goes beyond simply meeting the basic requirements.
B-	=	80-82	Good work but may miss an occasional key point/concept or application.
C+	=	77-79	Slightly better than average work. Commendable.
C	=	73-76	Average work. Meets only the very basic requirements.
C-	=	70-72	Worse than average. Significant shortcomings or mistakes.
D+	=	67-69	Poor work; shows little effort but is passing.
D	=	63-66	Very poor work; shows almost no effort.
D-	=	60-62	Very close to failing.
F	=	59 or below	Failing

There is no grading curve in this class. I will be as clear and transparent as possible about the expectations throughout the class through open discussions, review sessions and explicit grading rubrics for assignments. You will be graded on your individual performance in meeting the criteria; not in terms of your performance relative to each other.

Finally, there are always legitimate exceptions to this rule, but I would like you to know from the beginning that I strongly discourage incompletes.

**Academic Honesty:**

All Indiana University policies regarding academic honesty will be strictly enforced. Plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct in any manner will not be tolerated. I have and will continue to uphold IU’s Code of Conduct. Any violations can result in a range of disciplinary action, including any combination of the following: a failing grade on the assignment; failing grade for the course; filing an official report for the student’s academic record. Depending on the nature of the case, my sanction for the course may also be followed up at higher levels with broader university sanctions which include academic probation and expulsion. This is serious. I would encourage you to read Section 3 of IU’s Code of Student Rights,

Responsibilities and Conduct, which describes what constitutes academic misconduct and can be found at: <http://dsa.indiana.edu/Code/index1.html>.

While most examples of misconduct are blatantly obvious (i.e., you may not pay someone to take your final exam for you!), knowing when and how to acknowledge and appropriately cite sources is something you may have to learn. For example, even if you acknowledge the source, you can not stay too close to the language of the original source when paraphrasing. If you are not sure about anything, please do not hesitate to see me, and we can go over it together. Additionally, you may find the Campus Writing Program's information useful: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Students with any disability or special learning needs should contact me as soon as possible and/or Disabilities Services for Students (Franklin Hall 096; 812-855-7578) so that any necessary arrangements can be made.

\*\* Please note. I reserve the right to change any readings, dates and requirements listed in this syllabus. If this occurs, every effort will be made to announce the changes well in advance. You are responsible for any changes made and announced in class or via Canvas. \*\*

**Course Reading and Class Schedule:**

**Section 1: Introduction to Key Concepts in Comparative Politics**

**1. Monday, January 9 INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE POLITICS?**

**WHY POLITICS MATTER TO YOU EVERY DAY HERE IN BLOOMINGTON... AND WHAT WE LEARN BY LOOKING ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD**

**Assignment #1:**

Buy the textbook and read the entire syllabus.

Watch “Bowling for Columbine.” We will discuss it on Wednesday.

**2. Wednesday, January 11 WHAT IS THE COMPARATIVE METHOD?**

**Excerpts from film in class:** “Bowling for Columbine” (Director: Michael Moore; 2002)

**Reading due:**

O’Neil, Chapter One: Introduction.

**Monday, January 16 NO CLASS – MLK HOLIDAY**

**3. Wednesday, January 18 - WHAT IS THE STATE? AND WHAT IS STATE POWER AND AUTHORITY?**

**Excerpt from films in class:** “The Godfather” (Director: Coppola; 1972)  
and “Triumph of the Will” (Director: Reifentahl; 1935)

**Reading due:**

O’Neil, Chapter Two: States.

**4. Monday, January 23 - THE NATURE OF SOCIETY AND POLITICAL COMMUNITY**

**Reading due:**

O’Neil, Chapter Three: Nations and Society.

**5. Wednesday, January 25 THE POLITICAL ECONOMY**

**Readings due:**

O’Neil, Chapter Four: Political Economy.

**6. Monday, January 30 TYPES OF AUTHORITARIAN RULE**

**Quiz #1: Applying concepts of comparative politics from Section 1.**

**Readings due:**

O’Neil, Chapter 6, Nondemocratic Regimes.

Alterman, Eric. “When Democracy and Liberty Collide; Finding Reasons for Optimism About Authoritarian Regimes,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 1998, B7.

*Section 2: Why are some countries democratic and others authoritarian?*

**7. Wednesday, February 1 DEMOCRACY – BASIC CONCEPTS, DEBATES AND ISSUES**

**Reading due:**

O’Neil, Chapter 5, Democratic Regimes.

**8. Monday, February 6                   ADVANCED INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRACIES : THE U.S. CASE**

**Readings due:**

O’Neil, Chapter 8, Advanced Democracies.

Lizza, Ryan. 2012. “The Campaign Trail: The Final Push.” *The New Yorker*, October 29, 2012, p. 62.

Lepore, Jill. 2013. “Long Division: Measuring the Polarization of American Politics.” *The New Yorker*, December 2, 2013, p. 75.

**9. Wednesday, February 8           POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS:  
HOW THE U.K. DIFFERS FROM THE U.S.**

**Readings due:**

“The United Kingdom.” CIA World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. "Electoral Systems: Majority and Plurality Methods Versus Proportional Representation." Chapter 8 in *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. Yale University Press, 1999. ISBN: 9780300078930.

**10. Monday, February 13 THE POLITICS OF THE WELFARE STATE: A COMPARISON OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS**

**Readings due:**

Steinmo, Sven and Jon Watts. “It’s the Institutions Stupid! Why Comprehensive National Health Insurance Always Fails in America.” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*. Vol. 20 (Summer 1995).

**11. Wednesday, February 15 COMMUNISM AND POST-COMMUNISM**

**Readings due:**

O’Neil, Chapter 9, Communism and Post-Communism.

Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. 1848. “Manifesto of the Communist Party.” In Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton, p. 473-483.

**12. Monday, February 20 THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM IN THE SOVIET UNION**  
**Quiz #2: Applying concepts from section 2 on advanced industrialized democracies and authoritarian rule.**

**Readings due:**

“Russia.” CIA World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html>

“Fall of the Soviet Union.”

<http://www.history.com/topics/fall-of-soviet-union>

**13. Wednesday, February 22 LIFE AFTER COMMUNISM: THE CASE OF DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC REFORMS IN RUSSIA**

**Readings:**

Lilia Shevtsova, “Putinism under Siege: Implosion, Atrophy, or Revolution?” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 23, no. 3 (July 2012), pp. 19-32.

Mikhail Dmitriev and Daniel Treisman, “The Other Russia: Discontent Grows in the Hinterlands,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, no. 5 (September/October 2012), pp. 59-72.

**14. Monday, February 27 THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF COMMUNISM IN CHINA**

**Readings:**

“China.” CIA World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>

“A History of the Communist Party in China.”

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-04/29/c\\_13851746.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-04/29/c_13851746.htm)

“An Illustrated History of the Communist Party of China.”

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/45954.htm>

Joseph Khan, “Where’s Mao? Chinese Revise History Books,” *The New York Times*, September 1, 2006 (2 pages).

**15. Wednesday, March 1 CHINA: MARKET REFORMS WITHOUT DEMOCRATIZATION**

**Readings:**

Chu, Henry. “In March toward Capitalism, China has Avoided Russia’s Path.” *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 1998, p. S4.

Doug Guthrie, “China: The Quiet Revolution: The Emergence of Capitalism,” *Harvard International Review* (Summer 2003): p. 48-53.

“How the Other 800m live.” *The Economist*, March 11, 2006, p. 12.

**16. Monday, March 6 THE POLITICS OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA**

**Readings:**

Bruce J. Dickson, "Updating the China Model," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 4 (September 2011), pp. 39-58.

Minxin Pei, "Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?" *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 23, no. 1 (January 2012), pp. 27-41.

**17. Wednesday, March 8 MIDTERM EXAM**

**SPRING BREAK !!!! NO CLASS ON MARCH 13/15**

*Section 3: Why are Some Countries So Poor, and Others so Rich?*

**18. Monday, March 20**

**THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' DOUBLE CHALLENGE OF OVERCOMING  
AUTHORITARIANISM AND ENDEMIC POVERTY**

**Readings due:**

O'Neil, Chapter 10, Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries.

**19. Wednesday, March 22 THE POLITICS OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN NIGERIA  
Surprise given to all students, more or less, in class today. (This is not a surprise quiz!)**

**Readings:**

Van de Walle, Nicolas. 2009. "The Institutional Origins of Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Annual Review of Political Science*. Pgs. 307-327

**20. Monday, March 27 BRITISH COLONIAL RULE AND LEGACIES OF  
AUTHORITARIAN RULE IN NIGERIA**

**\*NO CLASS TODAY\***

**INSTEAD:**

1. Watch short film (~15 minutes):

"Nigeria's Story: A Nation was Born nearly 100 Years Ago"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gs6Kt0IJY14>

2. Lewis, Peter and Darren Kew. 2015. "Nigeria's Hopeful Election." *Journal of Democracy* 26 (3): 94-109.

**21. Wednesday, March 29 POVERTY AND ETHNIC POLITICS IN NIGERIA AND RWANDA**

**\*NO CLASS TODAY \***

**INSTEAD:**

1. For background about poverty and ethnic politics during the Biafran War in Nigeria, watch “Nigeria vs. Biafra: Biafra Civil War documentary (CBS News; ~31 minutes) available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrHKYp45pb0>
2. For background about poverty and ethnic politics in Rwanda, watch “Sometimes in April” (Peck; 2005; 2 hours 20 minutes) available online or on reserve in the basement of the Wells library.
3. **Complete Quiz #3 online in Canvas based on the readings and films from 3/27 and 3/29 by the end of our class time at 2:15 p.m. on 3/29.**

*Section 4: Why do ethnic and religious cleavages turn into all-out conflict in some places/at some times and not others?*

**22. Monday, April 3 THE CHALLENGE OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS CLEAVAGE AND CONFLICT**

**Quiz #4: Applying concepts from section 3 on poverty vs. wealth.**

**Readings:**

O’Neil, Chapter 7, Political Violence.

**23. Wednesday, April 5 RWANDA – COMPARISON OVER TIME**

**Readings:**

Kapuscinski, Ryszard. 2001. “A Lecture on Rwanda.” *In The Shadow of the Sun*. New York: Vintage International, p. 165-182.

**24. Monday, April 10 POLITICAL HISTORY OF NORTHERN IRELAND**

**Readings:**

Darby, John. “Conflict in Northern Ireland: A Background Essay,” in Seamus Dunn, ed., *Facets of the Conflict in Northern Ireland*, Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1995.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/facets.htm>

**25. Wednesday, April 12 “THE TROUBLES” IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE PEACE PROCESS**

**Film in class: “Endgame in Ireland: Guns and Government” (2003; 20 minutes)**

**Readings:**

BBC. “Clinton: His Role in Northern Ireland.” December 11, 2000.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/1065913.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/1065913.stm)

Darby, John. “Northern Ireland: The Background to the Peace Process.” CAIN Web Service, University of Ulster, 2003.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/darby03.htm>

McDonald, Henry. 2013. “Northern Ireland Talks Resume for One Final Effort.” *The Guardian*, December 29, 2013.

**26. Monday, April 17 “NEVER AGAIN” – A COMPARISON OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO GENOCIDE AND CONFLICT**

**Readings:**

“Srebrenica, an Obligation Unfulfilled.” *The New York Times*, July 14, 2005, A24

“The Blame Game: Exchanging Unpleasantries about the Genocide.” *The Economist*, August, 7, 2008.

**27. Wednesday, April 19 CONCLUSION:**

**WHAT WE CAN DO WITH WHAT WE LEARNED?**

**Quiz #5: Applying concepts from section 4 on ethnic and religious conflict**

**Readings:**

O’Neil, Chapter 11, Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics.

Gause, F. Gregory. “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2005.

**28. Monday, April 24 IN-CLASS REVIEW SESSION FOR THE FINAL EXAM**

**29. Wednesday, April 26 IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM**

**\*Our scheduled final exam was slated for 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. on Friday, May 5, so the entire class agreed to move it to the last day of class.**

**WEBSITES FOR NEWS:****BBC News**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>

**UN IRIN** (amazing resource! latest news by country and by theme) <http://www.irinnews.org/>

**New York Times**      [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

**The Economist**      [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)

**IMPORTANT WEBSITES FOR DATA ON POLITICS AROUND THE WORLD:****CIA World Factbook**

Background information by country updated regularly

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

**U.S. State Department “Background Notes”**

Provides brief summaries of current events and some historical background for most countries in Africa

[http://www.state.gov/www/background\\_notes/index.html](http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html)

**Library of Congress Country Studies**

Presents analysis of historical background as well as current social, political, and economic systems in 101 countries throughout the world; apparently a number of African nations are not covered.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html#toc>

**World Bank Country Data**

Gives information on economic development issues primarily by country and region.

[Http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/0,,pa...](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/0,,pa...)

**U.S. State Department Country Reports on Economic and Trade Policy**

Provides useful information organized by region and then country.

[http://www.state.gov/www/issues/economic/trade\\_reports/99\\_toc.html](http://www.state.gov/www/issues/economic/trade_reports/99_toc.html)

**Amnesty International Human Rights Country Reports**

Presents yearly surveys of treatment of human rights by country.

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/engindex>

**International Foundation for Election Systems**

Compiles valuable information about recent and upcoming elections around the world.

<http://www.ifes.org/>

**Hyperhistory Online**

<http://www.hyperhistory.com>

**ADDITIONAL WEBSITES FOR MAPS:****National Geographic.com**

**Globalis – Interactive World Map** (can generate custom maps) <http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/>