

**POLS\*2100  
COMPARATIVE POLITICS  
Winter 2012**

**Department of Political Science  
University of Guelph**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 19:00 – 20:20  
Room: Thornbrough 1200**

**Professor Jordi Díez  
Office Hours: Thursdays 3:00 – 5:00  
(MacKinnon 549)**

---

**Overview**

This course provides students with an introduction to the Political Science sub-discipline of Comparative Politics. It is divided into three parts. The course opens with an introduction to Comparative Politics and the comparative method, as well as concepts such as the state, nationalism and the nation-state. Students will be exposed to a historical overview of state formation, in both European and Non-European contexts, and various theoretical approaches to the study of the state. We will also look at the political economy of the contemporary state. In Part II, we will examine classical and critical theories of the state in relation to the origins, structure and role of the modern state and its many manifestations in different regimes such as liberal democratic, social democratic, communist and authoritarian. In the third, and last, part of the course, students will engage the phenomena of political violence and state collapse and will subsequently look at two case studies: Afghanistan and Somalia.

**Requirements**

- An in-class mid-term examination, **on February 14** (30%)
- A term paper, due **on March 15** (40%)
- Final Exam, **during the Final Exam Period** (30%)

**Required Readings**

The required textbook for the course is:

Patrick O'Neil. 2010. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. Third Edition. New York; London: W. W. Norton & Company.

It is available for purchase at the University's bookstore. Since students will be required to read the book in its entirety, they are encouraged to purchase it. However, additional copies have been

placed on reserve in the library. In addition to the textbook, student are required to do several other readings, all of which are listed in this syllabus. All of these readings are available on reserve in the library, through the Course Reserve of the library website. Unless otherwise noted, all readings cited in this outline, as well as those that will be assigned from time to time, are required reading and subject to examination.

### **Courselink**

You are required to consult the course's Courselink page regularly as additional readings and announcements will be posted with frequency. A discussion forum will be setup and will be directed by the instructor and the TAs. Using the general discussion forum may help students to test out the ideas and obtain input from peers as well as the instructor. We will provide input if it is required and will try to answer questions. It is primarily designed to encourage students to engage in a discussion in an attempt to clarify material from the lectures and the readings that remain unclear or on which students would like to elaborate or explore further. Students must know that the Courselink discussions must adhere to the University's formal policy of communication and engagement. According to University Policy, students have the responsibility to foster an environment characterized by mutual respect. As such, do know that propriety is expected in these university fora and action will be taken should the policy be violated.

### **Important Notes**

- In this class, students may **only** use electronic mail for **procedural inquires**. All substantive questions regarding lectures, readings, writing assignments and presentations must be asked in person. Nevertheless, students are strongly encouraged to approach the TA's or the Professor during their office hours with any queries, rather than using e-mail.
- Only under truly exceptional circumstances shall make-up examinations be administered and late essay submissions be accepted. Medical, or similar, documentation, stating that the student is (fully) **incapacitated and unable to work**, is required. The note must state the exact dates during which such incapacitation occurred. After the end of the semester, make-up tests and final exams will only be administered after having been granted permission from the Academic Review Sub-Committee.

Your continued registration in the course will be taken as evidence that you have agreed to its requirements, terms and conditions

## Schedule of Topics and Readings

### PART I: CONCEPTS, TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

#### WEEK ONE: Comparative Politics: An Introduction

Jan 10 Introduction and overview of the course

Jan 12 What is Comparative Politics? The Comparative Method and Comparative Politics as a Science

Required Reading:

- O'Neil, Chapter 1

#### WEEK TWO: The State and State Formation

Jan 17 What is a state? Why study it? The difference between state, regime and government

Jan 19 The formation of the modern state

Video: School of the Assassins

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 2
- Weber, Max. 2006. "What is the State" in Bernard E. Brown (ed.) *Comparative Politics Notes and Readings*, pp. 84 – 87.
- Tilly, Charles. 2006. "War Making State Making as Organized Crime" in Mark Kesselman and Joel Krieger (eds.) *Readings in Comparative Politics*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, pp. 43-52.

#### WEEK THREE: States, Nations and Nationalism

Jan 24 Nations, Ethnicity, Nationalism, Ideology and the Modern Nation-State

Jan 26 Ethnic Conflict

Required Readings:

- □ O'Neil, Chapter 3
- Klador, Mary. 2004. "Nationalism and Globalization" in *Nations and Nationalism*.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914" in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 263-307.

#### WEEK FOUR: The Political Economy of the State

Jan 31 Political Economy and States

Feb 2 Markets, States and Regimes

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 4
- Coates, David. 2006. "Models of Capitalism in the New World Order" in Mark Kesselman and Joel Krieger (eds.) *Readings in Comparative Politics*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 112-121.

### **WEEK FIVE: Democratic Regimes**

Feb 7 Democracy and Democratization

Feb 9 Regimes in Advanced Democracies

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapters 5 and 7

### **WEEK SIX**

Feb 14 **IN-CLASS TEST**

Feb 16 **Overview of Essay Assignment** (miss this at your own peril!)

### **WEEK SEVEN: FEBRUARY 21 & 23 READING WEEK, NO CLASSES SCHEDULED**

## **PART II: AUTHORITARIAN AND DEMOCRATIC REGIMES**

### **WEEK EIGHT: Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism**

Feb 28 Video: "Welcome to North Korea"

Mar 1 Sources of authority in authoritarian regimes

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 6
- Al-Khalil, Samir. 1999. *Republic of Fear*. New York: Pantheon, Chapter 2.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, Chapters 2 and 3.

### **WEEK NINE: Communism and Post-Communism**

Mar 6 Communist regimes, Post-communism and political transitions

Mar 8 Video: "Chiefs and Strongmen"

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 8
- Aguirre, Benigno E. 2002. "Social Control in Cuba" *Latin American Politics and Society*, 44, 2(Summer), pp. 66-98.
- Jatar-Hausmann, Ana Julia. 1998/99. "What Cuba Can Teach Russia" *Foreign Policy* 133 (Winter), pp. 87-102.

### **WEEK TEN: Less-Developed and Newly Industrialized Countries**

Mar 13 Regimes in Less-Developed Countries

Mar 15 Video: *The Gods of our Fathers*, National Film Board, 1994.

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 9

**ESSAY DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS MARCH 15**

## **PART III: STATE COLLAPSE AND RE-BUILDING**

### **WEEK ELEVEN: Political Violence and State Collapse**

Mar 20 Explanations of Political Violence

Mar 22 Failed States and State Collapse

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 10
- Rotberg, Robert. 2006. "Failed States in a World of Terror" in Mark Kesselman and Joel Krieger (eds.) *Readings in Comparative Politics*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 82-89.

### **WEEK TEWLVE: State Re-Building, The Cases of Afghanistan and Somalia**

Mar 27 The Case Study of Somalia

Mar 29 The Case Study of Afghanistan

Required Readings:

- Merkaus, Ken. 2003. "State Collapse in Somalia: Second Thoughts" *Review of African Political Economy* 97, pp. 405-422.
- Wimmer, Andreas and Conrad Schetter. 2003. "Putting State Formation First: Some Recommendations for Reconstruction and Peacemaking in Afghanistan" *Journal of International Development* 15, pp. 525-539.
- Astri, Suhrke. 2007. "Reconstruction as Modernisation: The 'Post-Conflict' Project in Afghanistan" *Third World Quarterly* 28, 7 (October), pp. 1291-1308.

### **WEEK THIRTEEN: Globalization and Comparative Politics**

Apr 3 Comparative Politics in a Globalized World

Apr 5 Review Session (miss this at your own peril!)

Required Readings:

- O'Neil, Chapter 11