

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Department of Political Science
PS101 – Political Science 101 Introduction to
Comparative Politics (SS) (NW) (XS) (GC)
3 cr. Fall 2022

Prof. Druscilla Scribner (Ph.D., University of California San Diego)

Office Location: Virtual

Office Hours: Tu/Th, 11:30-1:00 pm and by appointment via MS Teams

Email: scribned@uwosh.edu

Class Time: Asynchronous (paced)

Class Location: Online

Department Office: Sage 4631, (920) 424-3456

COURSE DESCRIPTION

UWO Course Bulletin Description: This course provides an introduction to key concepts and issues in comparative politics in the context of case studies from Europe, Asia, the Americas, Africa, and the Middle East. It explores political participation and institutions, political ideology and culture, the role of government, political parties, democratization, economic development and inequality, nationalism, and ethnic and religious conflict in a variety of national and regional contexts around the globe. **3 credits**

There are no prerequisites for this course; it is open to all students regardless of major or disciplinary focus.

This course is **designated a “Global Scholar” course** and may count toward achieving a Global Scholar Designation on your transcript. Global Scholar courses build on the knowledge, skills, and perspectives you gained in your USP Global Citizenship courses. Global Citizenship and Global Scholar courses are designed to provide students with the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills needed to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world.

There are no prerequisites for this course; it is open to all students regardless of major or disciplinary focus and meets key learning goals and distributional requirements of your UWO general education course of study, including your global citizenship requirement.

PS101 satisfies a major requirement if you are a Political Science major. Political Science majors should remember to take Political Methodology (PS245) in either their sophomore or first semester of their junior year. PS245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.

Course Goals

- Gain knowledge and understanding of the political process
- Learn to think like a social scientist
- Expand your knowledge and understanding of the world
- Gain intercultural knowledge and competence

Explore courses and your liberal arts education

Introduction to Comparative Politics is an EXPLORE course in the University Studies Program (USP) curriculum. One of the goals of the USP is to provide you with a broad understanding of the human experience through an exploration of different disciplines. Major academic divisions like social science, and their disciplines, like political science, present us with alternative approaches or “ways of knowing” about nature, culture, and society. Introduction to Comparative Politics is in the society category; we want you to start thinking like a “social scientist” and using some of the tools of political science to confront the kinds of fundamental questions posed in the course description above. PS101 is one of the gateway courses to advanced study in Political Science (see the end of the syllabus for more course recommendations.)

Global Citizenship

This course also satisfies your USP Global Citizenship Requirement. Global Citizenship is the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world.

Our exploration of other countries' domestic politics and disciplinary “ways of knowing,” including the use of social science methods, are all part of what it means to be liberally educated. A liberally educated person is prepared to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. Such individuals possess broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science, culture, and society) and in-depth knowledge of a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings (adapted from AAC&U).

Understanding cultural differences and navigating a culturally rich, diverse, and complex world is an essential learning outcome (a core goal) of your liberal education at UWO and an essential life skill. Intercultural knowledge and competence is the understanding of one's own culture as well as cultures beyond one's own; the recognition of the cultural values and history, language, traditions, arts, and social institutions of a group of people; the ability to negotiate and bridge cultural differences in ways that allow for broader perspectives to emerge; and the skill to investigate a wide range of world views, beliefs, practices, and values.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Define and apply key concepts in comparative politics.
- Compare and contrast the political systems of the countries explored in the course, paying particular attention to each country's historical, political, economic, geographical, and moral aspects of governance.
- Explain how different electoral systems affect representation in democracies.
- Investigate how differences in worldviews, beliefs, practices, and values affect political choices in diverse contexts.
- Explain and evaluate the importance of specific historical events in the context of the political and economic development of the countries studied.

- Explore comparative data about a contemporary political issue.

Assessing student learning

This course uses a variety of formative and summative methods to assess student learning. These include InQuizitive, case study quizzes, shared written responses, and online discussions. InQuizitive is an adaptive quizzing tool corresponding to the conceptual chapters in the textbook. It helps you to master and apply key concepts. Assignments are designed to get you thinking about and applying core concepts to our case studies. There is a final cumulative exam.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required textbook: **Cases and Concepts in Comparative Politics, SECOND EDITION, Patrick H. O'Neil, Karl Fields, and Don Share.**

This text is available in the University Books and More Bookstore and online directly from the publisher. You can purchase the fully online version or the paper version with online access to InQuizitive. The fully online version is the cheapest. There are directions for you from the publisher in our introduction module.

Web-based applications you will use in this course are all provided by UWO and your textbook publisher, W.W. Norton. They include Canvas, Collaborate Ultra, Microsoft Teams, and InQuizitive.

For any technical problems, make sure you contact the UWO or the W.W. Norton help desk right away! That's their job... so don't wait! These are not things I can help you with.

- [Canvas Help](#) and [Canvas Student Guides \(very comprehensive\)](#)
- [UWO Knowledge Base \(Tech Support\)](#)
- [Norton Tech Support](#)

ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This is an asynchronous online course - we do not have any zoom meeting times. But we do have a weekly schedule of assignments. You need to complete one week before moving to the next. Each new week is available starting the previous Wednesday at 11:59 pm.

There are a variety of activities to complete to reach our learning objectives each week. These activities include reading, online discussions, videos, mini explanatory lectures, written assignments, quizzes, etc. These assignments have due dates.

The standard number of expected work hours is 9 hours per week in a three-credit course. We will cover lots of ground in our time together, so you need to be organized and self-motivated to make sure you do not fall behind! The course is structured with reminders and deadlines to keep you on pace to completion. Each module includes an overview highlighting what you need to accomplish in the module.

Participation

In online courses, your regular participation involves logging in to our course, navigating through the content pages in a module, completing the readings and videos, participating in discussions and other activities, and submitting assignments, quizzes, and exams.

Your participation is an integral part of your learning, but it also contributes to the learning of your peers. As members of our learning community, each of us is responsible for creating an environment in which we can all learn from each other. You are already in a discussion

group on Canvas of about 10 students (give or take) to make our discussions more intimate and manageable. Discussions are automatically tied to your group. For help with Canvas groups see: [How do I view my Canvas groups as a student?](#)

To ensure each member of our course feels included and welcomed, all of us will abide by a few key rules of etiquette. We will treat each other with dignity and respect while acknowledging that each of us is unique and has different views and opinions about topics. Some of the topics we cover may elicit strong reactions. To ensure everyone feels comfortable engaging in our discussions, please keep in mind that written communications can be easily misinterpreted. Each time you make a post or reply to a discussion, read it twice before you submit it to ensure the words you have chosen are considerate but also convey your message. If you feel a peer has violated these expectations, please contact me directly; I will tend to your concern in a confidential matter.

Technology Requirements

We will use Canvas and Zoom extensively for class. Set up your Canvas notifications, so you do not miss anything! Keep in mind that Canvas does not play that well with Apple. So be sure you are accessing Canvas through Chrome (not Firefox, and not Safari). Canvas only supports some file types (again, not Apple) - so be sure to use MS Word and PDF.

Depending on how you decided to purchase your text(s) for this class (e.g., rental, paper copy, or electronic book), you may have other technical requirements related to your textbook.

Tips for managing online learning and participation

Online learning is different and can be challenging! What is out of sight can often be out of mind. Although you are not coming to a physical classroom, ensure you stay engaged and on top of your work.

- Set aside time for working online. You already know that it will take you longer to respond to an online discussion than to raise your hand and make a comment in class - so give yourself time!
- Focus; avoid shared spaces; let others know when you are working so, they leave you alone (or remind you to stay on task!)
- Check Canvas. I will post materials on Canvas, primarily using the announcement tool to post reminders and stay in touch with the class.
- Post and ask questions. If you do not understand something, do not sit in silence. There is a "Does anyone know...?" running discussion student board to post and answer questions. Use it... Ask!
- Do not procrastinate! It can be effortless to delay work when you are not physically attending class. Keep up with what is posted in Canvas daily - set up a schedule for yourself, so you do not fall behind.

COURSE POLICIES

Course Schedule

We have a course schedule that we follow over the semester. You can find this schedule in our START HERE module. It is hyperlinked to our modules in Canvas. A non-linked version is included in this syllabus for your reference.

The course is organized in weekly modules. Each includes an overview highlighting what you need to accomplish during the week. The week's overview page lists the activities and

associated assignments for that week; these must be completed before moving to the next module.

Assignments and Grading

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following weighted assignment groups, using the UWO 93/87/80 grading scale.

- InQuizitive [15%]* is an adaptive learning tool that comes with your textbook. It gives you power over how you learn. InQuizitive is associated with each of the concept chapters in the book. It's easy to use, you get feedback instantly, and you can choose to keep answering questions until you reach your desired score. The tool explains what the correct answer is, even when you get the question right.
- Checking for Understanding responses [15%]* are short reading responses on key concepts that come in the video lectures and in the textbook. They are a way to see if you are on the right track and get feedback on your thinking.
- Country Chapter Quizzes [15%]* are multiple-choice quizzes in Canvas on the country case chapters. You can take these quizzes twice.
- Online Discussions [25%]* are for interacting with and learning from your peers. There are two types of online discussions. Post-n-Share assignments ask you to respond to a prompt in a discussion post. It is shared with the class, and you can read others' posts. You do NOT need to write a reply to your peers' posts, but you can if you want to. Think of this as raising your hand in class and sharing your well-supported thoughts. Post-n-Respond assignments ask you to respond to a prompt in a discussion post and then reply to two classmates' posts. This is a classic discussion format. Your original post is due on Wednesdays, and your two replies are expected by the end of the day Friday.
- Weekly reflection [15%]* allows you to pause and recognize connections between what you already know and what you are learning. It is a way of helping you to become an active, aware, and critical learner.
- Final Exam [15%]* at the end of the semester there is an online final exam.

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	
A	100%	to 93%
A-	< 93%	to 90%
B+	< 90%	to 87%
B	< 87%	to 83%
B-	< 83%	to 80%
C+	< 80%	to 77%
C	< 77%	to 73%
C-	< 73%	to 70%
D+	< 70%	to 67%
D	< 67%	to 63%
D-	< 63%	to 60%
F	< 60%	to 0%

Due dates and feedback

Your assignments are due on the same days every week to give you some structure and flexibility.

- InQuizitive, Checking for Understanding, and case study chapter quizzes are *always due by Friday midnight. Do them before*, while you are working your way through the module.
- Discussion posts are always due on *Wednesdays with replies expected on Friday*. I will close the discussion at midnight on Friday.
- Weekly learning reflections are always due on *Sunday night by midnight*. Write your reflection once you have finished the module.

It can be frustrating to wait a long time to receive feedback or to know your grade. I will provide feedback and grade your work on Canvas within a few days to a week. [Learn how to view feedback and comments on Canvas.](#)

Absences, late work, and accommodations

Plan on submitting work on time. All assignments are due by midnight (11:59 pm) on the scheduled dates. Because this is an asynchronous course, you have some flexibility with your time and should be able to adjust to minor personal and family emergencies; however, if you have a significant illness or another issue that impacts your ability to complete assignments on time or complete the course, **communicate with me right away**.

Missing work will receive a zero, and late submissions are automatically subject to a 7% per day late penalty. A late penalty can be removed for extenuating circumstances. If you think you have extenuating circumstances, contact me.

- *Excused absences and late work:* According to University policy, excused absences require documented evidence of medical necessity or an approved college-sanctioned event. We will work out a schedule for you to complete your work before or after your absence. Zeros and late penalties will be removed as work is turned in. Discussion cannot be made up, but alternative written assignments may be devised as a substitute.
- *Unexcused absences and late work:* The late penalty is 7% per day - it is automatic and will diminish your potential grade to a floor of 65%. This means you can turn in late work and at least get a D. This grace period runs until midterm. You are always better off submitting something rather than nothing! No previous unexcused late work is accepted after Week 10. Discussion boards are time-sensitive; late original discussion board posts receive no credit.
- Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. For more information, see the [Dean of Students](#) website and the [Accessibility Center](#).

Citations and Writing Expectations

The Political Science Department has [writing resources](#) for you, including a citation style guide.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is using someone else's UNIQUE ideas, words, theories, evidence, findings, argument, etc., and passing them off as your own by not properly attributing or acknowledging the original source of those ideas. Plagiarism could result in failing the assignment or course. If you are unsure whether what you have written constitutes plagiarism, ask before you turn it in. If there is an issue, we will talk.

This class uses Turnitin technology to help you and me detect plagiarism issues. See the Dean of Students' [resources on plagiarism](#) for more information about how we address these issues at UWO.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ACTIVITIES

We have a course schedule that we will follow over the course of the semester. The basic schedule is reproduced below. In Canvas, this schedule includes hyperlinks to our weekly pages with detailed plans and additional resources for each week. If anything changes in our schedule, I will inform you via announcements.

I have structured the course with lots of reminders and deadlines to keep you on pace to completion. You should sign up for Canvas notifications to ensure you do not miss class announcements and reminders.

*Note: Classes September 7
Week 0: Start Here [September 7-9; module available starting on Wednesday, August 31]

- Work through the course overview and resource pages
- Register your text and tryout *InQuizitive*
- Introduce yourself to your discussion group

Week 1 How we compare states and governments [September 12-16; module available starting on Wednesday, September 7]

- Read Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (States) in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for each chapter
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 2 How states, governments, and society interact [September 19-23; module available starting on Wednesday, September 14]

- Read Chapter 3 (Nations and Society)
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for each chapter
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 3 How states govern the economy [September 26-30; module available starting on Wednesday, September 21]

- Read Chapter 4 (Politics Economy) in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages

- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for each chapter
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 4 How democracy works [October 3-7; module available starting on Wednesday, September 28]

- Read Chapter 6 (Democratic Regimes) and Chapter 7 (Developed Democracies) in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for each chapter
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 5 Parliamentary democracy in the United Kingdom [October 10-14; module available starting Wednesday, October 5]

- Read the United Kingdom country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 6 Post-War European democracy in Germany [October 17-21; module available starting on Wednesday, October 12]

- Read the Germany country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 7 Political Violence and non-Democracies [October 24-28; module available starting on Wednesday, October 19]

- Read Chapter 5 (Political Violence) and Chapter 8 (Non-democracies) in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for each chapter
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 8 Nigeria - Democracy, and non-democracy in violent contexts [October 31-November 4; module available starting on Wednesday, October 26]

- Read the Nigeria country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 9 Russia - Post-communist Non-democracy [November 7-11; module available starting on Wednesday, November 2]

- Read Chapter 9 (Communism and Post Communism) and the Russia country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for chapter 9
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 10 China - Communist non-democracies [November 14-18; module available starting on Wednesday, November 9]

- Read the China country case chapter in your text

- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 11 Developing Countries [November 21-22; module available starting on Wednesday, November 16]

- Read Chapter 10 (Developing Countries)
- Complete *InQuizitive* for chapter 10

*NOTE November 23-27 is Thanksgiving Recess

Week 12 India - Democracy, Diversity, and Development [November 28-December 2; module available starting on Wednesday, November 23]

- Read the India country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 13 Brazil - Politics and Development [December 5-9; module available starting on Wednesday, November 30]

- Read the Brazil country case chapter in your text
- Work through the mini-lecture and resource pages
- Complete discussion and checking-for-understanding assignment(s)
- Complete the country case quiz
- *Learning Reflection*

Week 14 Finals Week [December 12-16; module available starting on Wednesday, December 7]

- Final Exam (two parts)

*NOTE December 16 is the end of the Term

POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Office Hours: The [Political Science Department](#) uses Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) for holding office hours. This system is available to all UWO students. Your Poli Sci faculty are available during their posted office hours (whether you are taking an in-person or an online class). To use MS Teams during office hours, send a chat to your instructor to let them know you want to meet - think of that as the equivalent of knocking on the door. We're here for you! Please use our office hours freely and often. Many faculty are also happy to set up meetings outside of office hours if students have conflicts with the posted times.

Expectations for Academic Honesty: A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person, all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with appropriately (quoted when using someone's words and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When you are asked to work in teams, that work should be done by the group collaboratively. [More information can be found here.](#)

Concerns or Grievances: The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. You should contact me if you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method. That goes for your other classes, too: always talk to your professor first. But if you are not comfortable speaking to your instructor, you can always reach out to the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. As needed, he can guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science or the Dean of Students.

Note to Political Science Majors: Congratulations on joining a great major - the world needs your critical thinking, creative problem-solving, knowledge of the issues, and stellar communication skills! Please NOTE that majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year. Political Science 245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.

If you are currently a political science major or think you will be one of our majors in the future, save your written work from your classes, so you are prepared to put together your portfolio of significant work when you are a senior. Please let me know if you have questions about the major or advising!

Changes: If substantive changes are made to this course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided promptly, and a revised syllabus will be made available (see our course schedule page).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

I want you to be successful! There are many [student resources](#) dedicated to your academic and personal success.

UW Oshkosh strives to create inclusive learning environments. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. For more information, see the [Dean of Students](#) website and the [Accessibility Center](#).

If you have any situation/condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect your ability to perform in this class or access class assignments; please reach out to me so that we can work together on a plan for your success. Canvas is an ADA-compliant course management software suite. Both Canvas and our textbook have accessibility features that you may find helpful such as the immersive reader function.

Diversity drives innovation, creativity, and progress. At the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, the culture, identities, life experiences, unique abilities, and talents of every individual contribute to the foundation of our success. Creating and maintaining an inclusive and equitable environment is of paramount importance to us. This pursuit prepares all of us to be global citizens who will contribute to the betterment of the world. We are committed to a university culture that provides everyone with the opportunity to thrive.

By federal regulations set forth by [The Higher Education Act of 1965](#) (amended in 1998), [consumer information](#) is available to all students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.
