

INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Department of Political Science



**WHERE IS YOUR
PROFESSOR?**

DR. AMBER LUSVARDI

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE**

SHE/HER/HERS

FOX CITIES OFFICE: M1502

920-832-2856

LUSVARDIA@UWOSH.EDU

About This class

Introduction to Comparative Politics Classroom: Fox
Main 1553
Class times: MWF 11:30-12:30 3
credit hours

About Office Hours

My office hours are time set aside specifically for you. We can discuss course content, any barriers you are facing, or broader questions about political science. If you are not available during my office hours, please let me know and I can accommodate you.

Office Hours: 10:20 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. Mondays and
Wednesdays in person (preferred) or via Teams



What to know

Getting started in this course

Political science is a social science - sciences that study human and social behavior. In political science we are particularly interested in power. As Harold Laswell said, "Who Gets What, When, and How?"

In this course, we will explore the impact of political institutions, electoral systems, and cultural elements on modern states. Importantly, we will consider what makes for a "successful" democracy? What (good & bad) lessons can we learn from the rest of the world?

Strategies for Success



Check your Canvas page. There, you will see due dates reflected on your calendar, can see your updated grades, and can access course readings and assignment rubrics.



If you find you are not performing as well as you would like in this course or your courses generally, please reach out to me. I can help to accommodate you or see if we can address any barriers you are experiencing together.



Class attendance is the greatest predictor of academic success in college (Crede, Roche, and Kieszczynka 2010). I count on your attendance as a valued member of this class. If you are not attending class regularly, I will reach out to you for an office hours meeting.



Course 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 variety of national and regional contexts around the globe.

Learning Outcomes

- 1) Define and apply key concepts in comparative politics.
- 2) Compare and contrast the political systems of the countries explored in the course, paying particular attention to historical, political, economic, geographical, and moral aspects of governance in each country.
- 3) Investigate how differences in worldviews, beliefs, practices, and values affect political choices in diverse contexts.

Required Textbook

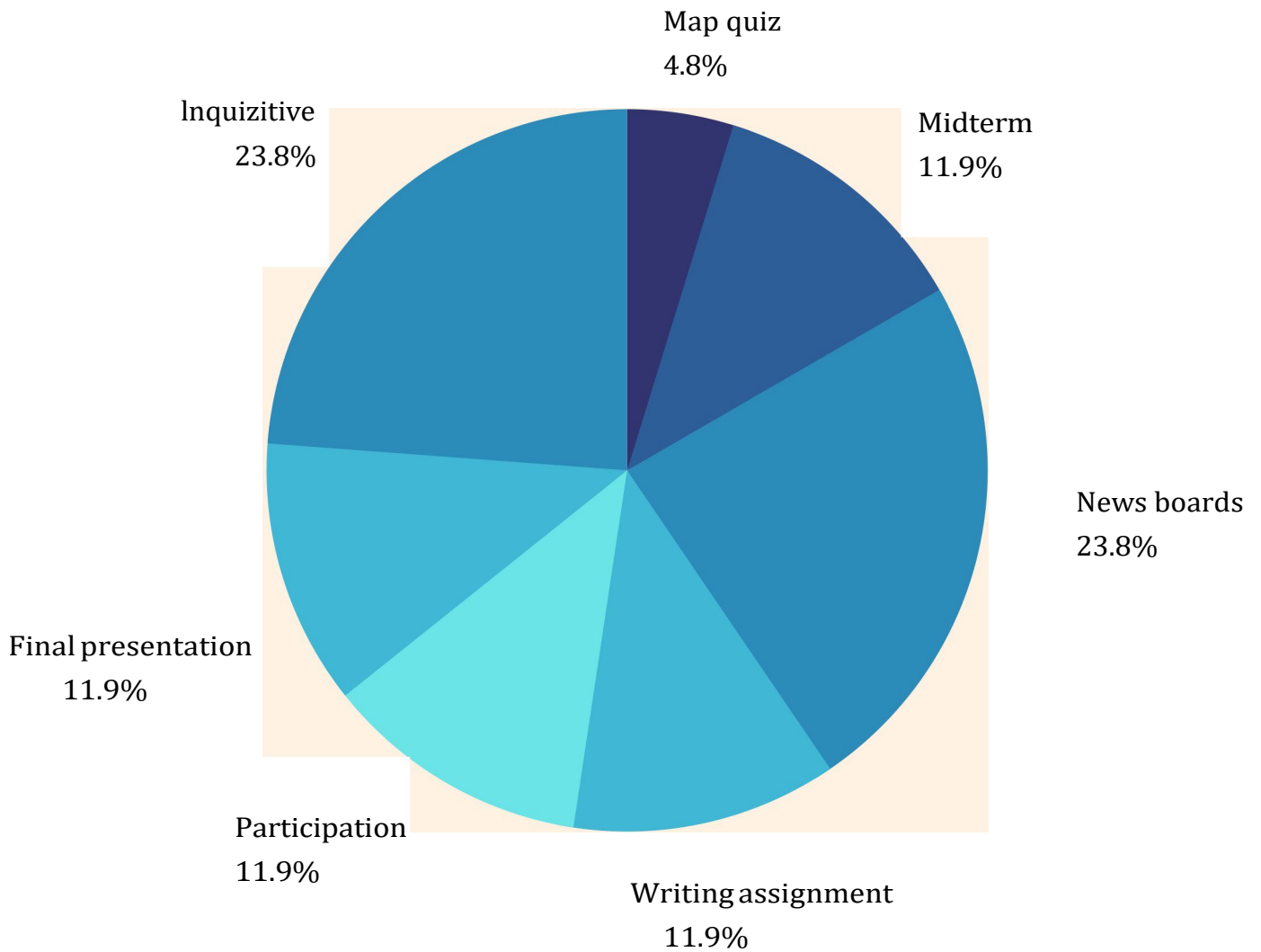
O'Neil, Fields, and Share. *Cases and Concepts in Comparative Politics*. 2nd Edition. WW Norton. Purchase the option that includes "Inquizitive." All other reading materials will be supplied via Canvas.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

ASSESSMENT

Your final grade will be based on a map quiz, Inquizitive quizzes, the "News Board," exam, writing assignment, final presentation, and participation.



Assignments

Map quiz (20 points) - You will need to correctly identify 20 countries on the World Map. I will provide a list on Canvas of 40 potential countries that will appear on the list. Quiz will be Sept. 19.

Midterm (50 points) - The midterm exam (Oct. 24) will cover content from the first half of the semester and include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Inquisitive quizzes (10 pts per quiz) - You will take quizzes based on the weekly textbook readings via Canvas. You will receive a score out of 10 points based on your quiz grade.

News boards (10x10 points) - From Oct. 3 to Dec. 5 you will be responsible for posting a news article (due on Sunday) about politics in your region of the world. I will assign each student a "region" of the world they are responsible for following. With your article, submit one paragraph explaining why this news article is interesting to you and relating it to class when possible. Suggested news sites: BBC and NPR.

Investigation & Analysis Writing Assignment (50 points) - You will choose one of the cases that I present in class (U.S., Mexico, UK, Germany, Russia, China, Iran, or Nigeria) to do more exploration on. You will investigate your case on one of the central themes of our class -- What makes a "good" democracy? How "democratic" is your country under the parameters that we have studied? What changes would need to happen? How likely are they? You will summarize your findings in a four-page paper with citations

Final presentation (50 points) - You will give a 5-minute presentation of your findings from your "Investigation & Analysis" to the class during the final week.

Participation (50 points) - You are present and active in class and free from distractions. If you need to miss class, you communicate with your professor. We will have a check-in at mid-semester. At the end of the semester, you will submit a paragraph in which you grade yourself on participation for the semester (I may or may not accept your grade).

** Detailed descriptions and rubrics of all assignments are on Canvas.

Grading Scale

100-97-A+
97-94-A
93-90 -A-
89-87 - B+
84-86-B
80-83 - B-
79-77 - C+
76-74 - C
73-70 - C-
69-67 - D+
66-64-D
63-60- D-
59 and below- failing

Weekly Schedule

C&C = Textbook, Cases and Concepts in Comparative Politics

Sept. 7 & 9

Introduction: Syllabus, expectations. Read: Ch. 1 C&C

Sept. 12, 14, & 16

Ch. 1, continued

Sept. 19, 21, & 23

States, Read: Ch. 2 C&C. Map quiz Sept. 19

Sept. 26, 28, & 30

Read: Chapter 4 Nations & Society, at home:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/quiz/political-typology/?group=a16367b30bb6bffecc846a500dacc016>

Oct. 3, 5, & 7

Political Economy, Read: Chapter 4 C&C

Case study: United States. Read C&C page 250-272 and *How Democracies Die* via Canvas

Oct. 10, 12, & 14

Political Violence, Read: Ch. 5 C&C and Collier & Gunning via Canvas

Oct. 17, 19, & 21

Democratic regimes, Read: C&C Chapter 6.

Case study: Mexico (page 570 in C&C), Read: Necropolitics, Narcopolitics, and Femicide via Canvas

Oct. 24, 26, & 28

Midterm exam Oct. 24; Developed democracies, Read: C&C Chapter 7

Oct. 31, Nov. 2, & 4

Case studies: UK and Germany, Read C&C 218-244, 304-326

Nov. 7, 9, & 11

Nondemocratic regimes, case study Iran. Read: C&C Chapter 8, *Persepolis* via Canvas

Nov. 14, 16, & 18

Communism and Post-Communism. Read: C&C Chapter 9

Nov. 21

Catch up week

Nov. 28, 30, & Dec. 2

Case studies: Russia and China

Dec. 5, 7, & 9

Developing Countries, Read C&C Chapter 10 Case study: Nigeria (page 660)

Dec. 12, 14, & 16

Final project presentations

Note: If substantive changes are made in course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available.

All About You

You have the right to be called by whatever name and pronouns you prefer.

You are a valued member of this class. Your experience as part of this class is important to me. If you are experiencing barriers to your success in this course, please reach out to me so I can assist you or can help you find the correct resources.

On Language

Each person in this course is a valued member of the group and you should feel free to share your experiences as they are relevant to this class. No student in this class is ever expected or believed to speak for all members of a group. Do be thoughtful in your language when adding to class discussion.

What about my technology

You will never be required to bring a laptop or tablet to class. I discourage students from the use of laptops or tablets in my courses due to the extensive research that shows it to be a hindrance to learning and a distraction to classmates (*see Dontre 2020*). It is your choice whether to use your laptop/tablet while we are taking notes, but it should be stowed away at other times.

As engagement and discussion are important, please refrain from wearing headphones during class.

Note to Poli Sci Majors

Political Science 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 if you think you will be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. If you have questions, please see me or any faculty member after class.



Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. It is open to students at any level and in all majors, and is the first in a series of introductory courses in Political Science. In Introduction to Comparative Politics (84:101) we introduce students to the democratic and non-democratic political systems of several different states (e.g., Germany, China, Iran), taking a look inside each one to determine how they function. In Introduction to American Politics (84:105), we give students an in-depth look at the working of the American system of government. And in Introduction to International Relations (IR; 84:115), we show you how states work with and against each other in the global system. Political Science majors are required to take all three, but they stand independently so that non-majors can benefit from them as well.

Student Right to Know

Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990:
<https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>

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 properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team.

Disability Statement

This course is for all UWO students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that could negatively impact one's equal access to education. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the space or content of this course, please contact me by email, phone, or during office hours to discuss your specific needs. I am happy to discuss how to best accommodate you. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessibility Center in Dempsey Hall 215 or at accessibilitycenter@uwosh.edu for further assistance.

Grievance Statement

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.