

PS 101: Introduction to Comparative Politics [3 credits]

QUEST II

Spring Semester 2024

University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

Class meets MWF 11:30/12:40 in Sage 1232

Office hours: T 10-11:30 (ON TEAMS), W 10-11:30 (IN PERSON), and by appointment

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“While the performance of democracy is failing to inspire, authoritarianism faces its own steep challenges...Economic development, globalization, and the information revolution are undermining all forms of authority and empowering individuals. Values are changing...generally the movement is toward greater distrust of authority and more desire for accountability, freedom, and political choice. In the coming two decades, these trends will change the nature of rule in China, Vietnam, Iran, and the Arab states much more than they will in India, not to mention Europe and the United States.”

Larry Diamond, “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession”, *Journal of Democracy* 2015

UWO Bulletin 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 a variety of national and regional contexts around the globe.” This course has no prerequisites. This is a required course for the Political Science major and minor.

Spring 2024 Course Description:

What is the ‘democratic recession’ and what does it mean for the world? We live in a time when ideas about democracy are shifting, and when global democracy is declining. More than that, countries like China—which aren’t democratic—seem to be weathering the storm. In this course, we’ll take a long, hard look at established democracies in the United Kingdom, Germany, and France to see how they function and whether or not they’re up to the challenge our current political climate presents. At midterm, we’ll switch our focus and examine countries that aren’t democratic or are only weakly so: Russia, China, and Iran. Throughout the semester we will explore how different political systems respond to social, cultural, economic, religious, and other major national cleavages. The major emphases of this course will be institutions of government, electoral systems, parties, and political participation and how these aspects of government contribute to or detract from the quality of life for those living in each country.

You’ll find that, as you study the way other countries function, you’ll gain a better understanding of your own country. If you pay attention, do the work I assign, and come to class every session, you’ll walk away from this class a much more informed global citizen than when you entered—and that will serve you well no matter what career you are pursuing.

Required Resources:

-O'Neil, Patrick H., Karl Fields, and Don Share, eds. 2024. *Cases and Concepts in Comparative Politics*. Third edition. New York: W.W. Norton.

-If you have a smartphone, please install the free **BBC News** app on your phone and check it daily!

Student 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.

The University Studies Program: The University Studies Program (USP) is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This Quest II course emphasizes ethical reasoning. Upon completion of this course you will be ready to enroll in Quest III, and then Connect. This course fulfills a USP Social Science (SS) requirement and a Global Citizenship (GC) requirement. This course fulfills also one of your three required introductory courses for the Political Science major and minor.

Signature Question: How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?

Definition: 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.

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. More information on the Global Citizenship Certificate can be found at: www.uwosh.edu/cetl/initiatives/global-citizenship

Liberal Education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as 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. (AAC&U;

http://www.aacu.org/leap/What_is_liberal_education.cfm) Our approach to liberal education is articulated through the University Studies Program, but is similar to the general education programs of all other four year universities.

Ethical Reasoning: People engage in reasoning in a number of ways. We are capable of theoretical reasoning – reasoning about, for instance, the way a system of ideas or claims is connected. We are capable of practical reasoning – reasoning about what to do and how to do it. Ethical reasoning is a form of reasoning we all do when we ask questions like “Should I do this?” “Is it right to do that?” “Is this policy good?” “Am I doing what I should to be a good person?” “What should a good person do?” Thus, ethical reasoning is, broadly, reasoning that incorporates our beliefs about values (good, bad). Ethical Reasoning typically reaches a conclusion of the form “X is right/wrong” or “I should do X/not do X”.

Freshman year experience requirements (“planning your future in college, work & life”): a) students visit at least three Open Houses during Academic Open House Week (or visit departments at another time if necessary) b) Scheduled class visit/activity from Career Services c) Scheduled class visit from Alumni d) Undergraduate Research Element.

Grading Scale and Assignments:

I use a 93/90/87 grading scale in this course (which means that 93 is the cutpoint for an A, 90 for an A-, 87 for a B+, etc.). Your grade will be determined by several assignments and exams, detailed as follows:

Map Quiz (5%):

There will be a map quiz given in the third week of the course. The following list of countries will appear on your map quiz. See Canvas for blank maps and a list of included countries so you can start studying.

Exams (60% total):

There will be three exams in this course, each worth 20% of your course grade. Exams will consist of multiple choice/fill-in-the-blank questions and several identification and/or short-answer essays. Exams will be taken on Canvas and are open book/open note. Students are expected to work alone and not use outside resources. Each exam will cover unique material.

Quest II Assignments (20%):

Academic Open House Week Participation (5%): Departments will hold open houses between February 19-21 on the Oshkosh Campus. Speak with someone about 3 different majors (see form) and turn it in by class time on February 26. You can complete the entire assignment on February 20, by visiting the departments in the Sage Hall Lobby (Political Science, History, and Journalism) between 11am and 2pm.

Career and Professional Development Resume Evaluation (5%): Staff from the CPD Office will hold class in Reeve 307 (the theater) on February 28 to discuss resumes, LinkedIn profiles, and networking. A UWO alumnus will visit class to talk about their career planning and job search experience on February 14. Students should complete a draft of their resume and upload it to VMOCK (<https://uwosh.edu/career/vmock/>). A revised resume, along with feedback from VMOCK should be posted to our Canvas page by the end of the day on March 1 for credit.

Career/Internship Fair Participation (5%):

[Internship & Career Fair](#) on Wednesday, March 6th 11:30-3:30 in Kolf (preferred)

[UWO Eastern WERE Education Fair](#) on Thursday, March 14th 1:00 - 2:30pm in Reeve 227

[Spring Healthcare Career Fair](#) on Tuesday, March 19th 11:00-1:00 in Reeve 227

[Creating Connections](#) on Wednesday, April 10th from 4:00-5:00 in Reeve 227

[Summer Job & Internship Fair](#) on Wednesday, April 17th 11:00 - 1:00 in Reeve 227

Quest II Portfolio Submission (5%): Your portfolio will contain reflections on your Quest II components (listed above), your research paper, and your growing understanding of Global Citizenship and Political Science. This assignment is **due on Wednesday, May 15** (on Canvas).

Solutions to Democratic Disengagement Essay (5%): This is your undergraduate research element for Quest II. Students will write a short essay drawing on a small number of articles from class to make an argument about whether a change in our electoral system would address feelings of alienation and voter disengagement. Details on this assignment are available in a separate handout (available in the module of the same name on Canvas).

Attendance/Participation: (10%): Attendance is required for USP activities including the Alumni speaker and Career and Professional Development presentation (each event is worth 2.5% of your course grade). Attendance is not required for our other classes. Students can gain participation points (5%) through regular participation in class. Students who are not present cannot earn participation points. Students who are present but clearly off task cannot earn participation points. This policy is designed to avoid situations where students are physically present in class but completing other course work, texting, or watching a movie rather than engaging in the day's lecture and discussion. Students are encouraged to use class time in the manner that is best for them: either engaged and in the classroom or away from the class to avoid distracting others.

Students with documentation are excused from the three required classes for all-campus events, other university events for which they are a team member, and medical emergencies. Students with documentation are also excused for jury duty, required military leave, or other activities as mentioned in the Registrar's Office's "Class Attendance Policy", found here:

<https://uwosh.edu/registrar/academic-policies/#:~:text=Class%20Attendance%20Policy,for%20each%20scheduled%20class%20session>

All documentation must be provided within 2 weeks in order for students to be eligible for attendance points or to make up late work.

Early Alert: Early Alert is a program that provides you with an Early Grade Report from faculty. Early Grade Reports will indicate if you have academic performance or attendance issues and specific steps you can take and resources available to help you improve. It is common for students to be unaware of or over-estimate their academic performance in classes so this will help you be aware early on of your progress and provide strategies for success in the classroom. You will receive an email during the 5th week of classes. It is important to read the entire email carefully. Your early alert assignment for this class will be your map quiz.

Other policies:

Cell Phones, Laptops, Etc.: Please be courteous and set your phone to vibrate or silent mode during class, and please keep your phone in your bag unless I tell you it's OK to use it (sometimes it is!). It is disruptive to all of us if it rings during lecture or discussion. Despite the allure of laptops, the documented best way to learn is for you to take notes on paper in class. If you are on a laptop or tablet and checking non-course-related sites, I'll ask you to stop bringing your devices to class, as it's a distraction to those around you.

Other Distractions: Please refrain from reading the newspaper, wearing headphones/earbuds, checking your phone, or frantically completing your reading or assignments for other classes while you're in mine. It's disrespectful to me and to your classmates. If you cannot give this class your full attention, you probably shouldn't come anyway.

Please do not pack up before I say that class is over. If this becomes a problem, pop quizzes or similar will be your new end of class activity.

Email: I check my email often, and I am happy to answer questions via email. However, please use proper grammar, punctuation, and communication when emailing your professor. That means that all communication should: 1.) include a meaningful subject line; 2.) begin your email with "Dear..."; 3.) use proper titles, if necessary (for faculty, that's usually "Prof." or "Dr."); 4.) be specific about the action you'd like the recipient to take; and 5.) sign your full name to the email or use an automatic signature. If you fail to do so, I will ask you to try again. Also, I am not able to answer questions about grades unless you are using your Oshkosh email address. All class announcements will be sent to your Oshkosh address.

Campus Resources: In the University Studies Program, we want you to be successful. Below is a list of campus services available to support your success. More information about these resources is available at: <http://www.uwosh.edu/home/resources>

Center for Academic Resources: The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the

Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Tutor List page on CAR's website (www.uwosh.edu/car) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on a link to request one, stop by SSC 102 or call 424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.

Writing Center: The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. Trained peer consultants help writers understand an assignment, envision possibilities for a draft, and improve their writing process. They even help writers learn to identify their own proofreading errors. Students can make a free appointment or stop by to see whether a consultant is available. For more information, view their website (<http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>), call 920-424-1152, email wcenter@uwosh.edu, or visit them in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center.

Polk Library/Information Literacy: You have been introduced to Information Literacy in your Quest Speaking and Writing courses. As a reminder, Polk Library offers many professional librarians who can help you find library resources for your research. Specifically, Ted Mulvey, the Information Literacy Librarian, is available to assist you as you access, evaluate, and use information in University Studies Program classes. Phone: 920-424-7329; email: mulveyt@uwosh.edu. You may also set up a research advisory session with a librarian at: rap@uwosh.edu.

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 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. More information can be found here: <https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Academic-Honesty.pdf>

Use of ChatGPT or other AI services: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not permitted for any stage or phase of work in this class. All written work submitted for this course must be completed by you, personally. *You may not use AI tools to draft your work, even if you edit, revise, or paraphrase it.* Use of artificial intelligence (AI) to generate text is strictly prohibited but you may use simple word processing tools to update spelling and grammar in your assignments. Submission of any content generated by AI will be considered a violation of academic integrity, including any AI-generated work that you have summarized or edited. The use of AI tools will be considered cheating and will be subject to the Academic Misconduct policy.

A note for Political Science majors: Political Science majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year. If you have questions about this requirement, your course schedule, possible internships, or career preparation please reach out to your faculty adviser. Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisers at least once per

year. If you are unsure who your adviser is, you can check Titanweb or email Ms. Angelee Hammond at hammond@uwosh.edu.

Disclosure statement: 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/>.

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. Tracy Slagter. She can be reached at slagtert@uwosh.edu. Should she be unable to resolve your concerns, she will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

Statement of reasonable accommodation for student with disabilities:

<https://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/Accessibility-Center/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabus-statement>

Course Calendar:

Reading assignments are given in the course calendar in this syllabus (below). Assigned reading for a class day is given as the “Reading Assignment” below each entry. I expect you to have done the reading for each class ahead of time.

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.

Week 1: M, Feb. 5: Introduction to the class and assignments
 ▪ Reading assignment: syllabus
 W, Feb. 7: Defining Comparative Politics
 ▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 1
 F, Feb. 9: What is “the state”?
 ▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 2
 Su, Feb. 11: USP Pretest Quiz (on Canvas) due by 11:59pm

Week 2: M, Feb12: What is “the state”? II
 ▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 2
 W, Feb. 14: **Alumni Visit**
 ▪ Reading assignment: **Required attendance.**
 F, Feb. 16: Distinguishing nations from states
 ▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 3

Week 3: M, Feb 19: Understanding Democratic Regimes
 ▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 6
 W, Feb. 21: Understanding Electoral Systems
 ▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 6

- F, Feb. 23: The United Kingdom
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, U.K. Case Study
 - **Map Quiz (in class)**

- Week 4:
- M, Feb. 26: The United Kingdom
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, U.K. Case Study
- W, Feb. 28: **Career and Professional Development Visit**
- Reading assignment: **Required attendance. Reeve 307.**
- F, Mar. 1: A closer look at advanced industrial democracies
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 7
 - **Resumes and VMOCK Feedback due by 11:59pm**

- Week 5:
- M, Mar. 4: Germany
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Germany Case Study
- W, Mar. 6: Germany
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Germany Case Study
- F, Mar. 8: No Class - Complete Exam or Prepare
- **Exam 1 open on Canvas Mar. 8 - 10 (at 11:59pm)**

- Week 6:
- M, Mar. 11: Electoral Systems: Concepts and Trends
- Reading Assignment: Krook and Schwindt-Bayer “Electoral Institutions”
- W, Mar. 13: Electoral Systems: Outcomes and Challenges
- Reading Assignment: Htun “Is Gender Like Ethnicity?”
- F, Mar. 15: France
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, France Case Study

- Week 7:
- M, Mar. 18: France
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, France Case Study
- W, Mar. 20: Solutions for Democratic Recession
- Reading assignment: *Foreign Policy* “10 Ideas to Fix Democracy”
- F, Mar. 22: Political Economy
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 4
- Su, Mar. 24 Democratic Disengagement Essay Due (by 11:59pm)**

***** March 24-31 Spring Break *****

- Week 8:
- M, Apr. 1: Nondemocracies
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 8
- W, Apr. 3: Nondemocracies
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 8
- F, Apr. 5: Communism and Post-Communism
- Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 9

- Week 9:
- M, Apr. 8: Communism and Post-Communism, 2
- Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 9
- W, Apr. 10: Test Review
- Reading assignment: Bring questions over content for Exam Two!

F, Apr. 12: No Class - Complete Exam or Prepare
▪ **Exam 2 open on Canvas Apr. 12 - 14 (at 11:59pm)**

- Week 10:
- M, Apr. 15: Russia
▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Russia Case Study
- W, Apr. 17: Russia
▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Russia Case Study
- F, Apr. 19: Nondemocratic Regimes Revisited
▪ Reading assignment:
<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/11/1080125036/throughline-vladimir-putin>
“It’s High Time to Prepare for Russian Collapse” *Foreign Policy*
- Week 11:
- M, Apr. 22: China
▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, China Case Study
- W, Apr. 24: China
▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, China Case Study and
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/16/business/chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-bri.html>
- F, Apr. 26: China
▪ Reading assignment:
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/a-reporter-at-large/china-xinjiang-prison-state-uighur-detention-camps-prisoner-testimony>
- Week 12:
- M, Apr. 29: Political Violence
▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 5
- W, May 1: Political Violence
▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 5
- F, May 3: Iran
▪ Reading assignment: Cases & Concepts, Iran Case Study
- Week 13:
- M, May 6: Iran
▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Iran Case Study
- W, May 8: Iran - Recent Politics
▪ Reading assignment:
<https://www.vox.com/2022/12/10/23499535/iran-protest-movement-explained>
▪ Listen: <https://www.npr.org/2022/10/19/1129998206/the-woman-question>
- F, May 10: No Class
▪ Reading assignment: Credit for Career Fair attendance.
- Week 14:
- M, May 13: Development
▪ Reading Assignment: Cases & Concepts, Chapter 10
- W, May 15: Test Review
▪ Reading assignment: prepare questions for the review
▪ **Quest II Portfolio Due on Canvas**
▪ **W, May 15 – F, May 17 (at 11:59pm) Final Exam Period (Canvas)**

