

Comparative Political Analysis (POLI 361)
Spring 2017

Carolyn Forestiere
PUP 306
forestie@umbc.edu
Office Hours: Tue 11:30-1:00pm

Course Description

The goal of this course is to immerse students in the key theoretical frameworks and analytical methods that dominate the current field of comparative politics. Unlike other courses in Comparative Politics, this course is organized by theme, rather than by country or general geographical region. It is intended to be a continuation of POLI 260, where students attained a basic understanding of the fundamental concepts in comparative politics. For this reason, POLI 260 is considered an important preparation for POLI 361. Having already taken POLI 301 will also be helpful. POLI 361 examines theoretical aspects of the field, including topics such as political economy, globalization, political violence, democracy and post-communism.

The course is designed to expand your set of critical thinking skills. You will learn to read and dissect social science materials, but you will also learn how to apply your newly acquired analytical abilities to understanding events that occur every day in the political world. Furthermore, since students will naturally bring diverse interests to the classroom, we will see how, by breaking down events into component parts, the same set of theories can be used to understand diverse cases. At the end of this course, students should be prepared to utilize the comparative method to understand why events occur in various contexts and to have a set of theoretical resources that can be used beyond the class to understand the political world and other social phenomena.

Course Text

Essential Readings in Comparative Politics, edited by Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski. Norton. Fourth Edition

Course Requirements

There are four categories of grades for the course:

- 1) Midterm (20%)
- 2) Research Paper (40%)
- 3) Final (30%)
- 4) In-class attendance and participation (10%)

A Note on Academic Honesty:

Be honest. Even though there is a lot of ‘group discussion’ in this course, I assume that all the work you turn in is your own. If you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask. See below for a statement on academic integrity from the UMBC Office of Undergraduate Education:

"By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory [or for graduate courses, the Graduate School website]."

Schedule

Dates	Reading
1/31-2/2	Getting set up and Chapter 1: What is Comparative Politics
2/7-2/9	Chapter 2: The State (5)
2/14-2/16	Chapter 3: Nations and Society (4)
2/21-2/23	Chapter 4: Political Economy (5)
2/28-3/2	Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes (5)
3/7-3/9	Chapter 6: Nondemocratic Regimes (4)
3/14-3/16	Midterm
3/21-3/23	SPRING BREAK
3/28-3/30	Chapter 7: Political Violence (5)
4/4-4/6	Chapter 8: Advanced Democracies (6)
4/11-4/13	Chapter 9: Communism and Post-Communism (6)
4/18-4/20	Chapter 10: Less-Developed / Newly Industrializing Countries (5)
4/25-4/27	Chapter 11: Globalization (4)
5/2-5/4	In class presentations
5/9-5/11	In class presentations
5/16	Last day of class

Final exam, TBA