

POSCI 125: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2012

Office: Comenius 104

Office Ph.: 610-861-1418

Office Hours: Mon. and Wed. 11:30 am-1 pm and other times by appointment.

Professor Lisa Fischler

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Class: M, W 3b (10:20-11:30 am)

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to comparative politics through an exploration of politics and society in the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Using a range of themes relevant to comparative politics, the course will offer the theoretical tools and empirical information to critically evaluate politics in non-European and non-North American contexts. The course examines the political histories, political institutions, diverse identities, and political and social groups that have shaped the different paths of countries within Africa, Asia, and Latin America. For comparative purposes, parallel institutions and trends in North America also will be covered. This class fulfills the **M5 LinC** requirement.

Goals and Objectives

- a) Broaden knowledge about the possible range of political institutions, political behavior, political groups, and political problems in the world regions of Latin America, Asia, and Africa.
- b) Comprehend enough about politics in a number of countries to offer intelligent, critical, and well-informed explanations for similarities and differences in the political life of countries in these regions and to better understand the significance of these similarities and differences.
- c) Develop understanding of comparative questions and criticism as concerns the relationship between developed and developing nations.
- d) Improve critical reasoning about politics in non-European and non-North American contexts
- e) Enhance research abilities and oral and written communication skills.

Required Texts: Available at the college bookstore:

- ❖ O'Neil, Patrick, et al. *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*. Third Edition. NY: W.W. Norton and Co. 2010.
- ❖ O'Neil, Patrick, et al. *Cases in Comparative Politics*. Third Edition. NY: W.W. Norton and Co. 2010.

Course Grades, Policies, and Responsibilities

1. **Participation**-will include aspects of the course such as attendance, promptness, in-class participation, preparation, effort, and involvement in and contributions to the class. For assigned readings, you will be expected to read carefully, take notes, list questions, and come prepared to discuss (both verbally and in writing) in the session they are due. You can plan to spend two-three hours outside of class preparing for every hour spent in class. For class, participation includes active involvement in interactive lectures, substantive contributions to discussions, and engagement with in-class activities. Effort counts heavily. Attempting to answer a question, asking a question, or voicing an opinion and supporting it are all part of participation. I will evaluate your participation highly if you: a) attend class regularly and are there for the full class period; b) critically discuss the videos, materials, and readings I make available; c) raise relevant questions and offer thoughtful comments; d) demonstrate you understand the material by your full involvement during in-class activities; e) engage effectively in peer-review sessions in class. Every class session is counted toward your final participation grade. If you do not participate actively in each class, or are not there, your final participation grade will decrease because I cannot grade you when you do not participate.

-You are expected to attend all classes. **Please be aware that absences are not divided into excused and unexcused. Regardless of the reason, an absence from class will be counted as an absence.**

Extended or excessive absences (three or more) are required to be reported to the Dean's Office and each absence after the third will lower your participation grade.

-Arriving late or leaving early can lower your participation grade. After the second instance of late arrival or leaving early, the disruptive classroom policy may be applied.

2. Exams-There will be four in-class exams in this course. These essay exams will strongly emphasize both basic knowledge of and critical reflection on course readings and discussions. The exams are closed book exams. **Rules governing academic honesty apply.** I expect that you will study with other students for the exam, and I encourage such study groups. However, making sure not to write answers that resemble those of the classmates with whom you have studied will help you succeed in keeping your work your own and not borrowing someone else's. Check the syllabus for exact exam dates.

-No make-up exams will be given except in cases that qualify as extenuating, documentable and compelling circumstances. In such cases, criteria for accommodation are the same as detailed under "Accommodations" below.

3. Semester Project: will be an expanded, revised, and edited 750 word formal written version of the essay exam question (from exam I, II, and III) on which you had the lowest grade. The assignment asks you to review your lowest scoring essay answer among the first three exams, go back to the assigned readings applicable to the answer, and greatly improve on the answer you gave. The assignment is to be double-spaced and typed, use twelve point and Times New Roman font, and contain properly formatted citations and a reference page according to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Check the Reeves Library Home page for the reference formatting styles. Check syllabus for exact due date.

-All assignments are due at the time, date, and place noted on the syllabus. Late assignments will be accepted with a five (5) point deduction for each full day late beginning just after the due time and date (e.g. from 4:00 pm on the due date to 4:00 pm the next day is a 5 point deduction), up to 7 full days late at which time late papers and other assignments will no longer be accepted and students will receive a 0 grade on the assignment. No exceptions will be made for technical difficulties. I will only accept written work turned in by email if you have arranged with me beforehand to do so for that specific assignment. In the case of an assignment turned in via email, be aware that I must be able to open the attachment (which must be in .doc format) and email (which must have the assignment cut and pasted into its body) without a problem in order for the assignment to be accepted for credit.

4. Accommodations, Expectations, and Responsibilities

-Requests for accommodation on these policies will only be made in extenuating, documentable, and compelling circumstances; will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; require immediate notification be given to the instructor; and can be referred to Learning Services.

-In case of any crisis or emergency, or an extended absence from class, you must inform your professor through Learning Services or the Academic Dean's Office

-Cell phones need to be turned to OFF and put away in a purse or bookbag during class. Use of cell phones in any way during class may result in dismissal from class and can lower your participation grade.

- Drinks are allowed in class, other food is not.

-Disruptive behavior during class will result in your dismissal from the class the first time, after that, disciplinary action will be taken.

-Learning Disability accommodations: students who wish to request accommodation in this class for support of learning disabilities should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer at Learning Services (610-861-1510), 1307 Main St. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the appropriate disability support provider on campus.

-The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

-Academic Honesty-All students are expected to follow the principles of academic honesty as set out in the policies of Moravian College. See the Student Handbook for details. Any and all written work must be done in your own words (with the exception of direct quotations which are clearly indicated as such), and written work must include proper citations indicating the sources for any ideas, concepts, facts, or other information derived from others, whether or not you have restated it in your own words. Any cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Affairs Office. Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade in the course.

-Email etiquette-students can expect email to be answered within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends, provided that email is correctly addressed (to Dr. Fischler or Professor Fischler), signed by the student, and civil in content.

-For the well-being of both students and the instructor, I will insist on a 24 hour waiting period after each assignment is passed back before I will discuss it with you. After that, I am happy to engage in a reasonable, rational discussion about your assignment or exam with you.

-These guidelines are intended for the benefit of the students as far as clarification of the instructor's expectations for the course; however, in exceptional circumstances the instructor reserves the right to exercise discretion in the application of these guidelines to individual cases or to refer a particular case to the Academic Dean if necessary.

B. Grade Components

Your final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

Exam I	150 points
Exam II	150 points
Exam III	150 points
Exam IV	150 points
Semester Project	100 points
Participation	<u>100 points</u>
	800 points

Guidelines (Rubric) for Written Assignments

(Written by Ben Slote and modified slightly by Ann Bomberger)

1) Written work in the A range is based on an original, logical and coherently organized set of ideas; it makes a clear and persuasive argument (even if the reader disagrees with its argument); it brings in specific, relevant examples to back up its assertions; its points, at each turn, are clearly articulated: the words carry precise meaning, they don't obscure it; its sentences use only the words their ideas require, not any more; its paragraphs have distinct though related roles in the essay's cohesion as a whole, each holding one thoroughly asserted idea (not two competing ideas, not one idea half-asserted); if appropriate it accurately and thoughtfully uses other sources; and its sentences are without the grammatical, spelling, or typographical mistakes that exacting proof-reading would catch. (All of this takes a lot of work. If it is

all very nearly accomplished, the essay usually earns an A-.)

2) Written work in the B range: a very good paper, the writing of which is clearly, thoughtfully, and effectively executed. What sometimes prevents an "A" is a lack of originality, thorough thinking or careful proofreading. If two of these virtues are absent and the other areas of the paper are strong, the essay will usually earn a B-.

3) Written work in the C range: some conspicuous flaw usually earns an essay a C; its argument is really underdeveloped, it contains only minimal textual support, it has problems with organization and/or sentence clarity, it is in dire need of proofreading.

4) Written D work either contains more than one of the large problems cited in the "C" description or finds another way to convince its reader that the author has not spent nearly enough time on the thinking or writing in the essay.

5) Written work that earns an F misses on all criteria (originality, articulateness, persuasiveness, organization, the absence of mechanical mistakes).

Final Grade Scale (in percentage, not points)

93-100	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
63-66.9	D
60-62.9	D-
less than 60	F

Note: It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignment and for the course final grade.

Schedule and Assignments (Schedule may be changed at the discretion of the instructor; advance notice will be given)

****Be sure to bring assigned readings to class each day. We will use them for in-class assignments, some of which may be graded. Your grade for the day may depend on your remembering to bring your book to class.**

Class Session Date	Topic	Assigned Readings and Assignment(s) Due
1 M 1/16/12	Introduction	None
1 W 1/18/12	What is Comparative Politics?	<i>Cases</i> pp. 2-24

January 23, 2012	Last Day to add/drop	
2 M 1/23/12	The State	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 20-22; 43-51
2 W 1/25/12	Nigeria	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 531-565
3 M 1/30/12	Nations and Society	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 84-101
3 W 2/1/12	Russia	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 245-282
4 M 2/6/12	Summing Up	Exam I
4 W 2/8/12	Political Economy	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 103-105; 116-126
5 M 2/13/12	Mexico	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 407-443
5 W 2/15/12	“LDCs” and “NICs”	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 383-384; 385-390
6 M 2/20/12	China	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 285-309
6 W 2/22/12	Post-communism	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 321-323; 336-346
7 M 2/27/12	Summing Up	Exam II
7 W 2/29/12	India	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 327-364
March 3-10, 2012	Spring Break	No classes
8 M 3/12/12	Democratic Regimes	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 151-159
8 3/14/12	Japan	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 200-232

9 M 3/19/12	Advanced Democracies	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 296-303
9 W 3/21/12	United States	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 76-99
10 M 3/26/12	Summing Up	Exam III
10 W 3/28/12	Globalization	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 509-516
11 M 4/2/12	Iran	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 370-400
11 W 4/4/12	Political Violence	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 460-473
April 6-9, 2012	Easter Break	No classes
12 W 4/11/12	Brazil	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 451-481
13 M 4/16/12	Summing Up	Exam IV
13 W 4/18/12	South Africa	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 491-521
14 M 4/23/12	France	<i>Cases</i> , pp. 116-149
April 24, 2012 (Tuesday)	Written assignment	Semester Project due by 4 pm in Comenius 206
14 W 4/25/12	Revolutions and Regime Change	<i>Essential Readings</i> , pp. 376-383
April 30-May 4, 2012	Final Exams	