

Gov 1400: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2020

M/W/F 8:30 – 9:25 am
Pickering Room, Hubbard Hall
Gov1400@bowdoin.edu

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Office hours:
Mondays 2:00 – 3:30 pm
Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30 pm
and by appointment

This course provides a broad introduction to key concepts, cases, and debates in comparative politics. Most generally, we will ask why states are governed differently, both historically and in contemporary politics, and why governments have different responses to similar policy challenges. Why are some states strong while others are weak? Why are some states democratic while others are authoritarian? How can less developed states generate economic growth? We will weigh competing explanations for these differences across states, including explanations that focus on economic interests, institutions, and identity and culture. We also will survey the methods used in comparative politics and students will develop a research design for a comparative project.

In general, new material will be introduced each Monday and Wednesday. Friday courses will be devoted to applying our questions and theories to case material.

Participation, Assignments, and Grading:

Grades will be calculated based on the following assignments:

Participation and Weekly Quizzes	10 percent	Throughout the semester
Weak State paper	20 percent	Monday, February 17
Midterm exam	25 percent	Monday, March 2
Comparative Research Design	20 percent	Friday, April 24
Final Exam (Take Home)	25 percent	Thursday, May 14 by noon

Participation and Weekly Quizzes

The participation grade includes a student's attendance, engagement in learning, participation in class discussion and activities, and completion of the weekly quizzes. Attendance is extremely important to your success in this course. Please inform the instructor of any anticipated absences; more than two unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade.

In addition to attending class and completing all assigned reading, students should actively engage with the learning process by coming to class prepared to contribute questions and insights from the readings. Please bring your reading to class every time.

Each class meeting on Friday will begin with a short quiz. Questions will be drawn from the week's readings as well as a few short articles from the news media related that intersect with our class concepts and lectures. Quizzes will serve as the basis for discussion.

Fragile State Paper

Each student will choose a country listed on the Fragile States Index in the categories of Alert, High Alert, or Very High Alert. Students will research nature of state fragility in each country case, identifying multiple factors that contribute to weakness and briefly comparing their country to a second case.

For all papers, please use the Chicago Manual of Style citation format:

<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will be an in-class, bluebook exam covering the material through Friday, February 28. The exam will include a combination of essays, short answer, and multiple choice questions.

Comparative Research Design

Each student will design a comparative research project and write a proposal for that project. Students will pick a challenge faced by states and compare how two states respond to that challenge. Proposals will elaborate the question, hypotheses, case selection, conceptualization, measurement, research strategy, evidence gathering, and so forth.

Final Exam

The final will be a cumulative exam, but will emphasize material covered during the second half of the course. The final will be a take home exam, including several essays.

Late papers

Written assignments handed in after the class meeting when they are due will be lowered by a 1/3 grade (for example, A to A-). For each 24 hours after the deadline that passes, the paper will be marked down by another 1/3 grade.

Readings

Two books are required for purchase:

- Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, W.W. Norton and Co., 2018, 6th ed.
- Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, W.W. Norton and Co., 2018, 5th ed.

All other required readings will be available through our Blackboard course website. Readings listed next to each class session indicate material that will be discussed in that class session so please complete those readings prior to class.

Blackboard Course Website

There is a course website on Blackboard where you will find access to readings, copies of assignments and other handouts, advice for researching topics related to climate politics, links to useful websites, and a “Comparative Politics in the News” section. I encourage you to visit the website and to use its resources as you complete your assignments.

Laptop Policy

Laptops and tablets are not allowed in class on a regular basis, unless you have a documented accommodation or some other challenge that necessitates an exception. While I recognize that they can be useful for note taking, they are also a distraction and can be an obstacle to class participation. Please see me if you have any concerns. I will occasionally ask you to bring a laptop for a class activity at a specific class meeting.

Learning Goals

This course is designed to begin to fulfill the learning goals of the Department of Government and Legal Studies in the comparative politics subfield:

“Comparative Politics is a field of study and a methodology within political science. The subfield of comparative politics focuses on power and decision making within national boundaries: the rules and institutions that govern states and the social groups they comprise. Some scholars focus on politics in a single country, others specialize regionally, while others investigate variation in patterns of authority cross-nationally. As a method, comparative political science strives to make propositions that can be tested empirically, through qualitative or quantitative analysis, and which hold validity across all systems or within well-defined limits. Topics central to the field include the origins of democracy and dictatorship, reasons for economic growth and stagnation, sources of social conflict, and avenues for participation and representation.”

Accommodations

Bowdoin College is committed to ensuring access to learning opportunities for all students. Students seeking accommodations based on disabilities must register with the Student Accessibility Office. Please discuss any special needs or accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs; I am eager to work with you to ensure that your approved accommodations are appropriately implemented. If you have questions about requesting accommodations or concerns about approved accommodations, please contact Lesley Levy (llevy@bowdoin.edu), director of student accessibility.

Plagiarism

Please adhere to Bowdoin’s Academic Honor Code for all in engagement with this course: <https://www.bowdoin.edu/dean-of-students/student-handbook/the-academic-honor-code-and-social-code.html>

We will discuss how to properly cite your sources, but you also consult the college webpage on plagiarism: <https://www.bowdoin.edu/dean-of-students/judicial-board/academic-honesty-and-plagiarism/index.html>. If you are in doubt about how to refer to a particular work, please let me know.

Bowdoin College uses the following definition of plagiarism:

“Plagiarism is possible with any work performed in any medium and in any scholarly discipline. Plagiarism involves the intentional or unintentional use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment in all such scholarly work as essays, examinations, oral/written reports, homework assignments, laboratory reports, computer programs, music scores, choreography, graphic depictions, and visual presentations. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in selling of term papers or other academic materials.”
(Bowdoin Academic Honor Code)

Syllabus:

Introduction: What is Comparative Politics?

Wednesday, January 22

Introduction to the course: Why compare?

Friday, January 24

O'Neil, "Introduction," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap 1.

Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 28-34.

Comparing and Explaining: The Methods of Comparative Politics

Monday, January 27

Timothy C. Lim, "Introduction: What Is Comparative Politics?", *Doing Comparative Politics*, 2nd ed, 2010, pp.1-30.

Mark I. Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman, "Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 4-9.

Wednesday, January 29

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, "The *Science* in Social Science." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 10-15.

Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Chapter 1, pp 7-48. SKIM.

The State: Where Does it Come From and Why Does It Endure?

Friday, January 31

O'Neil, "States," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 2.

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," pp. 169-187. In Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Monday, February 3

Jeffrey Herbst, "War and the State in Africa." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 35-49.

Robert I. Rotberg, "The New Nature of Nation-State Failure." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 49-56.

Pass out Weak State assignment in class

Wednesday, February 5

Fund for Peace, "Fragile State Index Annual Report 2019,"

Available at <https://fundforpeace.org/2019/04/10/fragile-states-index-2019/>.

Developing Research Skills

Friday, February 7

Meet at Hawthorne-Longfellow Library in Electronic Classroom, near Media Commons.

Barbara Levergood will assist in a class activity to identify sources for your first paper, due at the end of the class period.

Nations and Ethnicity

Monday, February 10

O'Neil, "Nations and Society," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 3.

Eric Hobsbawm, "Nationalism." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 66-74.

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 75-85.

Wednesday, February 12

Class will be divided in half, with one group assigned to each reading:

Robert H. Bates, "Modernization, Ethnic Competition, and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa," in Donald Rothchild and Victor A. Olorunsola, eds. *State Versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas* (Westview Press, 1983), pp. 152-171.

Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond." *World Politics* 53 (April 2001), pp. 362-98.

Friday, February 14

Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993.

Amartya Sen, "Civilizational Imprisonments: How to Misunderstand Everybody in the World," *New Republic*, June 10, 2002, pp. 28-33.

Political Economy: What is the Role of the State?

Monday, February 17

O'Neil, "Political Economy," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 4.

Adam Smith, "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 141-146.

*****Weak State Paper - Due by 5 pm*****

Wednesday, February 19

Daron Acemoglu, "Root Causes: A Historical Approach to Assessing the Role of Institutions in Economic Development." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 159-162.

Immanuel Wallerstein "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 16, 3 (1974): 387-415.

Friday, February 21

Human Development Index: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>

GINI Index: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI>

Democracy

Monday, February 24

O'Neil, "Democratic Regimes," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 5.

Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is ... and Is Not." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 180-189.

Wednesday, February 26

Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 189-198.

Samuel Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner, eds. *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 3-5, 11-21.

Friday, February 28

Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk, "The Danger of Deconsolidation." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 229-238.

Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2019," available at:

<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019>

Midterm

Monday, March 2

Midterm exam in class

Authoritarianism

Wednesday, March 4

O'Neil, "Nondemocratic Regimes," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 6.

Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 241-253 .

Friday, March 6

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 254-264.

M. Steven Fish, "Islam and Authoritarianism," *World Politics* 55, 1 (October 2002): 4-37.

Monday, March 9 through Friday, March 20

SPRING BREAK – No Class!

Authoritarianism, continued.

Monday, March 23

Andrew J. Nathan, "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy* 14:1 (2003): 6-17.

Minxin Pei, "Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?" *Journal of Democracy* 23:1 (2012): 27-41.

Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Erica Franz, "How Democracies Fall Apart: Why Populism is a Pathway to Autocracy," *Foreign Affairs*, December 5, 2016.

Advanced Democracies

Wednesday, March 25

O'Neil, "Advanced Democracies," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 8

Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 53, 1 (1959): 69-86 **only**.

Friday, March 27

Maurice Duverger, "The Number of Parties." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 432-436.

Torben Iversen and David Soskice, "Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More than Others," pp. 437-446.

Conceptualization and Research Design

Monday, March 30

David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49, 3 (1997): 430-451.

Pass out Comparative Research Design assignment in class.

Civil Society and Social Movements

Wednesday, April 1

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II, pp. 106-110.

Simone Chambers and Jeffrey Kopstein, "Bad Civil Society," *Political Theory* 29, 6 (2001): 837-865. SKIM.

Friday, April 3

Robert D. Putnam, "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America," In O'Neil and Rogowski, 3rd ed., pp. 222-250. (**See Blackboard, not your textbook!**)

Sidney G. Tarrow, "Introduction" and "Contentious Politics and Social Movements," *Power in Movement* (Cambridge University Press, 2011, 3rd ed.), pp 1-34.

Post-Communist States: Legacies and Regimes

Monday, April 6

O'Neil, "Communism and Post-Communism," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 9

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 465-477. SKIM.

Adam Przeworski, "A Prologue: The Fall of Communism." In O'Neil and Rogowski, 3rd ed., pp. 366-371. (See **Blackboard, not your textbook!**)

Wednesday, April 8

Grzegorz Ekiert, "The Illiberal Challenge in Post-Communist Europe." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 477-488.

Henry Hale, "25 Years After the USSR: What's Gone Wrong?" In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 489-497.

Friday, April 10

Freedom House, Nations in Transit 2018: Confronting Illiberalism." Available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>.

Debate on Democracy Promotion.

Developing States: How to Generate Growth?

Monday, April 13

O'Neil, "Developing Countries," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 10.

William Easterly, "To Help the Poor from The Elusive Quest for Growth." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 509-515.

Wednesday, April 15

Paul Collier and Jan Gunning, "Why Has Africa Grown Slowly?" In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 525-542.

Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson. "Disease and Development." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 543-548.

Friday, April 17

The Economist, "Why Africa's development model puzzles economists," August 17, 2017.

Contemporary Challenges in Comparative Politics: Political Violence

Monday, April 20

O'Neil, "Political Violence," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 7.

Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 328-343.

Wednesday, April 22

Scott Atran and Robert Axelrod, "Reframing Sacred Values." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 343-362.

Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want." In O'Neil and Rogowski, 3rd ed., pp. 372-394.
(See Blackboard, not your textbook!)

Friday, April 24

Class Activity: Policies to prevent political violence.

*****Comparative Research Design due in class*****

Contemporary Challenges in Comparative Politics: Globalization

Monday, April 27

O'Neil, "Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics," *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Chap. 11.

Dani Rodrik, "Is Global Governance Feasible? Is it Desirable?" In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 550-564.

Wednesday, April 29

Niall Ferguson, "Populism as a Backlash Against Globalization: Historical Perspectives," In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 567-573.

John S. Dryzek, "Global Civil Society: The Progress of Post-Westphalian Politics." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 573-590.

Friday, May 1

Class Activity on Globalization.

Conclusion

Monday, May 4

Stephen D. Krasner, "Sovereignty." In O'Neil and Rogowski, pp. 57-63.

Wednesday, May 6

Last class: Comparative Politics Game Show.

*****Final Exam – Due on Thursday, May 14, 2009 by noon*****