



COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number POL 103 A	Course Title Comparative Politics		
Fall Semester	Spring Semester x	Summer Semester	Year 2013-2014
Name of Instructor Chad Rector			
Meeting Day, Time, and Room Number Monday, Thursday 2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m., Gailhac Hall, Room G114			
Final Exam Day, Time, and Room Number May 5, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., Gailhac Hall, Room G114			
Office Hours, Location, Phone Mondays and Thursdays 10-10:45 and 1-1:45, and many other times. Ireton G108.			
E-mail crector@marymount.edu http://worldpolitics.marymount.edu/103			

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

By accepting this syllabus, you pledge to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity expressed by the Marymount University Community. You agree to observe these principles yourself and to defend them against abuse by others.

Special Needs and Accommodations

Please advise the instructor of any special problems or needs at the beginning of the semester. If you seek accommodation based on disabilities, you should provide a Faculty Contact Sheet obtained through the Office of Student Access Services, located in Rowley Hall.

Access to Student Work

Copies of your work in this course including copies of any submitted papers and your portfolios may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. All work used for these purposes will be submitted anonymously.

Student Copyright Authorization

For the benefit of current and future students, work in this course may be used for educational critique, demonstrations, samples, presentations, and verification. Outside of these uses, work shall not be sold, copied, broadcast, or distributed for profit without student consent.

University Policy on Snow Closings

Snow closings are generally announced on area radio stations. For bulletins concerning Marymount snow or weather closings, call (703) 526-6888. Unless otherwise advised by radio announcement or by official bulletins on the number listed above, students are expected to report for class as near normal time as possible on days when weather conditions are adverse. Decisions as to snow closing or delayed opening are not generally made before 5:00 AM of the working day. Students are expected to attend class if the University is not officially closed.

1. BROAD PURPOSE OF COURSE

An introduction to the workings of politics inside countries other than the United States and an examination of the main conceptual approaches to understanding authority, institutions, and political change.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain key recurring patterns in comparative politics,
2. Interpret new or ongoing political events and transformations abroad in light of general theories of comparative government, and
3. Research and write competently in preparation for upper-division coursework

Introductory social science (SS1) objectives. After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain broad social science phenomenon including delegation and representation, collective action and regime change, and the use and limits of power and authority,
2. Apply analytic concepts and broad theories to specific social phenomena, and
3. Critically engage competing explanations for change in the political systems in preparation for upper-division coursework.

Global perspective (GP) objectives. In this course, students will:

1. Develop an understanding of the logic of the workings of political institutions outside of the United States,
2. Complete a series of short papers that together constitute a "global perspectives project" that demonstrates, through a combination of critical engagement with social science concepts and original research, an understanding of how societies make collective decisions.

3. TEACHING METHOD

Classes are a combination of lecture and discussion; student participation is a requirement. I expect you to form study groups that meet regularly. A requirement of the course is that you attend at least one one-on-one meeting with me and at least two study-group meetings with me before the end of the semester.

I am available to meet with students in my office in Ireton Hall G108 on Mondays and Thursdays between 10 and 10:45 and between 1 and 1:45 and on many other rotating times as well; you should feel free to come by during the M/Th times without an appointment if you wish, but at other times it is generally best to make an appointment. Times and appointment slots are listed [on this calendar](#), linked to QR code on right. You must be logged in to gmail or Marymount email. Scroll to the right to see future weeks.



4. GRADING POLICY

Final course grades will be determined on a fixed scale, not on a curve. Each assignment is worth a fixed number of points, listed below; these add up to 100. Each assignment will be returned with a numerical score. Course grades will be based on the total number of points out the 100 possible, with 90-100 an A, 80-89 a B, 70-79 a C, 60-69 a D, and 59 and below an F.

Course grades will be based on a weighted average of the following:

- Three exams. 15% each, 45% total. February 20, April 3, and May 5. Each exam consists of two parts: 5 short-answer identification questions worth 2% each (choose 5 out of 8) and 1 short essay question worth 5% (choose 1 out of 2). Students who miss exams will have one chance to take a makeup and will be marked down unless they have a valid medical or university business excuse. The exams will be written in class without books, notes, computers, phones, audio devices, or other aids. Students found violating the Marymount principles of Academic Integrity will fail the course and be formally charged through the University's Academic Integrity process.
- Four short papers due February 2, March 7, March 28, and April 16. 10% each. Each student's highest-scoring paper will count for double. 50% total. The specific assignments will be posted online three weeks before each due date. Papers will be at least 2 pages long, double-spaced, with standard font and margins. Students turning in papers containing plagiarism will fail the course and be formally charged through the University's Academic Integrity process. Papers are due at midnight the evening of the due date, and will be marked down one point for each day (or fraction of a day) late. These four papers together constitute a "global perspectives project" and must be completed with an average grade of C- (a total of 35 out of a possible 50 total points) to pass the course.
- Class participation. 5%. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings and apply them to contemporary issues. You may also earn extra credit for sustained contributions to discussion.

There are substantial opportunities for extra credit:

- Extra credit games. We will play several games in class over the semester. Students who are in class will receive extra credit points which can significantly improve final course grade, depending on how they do in the game. Games will not be announced ahead of time, cannot be made up, and will not be held on recognized religious holidays.
- DC event. 5% for a first event and 3% for a second. Attend an event in the DC area on any subject related to world politics, broadly defined, and write a blog post summarizing your experience. Specific instructions about attending and reporting on events are here. See examples here. Posts must be well-written to receive credit; I will send back poorly-written posts for revisions before they are accepted. You will receive 5 extra credit points for one event and post, and 3 points for a second. All events must be completed by Friday May 2 and blog posts submitted for final approval by Saturday May 3. Blog posts are kept private by default, but we may make selected posts public by mutual agreement.

Some additional course requirements are mandatory but do not count for any points:

- Assignments for study group and one-on-one meetings. You must meet with me in my office at least once one-on-one during the semester and at least twice as part of a study group. I will provide ample opportunity for students to set times for these meetings. At these meetings, you must bring a completed assignment. I will post specifics for the assignments in advance. If the assignment is incomplete, you will need to meet with me again to complete it properly. Failure to complete any one of these assignments will result in automatic failure of the course.
 - One-on-one meeting: an outline of a short paper you plan to write for one of the paper assignments, including source references, a thesis statement, and a summary of each contributing fact and idea. You must schedule this one-on-one meeting with me prior to the due date for either of the first two paper assignments.
 - First group meeting: a complete outline of a chapter from the textbook. This must be prior to the first exam.
 - Second group meeting: a complete set of notes from one class session. This must be completed prior to the second exam.
- Class attendance. Any student who misses 7 or more class sessions will automatically fail the course. Students will not be penalized for missing a class for a recognized religious holiday.

Papers will be marked down one point for each day (or fraction of a day) late. Any assignment or paper that is turned in on time may be rewritten for partial credit, but the grade after revision cannot exceed a B-. Students who miss an exam will have one chance to take a makeup and will be marked down unless they have a valid medical or university business excuse. Students will not be penalized for missing a class assignment for a recognized religious holiday. The exams will be written in class without books, notes, computers, phones, audio devices, or other aids.

Friday, February 7, is the last day to withdraw from a class without academic record.

Friday, March 21, is the last day to withdraw from a class with a grade of W.

I may, at my discretion, check any written assignments for plagiarism at any time during or after the semester, using electronic or other means. Students found violating the Marymount principles of Academic Integrity will fail the course and be formally charged through the University's Academic Integrity process. By accepting this syllabus and enrolling in the course, students acknowledge that they have reviewed the University's standards of academic integrity.

5. CLASS SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed before the class session under which they are listed. "Chapter" refers to a chapter in the assigned textbook. Readings outside the textbook are linked below. Some readings on current events are marked TBA and will be assigned during the semester.

Listed by each class meeting day is a reading assignment. Complete the reading before the class meeting.

Part 1: The balance of coercion and representation

Monday, January 13
Introduction and overview

Thursday, January 16
Theory and evidence
Reading: Chapter 1

Thursday, January 23
Violence and Order
Reading: Start Chapter 2

Monday, January 27
States
Reading: Finish Chapter 2

Thursday, January 30
Democratic institutions
Reading: Start Chapter 3

Paper #1 due Sunday February 2

Monday, February 3
Parliamentary democracy

Thursday, February 6
Parties and voting
Reading: Finish Chapter 3

Monday, February 10
Coercion
Reading: Start Chapter 4

Thursday, February 13
Authoritarianism
Reading: Finish Chapter 4

Monday, February 17
Review

Thursday, February 20
First Exam

Part 2: State and Society

Monday, February 24
Regime Change
Reading: Start Chapter 5

Thursday, February 27
Social activism and mobilization
Reading: Finish Chapter 5

Monday, March 3
Identity
Reading: Chapter 6

Thursday, March 6
Religion and Politics
Reading: Chapter 7

Paper #2 due Friday March 7

Spring Break

Monday, March 17
Gender and Politics
Reading: Chapter 8

Thursday, March 20
Collective action
Reading: Chapter 9

Monday, March 24
Revolution
Reading: Start Chapter 10

Thursday, March 27
Violence
Reading: Finish Chapter 10

Paper #3 due Friday March 28

Monday, March 31
Review

Thursday, April 3
Second Exam

Part 3: Political Economy

Monday, April 7
Development
Reading: Chapter 11

Thursday, April 10
Paths to development
Reading: TBA

Monday, April 14
Economic convergence

Paper #4 due Wednesday, April 16

Easter Break

Tuesday, April 22
Redistribution
Reading: Chapter 12

Thursday, April 24
Poverty
Reading: TBA

Monday, April 28
Health care
Reading: TBA

Thursday, May 1
Review

Monday, May 5, 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Third Exam

6. REQUIRED TEXTS

The required textbook is available for purchase at the bookstore or any online retailer.

Samuels, David. 2013. *Comparative Politics*. Pearson. ISBN: 978-0-321-44974-0.

7. REQUIRED OR SUGGESTED READINGS OR AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

N/A