

# **POL 2700: Comparative Political Systems**

University of Missouri  
Spring 2018

M W F 12:00PM - 12:50PM, Middlebush Hall, Room 211

T. Murat Yildirim

Office location: 207 Professional Building

Email: [tmypqf@mail.missouri.edu](mailto:tmypqf@mail.missouri.edu)

Office hours: M W 1:00-3:00 (or by appointment)

## **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the study of comparative politics. Through critical comparative analysis we will examine political institutions, processes, and outcomes within countries. The course is designed primarily to compare the impact of regime and government types, economic development, political culture, electoral and representative institutions in a way that allows us to make generalizations about the political environment surrounding us. Therefore, we will go beyond describing the politics of individual countries and look more deeply into the various interrelations that exist within and between social and political phenomena.

## **Required Books**

- William R. Clark, Matt Golder and Sona N. Golder. *Principles of Comparative Politics*, 3rd Edition. CQ Press, 2017

Other required readings will be available on Canvas.

Final class grades will be assigned with the following grading scale:

$A+ = 97.0 - 100$

$A = 93.0 - 96.99$

$A- = 90.0 - 92.99$

$B+ = 87.0 - 89.99$

$B = 83.0 - 86.99$

$B- = 80.0 - 82.99$

$C+ = 77.0 - 79.99$

$C = 70.0 - 76.99$

$D+ = 67.0 - 69.99$

$D = 60.0 - 66.99$

$F = 0 - 59.99$

## **Class Requirements**

### **Participation (10%)**

Although not mandatory, attendance is critical to your success in this class. You are expected to **complete all of the required reading prior to class** and participate actively in class discussions, as class meetings will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Students who come to class prepared and consistently engage in class discussions can expect to receive full participation points.

We will play several trivia games in class throughout the semester, in which you might be asked questions about current events, concepts explored in the readings, and/or the world map. Students will work in small groups (4-5 students) to find the correct answers and the team with the highest number of correct answers in each game will receive bonus point(s) that count toward the final exam. The purpose of this additional assignment is for you to familiarize yourself with countries and regions, and engage critically with the readings and current events featured in the news.

### **Exams (60%)**

There will be two exams, each of which will be worth 30% of your total grade. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions about topics covered in the readings and lectures. The final exam is not cumulative. Exam dates are **March 12** and **May 2**.

## **Final Project (30%)**

Students will team up to write a final report that critically examines the politics of a region (such as Western Europe) in the world. Students are expected to provide a brief examination of the political history of the region, along with political institutions and culture dominant in the region. Ideally, the report should compare and contrast the countries of the region and present figures showing the evolution of political systems within the region. The report should not be shorter than 10 pages and should be double-spaced. A more detailed grading rubric will be provided after the midterm. The final project is due **May 12**.

## **Other Considerations**

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. In this course, you are expected to submit original work and behave in a respectful manner toward both the instructor and other students in the class. Breaches of the academic integrity rules are extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach range from instructor-imposed academic sanctions, such as a failing grade for the course, to University-imposed disciplinary sanctions, such as probation or expulsion. If you have questions, please consult the University's academic integrity website, <http://academicintegrity.missouri.edu/>, and the University M-book, [www.missouri.edu/mbook](http://www.missouri.edu/mbook). Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

### **ADA Statement**

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible. If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please establish an accommodation plan with the Disability Center ([disabilitycenter.missouri.edu](http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696), and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, visit [ada.missouri.edu](http://ada.missouri.edu).

**January 15, (Monday): No Class**

- *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

**January 17, (Wednesday): Course Overview**

- No Reading

**January 19-22, (Friday, Monday): What is Comparative Politics?**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 1

**January 24-26, (Wednesday, Friday): Science and Pseudoscience**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 2
- Massimo Pigliucci: pp.10-12 (on Canvas)

**January 29, (Monday): What is Politics?**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 3

**January 31 - February 2, (Wednesday, Friday): The Origins of the Modern State**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 4

**February 5-7-9, (Monday, Wednesday, Friday): Democracy and Dictatorship**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 5
- Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry L. Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is... and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3): 75-88.

**February 12-14, (Monday, Wednesday): Economic Determinants of Regime Types**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 6
- Boix, Charles. 2006. "The Roots of Democracy: Equality, Inequality and the Choice of Political Institutions." *Policy Review*, 3-21.

**February 16-19-21, (Friday, Monday, Wednesday): Cultural Determinants of Regime Types**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 7

**February 23-26, (Friday, Monday): Democratic Transitions**

- Rustow, D. A. 1970. “Transitions to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model.” *Comparative Politics*, 2(3): 337-363.
- Carothers, T., 2002. “The end of the transition paradigm”. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1): 5-21.

**February 28, (Wednesday): Democratic Transitions II**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 8

**March 2, (Friday): Regime Type and Economic Performance**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 9

**March 5-7, (Monday, Wednesday): Varieties of Dictatorship**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 10
- Morse, Y. L., 2012. “The Era of Electoral Authoritarianism.” *World Politics*, 64(1): 161-198.

**March 9, (Friday): Review**

- No Reading

**March 12, (Monday): MIDTERM**

**March 14-16, (Wednesday, Friday): Varieties of Democracy**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 12

**March 19-21-23, (Monday, Wednesday, Friday): Making and Breaking Governments**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 12 (continued)
- Lijphart, A., 1999. *Executive-Legislative Relations*, pp. 116-143. (on Canvas)

**SPRING BREAK [March 26 - 28 - 30]**

**April 2, (Monday): No Class**

- No Reading

**April 4-6-9, (Wednesday, Friday, Monday): Elections and Electoral Systems**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 13

**April 11-13, (Wednesday, Friday): Social Cleavages and Party Systems**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 14

**April 16-18, (Monday, Wednesday): Institutional Veto Players**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 15

**April 20, (Friday): Workshop - Final Project**

- No reading

**April 23-25, (Monday, Wednesday): Consequences of Democratic Institutions**

- Clark, Golder & Golder: Chapter 16

**April 27, (Friday): Review**

- No reading

**April 30, (Monday): Workshop II - Final Project**

- No reading
- Final Project is due **May 12**.

**May 2, (Wednesday): FINAL**