POL 301 Politics of Developed Nations  
Fall 2017  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:40-11:50  
Pioneer A109

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Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the politics of developed states. We will do this through a comparative study of the political development and politics in five countries. Using these countries as case studies, we learn about political development, regime types, and political institutions. This course will address questions such as: How should we define democracy? What are the differences between democratic and authoritarian regimes? How have historical developments shaped politics and regimes today? Why and under what circumstances is regime change more or less likely? How do different political institutions work and how do variations in constitutional and electoral design impact political outcomes?

By the end of the course you will be able to explain differences between democracies and various types of non-democratic regimes. You will have developed a more nuanced understanding of democracy and the tensions inherent in it. In addition, you will have a better understanding not only of the current political issues in each of the five countries we will study, but also of the forces – historical, political, economic, and cultural that have shaped these current political systems.

COURSE PREREQUISITES: POL103 or Consent of Instructor

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Gain an appreciation for the variety of forms democracy takes around the world and understand the qualitative differences between democracy and authoritarian regimes. Assessment: Class discussion, Assignments, Exams.
2. Apply the comparative method to the study of political development, regime types, political economy, and political institutions. Assessment: Class Discussion, Exams.
3. Analyze the politics of five countries. Assessment: Class discussion, Assignments, Exams.
4. Be able to explain and offer examples of how political institutions, including constitutional structures and electoral systems shape political processes. Assessment: Class discussion, Assignments, Exam
5. Be able to demonstrate how political institutions have been shaped by each country’s particular political development trajectory, POLITICAL CULTURE, interests, and resources. Assessment: Assignments, Exams
6. Understand world cultures and reflectively interact with cultures other than their own. Assessment: Simulation, Paper
7. Critically evaluate global issues from multiple perspectives. Assessment: Simulation, Paper
8. Understand and analyze multiple philosophical and ethical positions held by persons within their own and other cultures. Assessment: Simulation, Paper

Required Texts

- E-Reserve Readings: There will be a few additional required readings throughout the course of the semester. These will be available via library E-reserves. If the reading is not posted onto the library e-reserve in time for that class period, I’ll make the reading available on Canvass and notify the class of this change beforehand.
- You should do the corresponding readings before each lecture. The amount of reading will vary considerably from week to week. You are welcome, and even encouraged, to take advantage of light reading weeks and read ahead. You are strongly discouraged from falling behind. It will be difficult to catch up, you will be responsible for knowing the readings for quizzes and exams, and we may discuss some of the readings during class. Also, lecture will not simply restate or summarize the information in the readings. It will complement the readings, and both are required for doing well in the course.
- Additional materials will be posted on My Courses and are noted in the syllabus.
- The required books are available at the university bookstore. All students will be expected to have the materials in a timely fashion so to be able to read, discuss, and complete course assignments.
- Students are also encouraged to keep-up with current events that unfold during the semester. Not only will this provide opportunity for increasing knowledge of politics, but also an opportunity for applying what they have learned to contemporary events. Students should read at least one newspaper daily such as the New York Times (www.nytimes.com), the Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com), or the Christian Science Monitor (www.csmonitor.com). It would also be useful for students to read such journals and magazines as Foreign Affairs or Foreign Policy, and The Economist or U.S News and World Report. They also offer heavily discounted subscription rates for students. These periodicals are available at the TWM Library.
Here is a list of relevant media sources related to the countries we will be discussing:

**U.S. and UK Sources:**
The Guardian (London) (www.guardian.co.uk)
The Independent (London) (http://www.independent.co.uk)
The Economist (available in the periodicals section of the library)

**Country Specific and Regional Coverage:**
Speigel online (Germany) (http://www.spiegel.de/international)
RT (Russian pro-government news network) (http://rt.com)
Moscow Times (Independent English language newspaper out of Russia) (www.themoscowtimes.com)
Xinhua News Agency (Official press agency of the People’s Republic of China; biggest and most influential media organization in China) (http://www.chinaview.cn/)
People’s Daily (Official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party) (http://en.people.cn/)
Al Jazeera (for coverage of Iran and the Middle East) (http://www.aljazeera.com/)
Mail and Guardian (South Africa) (www.mg.co.za)

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4. Disabilities/Academic Accommodation. Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations or any student considering obtaining documentation should make an appointment with Ms. Martha Bledsoe, Director of Services for Students with Disabilities, no later than the first week of class. She can be reached by calling 262-524-7335 or contacting her via email at mbledsoe@carrollu.edu.

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Discussion is an important component of this course and students are to be courteous and respectful to others. This means listening and not interrupting, even if you disagree with the ideas or opinions being expressed. While the exchange of ideas and perspectives is important to the overall goals of the course no hateful speech, offensive language, or inappropriate comments will be tolerated.

7. Make-up Exams and Late Assignments: Absolutely no make-up exams will be given without either (1) an excuse pre-approved by the instructor or (2) an extraordinary circumstance such as serious illness requiring hospitalization or family emergencies. Students are required to contact the instructor before scheduled exam date and will be required to provide documentation as required by the instructor.

Late assignments will be accepted but will be penalized a letter grade (i.e. 4.0 to 3.75) for each day they are late and are deemed one day late immediately after the class period they were due. Extensions for course assignments may be granted by the instructor in cases of severe illness and family emergencies, subject to documentation, with advance notification provided before the due date.

8. Right to Modify Course. The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as the curriculum and/or program require(s).
Grade and Course Requirements
The final grade for this class will be determined using the following criteria:

- First Exam: 25%
- Second Exam: 25%
- Cultural Diversity Project: 20%
- Homework Assignments: 10%
- Participation: 10%
- Attendance: 10%

The grading scale for the class is as follows: A (93%-100%), AB (88%-92%), B (83%-87%), BC (78%-82%), C (70%-77%), D (60%-69%), and F (59%-below).

There will be two (2) exams. The exams will be non-comprehensive. The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice, T/F, and fill in the blank. The final exam will be take-home and comprise long essay questions. The final exam will be distributed on December 11th. I will provide you with further details regarding the format and content of the exams as they approach. In addition, I will make it possible for you to submit up to ten questions prior to the day of the final exam.

It is not always easy to predict how quickly particular topics will be covered, so flexibility is needed in case we fall behind in covering the material.

Other Grade Components

- Attendance: 10%

Class attendance is mandatory. You will be able to miss six sessions of this class (a total of two weeks) during the semester. After six absences, I will lower your attendance grade by one letter grade (B to BC, for example) with each additional absence. In addition, anyone ending the semester in the “gray area” between two letter grades will be bumped up or down based on their attendance and participation.

- Cultural Diversity Project: 20%

As preparation for the simulation, students will be assigned a country on the UN Security Council representing such countries to prepare a paper. The paper should discuss the top four or five priorities for the simulation and explain why, in relation to the country’s foreign policy or other factors, the priorities are the most important. Background information about the country should be included insofar as it contributes to elucidating the priorities and the reasons for them. 5 to 10 sources are required – minimum. They will be asked to draw on primary documents of their country’s government, news analysis of their country’s foreign policy, and its position on the issues (from scholarly
journal articles, books, and internet sources). The paper may additionally discuss the group’s planned strategy or tactics for the negotiation itself. This paper should be 4-5 double-spaced pages in length.

**Simulation = 10%**
Students will be asked to represent a specific country on the UN Security Council with another partner for the course. There are 15 countries on the Council – so given the number of students, we may expand and or abridge the number of countries depending on the circumstances. The goal is to work with other countries to help pass resolutions that represent what your country believes is appropriate in encouraging UN reform. Your grade will be based on your willingness to take the simulation seriously, your ability to properly format and type up resolutions, mingle with other countries during the causing process, and volunteer to be put on the speaker’s list.

**Homework Assignments – 10%**
There are 4 homework assignments listed on the syllabus, which entail responding to questions on the assigned reading for that day. **Students are required to complete ONLY TWO of these assignments over the course of the semester.** Each will be worth 5% of your total grade. You should do the reading and then take about 20 minutes to write up your answers to the questions, which are on the syllabus. Type written responses are preferred. Please do **not** write more than a page or two, as these are supposed to be brief assignments. **Responses must be handed in at the start of class on the day the reading is assigned**, as we will use them as a jumping off point for discussion. I will not accept homework assignments by e-mail or previous to or after the class for which they are assigned. Please plan accordingly. These homework assignments will be graded as check (8-8.8), check/check-plus (9-9.5), check-plus (10), or check-minus (7.5 or less).

**Participation = 10%**
In the old days, students were seen to be an empty vessel into which the professor poured his or her knowledge. However, this old-model of education has come under severe challenge in recent years. Rote memorization is now seen to offer little to students. How often have you “crammed” for a test and then forgotten everything you learned within a few weeks? The philosophy behind this course is that students learn better when that learning is active. Students are expected to attend class. They are also expected to participate in class discussions, considering, manipulating, testing, and questioning the topics presented in class in order to develop their familiarity with the tools and concepts associated with the material. Hence, the format in this class is geared towards this philosophy. Active class participation by all students has the advantage of helping to foster tolerance for divergent viewpoints and developing students’ abilities to formulate arguments in a well-reasoned manner.

**Extra Credit Opportunities**
**First Extra Credit Opportunity:** For the midterm and final exams, I will permit each student to submit up to ten questions they feel should be on the final exam. All questions should be stated in the form of a question and can be in multiple choice or T/F format. If you do submit multiple choice questions, you will be required to submit four answers to each question, three of which are clearly false and one clearly true. I'll collect these questions. If I use your question on the final exam, you will receive a bonus point that will be applied to the final exam. So for example, if I use two questions on the final from one student, that student will receive two bonus points. Again, submitting midterm and final exam questions is an option; it does not constitute a requirement for the course. The final date I will accept questions for the midterm is October 6th and final is December 4th.

**Second Extra Credit Opportunity:** Over the course of the semester I will announce opportunities for extra credit, such as attending a lecture on campus. Another extra credit opportunity is to watch one of the recommended feature films listed below. For each extra credit activity that you do, you will need to turn in a brief write-up of your reaction to the event or film. You can upload these to the extra credit dropbox in Canvass. Tell me a bit about what you did or saw and offer some commentary. These write-ups will **not** be graded. For each extra credit opportunity that you complete a write-up on, you will get an extra point added a homework grade. For example, if you received an 8 on a homework assignment, then the extra credit point will bump that up to a 9.

**Extra Credit Films**

**German:**
- “Good-bye Lenin!” – Taking place in 1990 right after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this funny film is about a son’s attempt to shield his fragile mother, who has just emerged from a long coma, from the realization that her beloved country of East Germany is no more.
- “The Lives of Others” – Takes place in the former East Germany in 1984. It is about an officer in the notorious Stasi secret police.
- “Night Crossing” – Film based on the true story of the Strelzyk and Wetzel families who on September 16, 1979, attempted to escape East Germany to West Germany in a homemade hot air balloon during the days when emigration to West Germany was prohibited by the East German government.

**Soviet & Russian:**
- “Slave of Love” – (USSR, 1978) – By acclaimed Russian director, Nikita Mikhalkov, this film takes place on the eve of the Russian Revolution and tells the story of an apolitical actress who falls in love with a Bolshevik cameraman.
- “Burnt by the Sun” – (Russia, 1994) – Also by Mikhalkov, this film depicts the fate of a hero of the Revolution during Stalinist repression. This film won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film in 1994.

1 Note: The Russian and Soviet film recommendations and brief synopses are thanks to former UWSP History Professor Sally Kent. German, Iranian, and South African film recommendations and brief synopsis are thanks to UWSP Political Science Professor Jennifer Collins.
• “Little Vera” – (USSR, 1988) – An alienated teenager from a working-class background refuses to conform to small-town life in the Soviet Union. Ideologically controversial, the film was a smash hit in the Soviet Union because of its realistic portrayal of social problems in the 1980s.

*Iranian:*

• “Persepolis” – Based on the graphic novel of the same name, this animated feature film is about a young girl growing up in Iran during the Iranian Revolution.

*South African:*

• “Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom” – A British feature film on Nelson Mandela’s life based on his autobiography of the same name. Available at video rental stores.
• “Invictus” – A wonderful U.S. film on Nelson Mandela and how he used the Rugby World Cup in 1994 to build national unity after the end of apartheid. Morgan Freeman offers a masterful performance as Mandela Available.

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Tentative Course Outline

I. SECTION 1: Studying Politics from a Comparative Perspective
   a. Class Introduction (September 8th)
      Icebreaker
      Go over syllabus and course expectations
      3x5 note cards: What do you want to learn?

   b. Introduction: Comparative Politics and the Regional Perspective
Week 1 (September 11th, 13th, and 15th)

Readings
*Magstadt, ch. 1 “Comparative Politics and the Regional Perspective.”

Class Activity September 11th: Discuss Cultural Diversity Project

Class Activity September 13th: Spend time selecting countries for simulation


c. Week 2 (Sep 18th, 20th, 22nd): Models, Regimes, and Regions

Readings:
*Magstadt, ch. 2 “Models, Regimes, and Regions.”


*Homework: Assignment #1 on Dahl:

Look at Dahl’s 5 conditions for a democratic process on p. 38 and respond to these two questions:

1. When did the U.S. become a modern representative democracy (or polyarchy)? NOTE: International students may write about their own country in relation to Dahl.
2. In what ways does U.S. democracy today or your own governmental system meet Dahl’s 5 conditions? Where does it fall short?

II. Section II. The New Europe

a. Week 3 (Sep 25th 27th, 29th): German Political Economy & Institutions

Readings:
*Magstadt, ch. 3, 107-111

John Studzinski. “Germany is right: There is no right to profit, but the right to work is essential.” The Guardian, February 5, 2013 [E-RESERVE]

Class Activity September 29th: Meet in Library to go over resources available in relationship to class project

b. Week 4 (Oct 2nd, 4th, 6th): Germany’s Political Institutions & Parties

Readings:
* Magstadt, ch. 4, 158-172


Class Activity October 6th: MIDTERM EXAM REVIEW

III. Section 3: Russia

a. Week 5 (Oct 9th, 11th, and 13th): Institutions and Policy: Russia

Democracy or Dictatorship (Part I)
**Movie:**
“Fall of the Soviet Union” from History Channel (October 9th)

**Readings:**
*Magstadt, ch. 6, 233-254*
David Szakonyi. “Putin is Still Standing: The Elites that Keep the President in Power.” *Foreign Affairs*, July 26, 2016. [E-RESERVE]

MIDTERM EXAM OCTOBER 13th

FALL BREAK OCTOBER 13th (6:00 PM) – OCTOBER 17th

b. **Week 6 (Oct 18, Oct 20): “Institutions and Policies: Russia: Democracy or Dictatorship” (Part II)**

**Readings:**

*Homework assignment #2: (Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief):*

Based on the readings, **answer 2** of the following questions:

1. What are some of the reasons given by Norris to explain the underrepresentation of women in politics? (Mention a few factors)
2. Do you agree with the authors that underrepresentation is a problem? Why or why not? Make sure to address the arguments made by Mendelberg and Karpowitz.
3. Norris suggests that today the main point of contention is not so much whether underrepresentation (women being just one group among others that experience this) is a problem, but instead what are the “most effective and appropriate ways” to increase representation of underrepresented groups in legislatures. What role do electoral systems and quotas play in this regards? Would you favor electoral reform and/or the use of quotas in order to address underrepresentation?

IV. **Section 4: Asia**

a. **Week 7 (Oct 23, 25th, and 27th): “The UN: What is the UN Security Council? Who are the major players?”**

**Readings:**
Spiegel, World Politics in a New Era, Chapter 13 Global Governance: International Law and Organizations (E-Reserve)
(“International Governmental Organizations”, “Security IGOS: The United Nations”, “The United Nations is Born”, “The United Nations: Structure, Functions, and Politics”, “General Assembly”, and “Security Council”) During the course of this week we will be discussing the United Nations, major players, and simulation requirements. I would like to meet with individuals during the course of the week to discuss progress in relationship to the cultural diversity project.

Readings:
*Magstadt, ch. 8, 292-303

NOVEMBER 3rd: FIRST ROUGH DRAFT PAPER DUE

c. Week 9 (Nov 6th, 8th, and 10th) “China’s Political Institutions”
Readings:

V. Middle East

a. Week 10 (Nov 13th, 15th, and 17th) “Political Institutions and Power in Islamic Republic of Iran”
Movies:
Modern History of Iran/Islamic Revolution of Iran/BBC Documentary (November 13th)
Readings:

Homework assignment #3:
(Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief):
Based on Reading Lolita in Tehran respond to question #1 and either #2 or #3:
1. What is Nafisi describing in this book, and why is it subversive?
AND

2. Recount an event described in this book and convey your reaction to it.

OR

3. What did this reading teach you about authoritarianism?

b. Week 11 (Nov 20nd, 22nd) “Iranian Politics and Society”


November 23-26: Thanksgiving Break

VI. Sub-Saharan Africa

a. Week 12 (Nov 27, 29) South African Political Development

*Readings

Homework Assignment #4
After reading the Kasrils and Zuern articles, respond to the following questions:
1. What is the nature of the “Faustian pact” described by Kasrils?
2. How would you explain the rise of protests in South Africa, including the recent student protests?
3. If you were a member of the ANC, would you argue for changes in economic and/or social policy? Name one or two key changes you would advocate.

b. Week 13 (December 2nd, 4th) South Africa’s Political System and “Dear Mandela”

*Movie
Invictus (December 2nd)

*Readings
*Magstadt, ch. 14, 568-574
Sisonke Msimang. “South Africa's local election shock down to anger and apathy.” The Guardian, August 5, 2016. (E-reserves)

Week 15: In-Class Simulation
December 6th: Review Simulation

December 8th, 11th, and 13th: SIMULATION!!!!

DECEMBER 13th: SIMULATION PAPER DUE AND FINAL EXAM ASSIGNED

FINAL EXAM DUE: MIDNIGHT DECEMBER 19th