Instructor Information
Professor Renee Scherlen
OLCB 2056
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262-6094

Course Content and Objectives
Through a combination of readings, commentary, and discussions, this course introduces students to the key theories, approaches, and issues in comparative politics. I have designed the class with three objectives in mind. The first is to increase your knowledge of theories and approaches to comparative politics. The second goal is to debate and deliberate over aspects of contemporary comparative politics. The final objective is to familiarize you with main sub-fields within comparative politics.

Assigned Texts
The following are required for the course:


States and Social Revolutions. Theda Skocpol. Cambridge University Press (1979)


Grades/Assignments
Exam
The course will have one final exam worth 100 points. It will count toward 20% of your final grade. You will be given the exam during the scheduled time for final exams.

Weekly Reading Critique Assignment
Each week you must write a critical review for each of that week’s readings/chapters. Be sure to write one for each reading assigned. That means each reading in the Essential Readings should be analyzed separately, as should each chapter in the Lichbach & Zuckerman book.

Chapter/readings reviews should include:
1. A brief summary of the main/key thesis;
2. an assessment of the main contributions/positive aspects;
3. a critique of its limitations or flaws; and
4. two questions raised by the reading that you would like the class to discuss.

For books, your reviews should include the following:
2. assessment of its argument (theoretical perspective, utilization of evidence);
3. ideas or issues which you found ambiguous, poorly developed, or unclear;
4. ideas or issues you found exciting, well developed, or intriguing; and,
5. two or more questions about the book that you would like discussed during the seminar.

You should submit your critique to the professor 3 hours before class (i.e., by 3:00 pm on Thursday). This should be done via the class AsULearn page. Submissions after 3:00 pm will not be permitted. You should bring a copy of the review to class to use as a reference during the discussion. I will read these talking points and grade them: outstanding - (A), satisfactory - (B), unsatisfactory - (C). The weekly literature reviews count for 30% of your overall grade.

Critical Analysis Paper
Twenty-five percent of your final grade will be determined by a critical analysis paper due on the last day of class. The paper should be typed and between 18-22 pages in length. You will need to select a substantive topic in field of comparative politics you find intriguing/interesting (democratization, social movements, regime change, policy reform, etc). Then, you need to select four books (or 2 journal articles to substitute for one book) on the issue. Each book/journal article must use a different approach/theoretical orientation/method of analysis. You will be required to: (1) summarize each piece of literature; (2) assess the findings/conclusions of each piece of literature; (3) compare and contrast the differing approaches/theories utilized by the authors; (4) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches; and (5) argue persuasive for one of the approaches.

Oral Presentations
Each student will make short oral presentations on the weekly readings throughout the semester. Oral presentations should be analytical and critical in style; they are not intended to be descriptive summaries of the readings. It is assumed that everyone has already read the material, so there is no need to provide more than a cursory overview of the reading. Instead, presentations should focus on:

(1) the major issues or debates raised in the readings;
(2) identification of the most important contributions of the work in question (i.e., what is new or innovative in its approach or argument?);
(3) comparison and contrast with other readings or approaches (i.e., locate the work within the broader literature);
(4) identification of the main limitations or weaknesses of the work (i.e., present your critique).
(5) conclusion with one or more specific questions that can be used to stimulate classroom discussion.

In order to compare and contrast the readings to other readings, you need to read additional material on the topic. Use of International Political Science Abstracts, PAISarchive, JSTOR and other databases is suggested to be able to identify the most influential and useful additional readings for the presentation.

A handout that identifies important related (or contradictory) readings should be turned it to the professor by presenters; copies of it will be shared with all seminar members (to be saved as reference material for comprehensive exams). Every student will do present on 4 articles OR 1 book and 1 article. Students will select which books/readings they will be responsible for at the beginning of the semester.

**Participation**

The final 10% of your grade will be based on class attendance and participation. This is a seminar class. Learning takes place through the exchange of ideas within the classroom as well as reading assigned material. As a learning experience, the seminar will depend heavily on the quality of class participation and student interaction. It is essential that members of the seminar attend all sessions, participate actively in classroom discussions, and complete all required readings prior to class. In this graduate seminar, passive participation (“just being there”) will not suffice for a passing grade in participation. I will randomly select students to comment on the readings, others’ assessment of it, and their own critique. Furthermore, I will request that students link class topics to current events: what is going on in the world today that reflects, confirms, and/or contradicts the commentary found in the readings.

**Summary of Assignments**

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Reviews</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Total** = 100%
GRADE SCALE

- 95-100 = A
- 90-94 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- Below 70 = F

Cheating/Plagiarism Policies
I will abide by the University's Academic Integrity Code. Cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers or otherwise engaging in academic dishonesty will, at a minimum, lead to a grade of "F" for this course and possible expulsion (depending on the severity of the violation).

Late Assignments
I will not accept late assignments.
**WEEKLY SEMINAR TOPICS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #1</th>
<th>Aug 28</th>
<th>Syllabus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week #2</td>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>Approaches to Comparative Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #3</td>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Approaches to Comparative Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #4</td>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>The State – <strong>BEGIN ORAL PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
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<td>Week #5</td>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Nationalism</td>
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<td>Week #6</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>Non-Democratic Regimes</td>
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<td>Week #7</td>
<td>Oct 9</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
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<td>Week #8</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<td>Week #9</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Democratization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #10</td>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Political Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #11</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Political Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #12</td>
<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #13</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Political Violence &amp; Revolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #14</td>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #15</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>NO CLASS - paper due electronically via ASULearn</td>
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PS 5040-101  
COMPARATIVE POLITICS  
Fall 2008

READINGS
Readings are to be completed prior to class. Your reading critique must be submitted to the professor by 3:00 pm the day of class.

Week #1  
Aug 28  Syllabus

Week #2  
Sept 4  Approaches to Comparative Studies  
Reading:  
Lichbach & Zuckerman- Part I and II (Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Week #3  
Sept 11  Approaches to Comparative Studies  
Reading:  
Chapter 1, O’Neil & Rogowski, Essential Readings in Comparative Politics (Essential Readings)  
Lichbach & Zuckerman- Part IV (Chapters 9 and 10)

Week #4  
Sept 18  The State  
Reading:  
Essential Readings, Chapter 2.  
Lichbach & Zuckerman- Chapters 8

Week #5  
Sept 25  Nationalism  
Reading:  
Imagined Communities, Benedict Anderson.  
Essential Readings, Chapter 3

Week #6  
Oct 2  Non-Democratic Regimes  
Reading:  
Essential Readings, Chapter 5 & 8

Week #7  
Oct 9  Democracy  
Reading:  
Essential Readings, Chapter 6-7  
Lichbach & Zuckerman, Chapter 5
Week #8
Oct 16  NO CLASS

Week #9
Oct 23  Democratization
Reading:
Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan

Week #10
Oct 30  Political Economy
Reading:
Essential Readings, Chapters 4
Lichbach & Zuckerman, Chapter 7

Week #11
Nov 6  Political Economy
Reading:
Democracy and Development, Adam Przeworski.

Week #12
Nov 13  Development
Reading:
Essential Readings, Chapter 9

Week #13
Nov 20  Political Violence & Revolutions
Reading:
Essential Readings, Chapter 11
States and Social Revolutions, Theda Skocpol
Lichbach & Zuckerman, Chapter 6

Week #14
Nov 27  No Class

Week #15
Dec 4  CRITICAL ASSESSMENT PAPER DUE (VIA ASULEARN)

Final Exam
Thursday, December 11th at 6:00 pm