

POLITICAL SCIENCE 2053-004  
Introduction to Comparative Politics  
Spring 2021  
139 Allen

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Office Hours: M|W|F 8:00-9:00  
M|W|F 11:30-12:30  
M|W 2:00-2:30

Objective: The course is designed to provide students with tools necessary for examining politics across the countries of the world. In particular, we will provide a foundation for understanding the concepts on which political systems operate, the forces that account for change and continuity and the basis for comparing political performance in the first, second and third worlds. It is expected that by the end of the semester, students must have developed the analytical skills for explaining the differences and similarities in the select countries discussed in class. POLI 2053 is a General Education course designed to improve broad knowledge, stimulate life-long learning and develop critical understanding of the political phenomena.

The University strives toward Learning Competency and the fulfillment of the following objectives:

- ⇒ Ability to think, describe, interpret and analyze the world
- ⇒ Facility to make sense of the world that impacts on our own local system
- ⇒ The need to gain critical perspectives of the governments and institutions across various political systems

**COVID-19 Statement**

We remain under pandemic conditions and expect to be in this state for the entire semester. In order to consistently provide the highest quality LSU education, all students should follow current LSU guidelines. These include the following:

1. If you have any signs of illness, do not come to class.
2. In order to protect all campus community members, the University requires everyone to wear facemasks/cloths on campus. Failure to do so is a violation of the code of student conduct.
3. Wash hands with soap and water or clean with sanitizer frequently, and refrain from touching your face.
4. If you have to cough or sneeze unexpectedly, please be mindful of others nearby and cough or sneeze into your elbow or shield yourself the best you can.
5. If you have been exposed to others who have tested positive for COVID-19, self-quarantine consistent with current [CDC guidelines](#).

**Daily Symptom Checker:**

You are required to respond to a daily symptom check request sent via email or text message each morning. Completing the symptom checker will take approximately one to two minutes. Once you have provided information about your symptoms, you will be given feedback on whether or not you are certified to return to campus and attend your classes. Additionally, if you test positive for COVID-19, you are required to report it in your daily symptom checker application.

**Resources for Students:** Your health and safety are LSU's top priority. If you are feeling ill or overwhelmed with anxiety, please contact the [LSU Student Health Center](#) for medical advice and mental health support. General health care and mental health support are available for all enrolled students through telehealth appointments.

**Unexpected Changes to Courses:** Due to the unpredictable nature of the situation, the format of the course and/or requirements may be forced to change, and if this is the case that students will be given appropriate notification.

TEXTBOOK: there is one major text required for this course:

Patrick H O'Neil: *Cases in Comparative Politics*  
6<sup>th</sup> edition; W.W. Norton 2018

You are also required to read assigned articles from the New York Times for multiple choice tests and the two-country paper.

EXAMS & PAPERS: As part of the general education requirement (all students of 2053) will do standard multiple-choice questions during the midterm and final exams. A major essay question will also be administered to all sections of 2053. Much of the content of the midterm and final exam (essays and definitions) come from lectures. You will do a brief comparative survey of recent political developments in any two countries of your choice. For this 3-5-page paper, do not select any of the ten countries covered in the lectures.

GRADES:

Class Participation → 10 pts. (Daily)

Early Take-Home Test → 10 pts. (Due Feb 03)

NYT Multiple-Choice Test → 10 pts (March 01)

Midterm Exam → 20 pts. (March 01)

Two Country Paper → 20 pts. (April 12)

Final Exam → 30 pts. (April 19)

Total → 100 pts.

A+ 100 - 95

B+ 86.9 - 85

C+ 76.9 - 75

D+ 66.9-65

A 94.9 - 90

B 84.9 - 80

C 74.9 - 70

D 64.9-60

A- 89.9 - 87

B- 79.9 - 77

C- 69.9 - 67

D- 59-57

F: Below 57

## Lecture Outline & Reading Assignments

Jan 11	<u>Course Introduction</u> : The study of politics; the Value of Comparative Politics; Comparative Methods and Problems	O'Neil, Chapter 1
Jan 11	<u>Characteristics of Political Systems</u> : Defined by their Context; Driven by Constitutions and Ideologies; Sustained by their Economics	O'Neil, Chapter 1
Jan 25	<u>Institutional Approach</u> : Legislature, Executive, Judiciary; Interest Groups, Political Parties and Individuals	O'Neil, Chapter 1
Feb 01	<b><u>Take Home Exam DUE!</u></b>	
Feb 01	<u>Politics in Capitalist Democracies: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : Great Britain	O'Neil, Chapter 2
Feb 08	<u>Politics in Capitalist Democracies: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : France	O'Neil, Chapter 4
Feb 22	<u>Politics in Capitalist Democracies: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : Germany and Japan	O'Neil, Chapters 5 & 6
March 01	<u>NYT Multiple Choice Test</u> <b><u>Midterm Exam (in Class)</u></b>	Everyone in class
March 08	<u>Overview of Communism and the Third World Transition from Communism: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : Russia	O'Neil, Chapter 7
March 15	<u>Transition from Communism: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : China	O'Neil, Chapter 8
March 29	<u>Developing Countries: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : India	O'Neil, Chapters 9 & 11
April 05	<u>Developing Countries: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : Mexico	
April 12	<u>Developing Countries: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes</u> : Iran & Nigeria	

April 19	<u>Review for research paper and final exam &amp; Online Course Evaluation Two-Country Survey/Paper of Recent Events Due online</u>	O'Neil, Chapters 10 & 14
April 23	<b><u>Final Exam</u></b>	<b><u>By 11:55 pm</u></b>