Political Science 2012-130R

Fall 2020, Online

MWF, 1:50-2:40 PM

Instructor: Prof. Svet Derderyan

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Office hours: Fri 2:40-3:40 and by appointment (Zoom, FaceTime)

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### PSCI 2012 130R: INTRO TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

**Course Description**

This course serves as an introduction to comparative politics. Broadly speaking, researchers in comparative politics study the domestic political institutions of countries around the world and try to explain how their interplay leads to specific outcomes.

Why do some countries have democratic forms of government while others are autocratic? What are the consequences of different constitutional designs and political institutions? What determines the political culture of a given society? These are some of the questions that students of comparative politics address, and, this course, shall examine different theoretical and thematic approaches to the study of these issues.

The first part of the course focuses on two broad themes: (1) the basic concepts in comparative politics and (2) the main institutional pillars in most modern democracies. The readings on democratic institutions take as examples the old and established democracies in Western Europe and the United States but the theory behind them is generalizable to other parts of the world. The second part of the course reviews some of the non-democratic regimes and discusses both how and why they are different from democracies. In this part we will cover authoritarian, communist, and newly industrialized and less developed countries. The course also features a few documentaries and one fictional movie, which all serve to illustrate and reiterate important points raised by the readings and lectures.

At the end of the class, you will have a solid understanding of the major issues in this field and will be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different theoretical approaches to studying them. The course is designed to challenge you and your preconceived notions, so you will further develop you intellectual skills, particularly through critical thinking. You will also broaden your knowledge of particular countries.

**Course Requirements**

**COVID:** The COVID pandemic introduces unusual challenges to teaching classes such as ours. We will have to improvise and try to organize interactive and group activities in the online space. This will sometimes work very well, but there could also be more challenging times in terms of technological needs, internet connection, the general limitations that a lack of in person contact introduces to specific team-oriented assignments. We will take on these challenges as they arise and will be flexible.

Flexibility will be key not only for completing assignments and re-organizing group work. In case a student or the instructor for the course becomes temporarily unavailable due to illness, backup measures will be in place. Assignment deadlines will be re-negotiated on individual basis, certain lectures may be delivered asynchronously, a different instructor may step in for a period of time.

Whatever challenges arise as a result of the unusual circumstances during the pandemic, we will tackle them with a positive attitude, respect, empathy, and motivation. And as long as we manage to stay healthy and remain committed to the academic goals of our class, there can be no doubt – we will finish the semester with flying colors!

Presentations: 15%

Midterm Exam: 30%

Final Exam: 20%

Movie Entries: 10%

Final Paper: 10%

Participation and Attendance: 15%

Presentations:

You will be expected to give a 10 min presentation on how the various domestic political institutions that we will cover have influenced how politics and economics play out in a country of your choice. You will do this in groups of two. The presentations will be 15% of your final grade. They have to be accompanied by a PowerPoint, which will be shown to the class, and submitted to me before the presentation is due *with all the group members cc-ed.*

*Sign up sheet:*

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jdx8A0tUpIUO079rMhYt1N0Dw3TlfM1RKN8boXaA5IA/edit#gid=0>

These are group presentations. You have to meet with your group and organize how your group will make its argument. You will be receiving a single grade for the group, so each of you has an interest in making sure the group does well. One of you will email me the group's powerpoint on the day it is due and cc all group members. I will reply all with your grade.

Exams:

There will be two exams in this class. The midterm will cover the basic principles of comparative politics, as presented by Patrick O’Neil in Essentials of Comparative Politics, and the political institutions in modern democracies, mainly Western Europe and the United States. The final exam will be **cumulative** and will cover the topics discussed in the first half of the semester plus the main themes in the second half – authoritarian and communist regimes, as well as newly industrialized and less developed countries. The midterm will be 30% and the final will be 20% of your final grade.

Final Paper:

You will be expected to write a final paper focusing on how the political institutions and political culture in two countries affects various political outcomes. In your discussion please make sure that you focus on questions such as parliamentarism vs. presidentialism, differing electoral systems, party competition, government formation, civil society, varieties of capitalism, and socio-economic outcomes. This paper will be 10% of your grade. December 7th.

Movie Entries:

We will see a number of documentaries in this class. You are responsible to submit two short reactions (max 1 page single spaced) to two documentaries of your choice connecting your impressions of with our course. These documentaries serve an important goal – to demonstrate the real world applications of the theories and concepts we will be discussing in class. You will submit these in a single word document whenever you have completed the two reaction entries but before November 23. 10% of your grade.

Participation (Synchronous 7.5%+Asynchronous 7.5%):

Many of the lectures will be presented in a style that will give plenty of opportunities for in-class participation to the students. The frequency and quality of your comments during our lectures, as well as your attendance, will shape 7.5% of your participation grade.

Importantly, we will have a few asynchronous classes (no live online meeting) this semester. During those you will complete an assignment on your own time and then be expected to part take in an online discussion on Canvas. The quality of your participation on Canvas will determine the other 7.5% of your participation grade.

**Required Readings**

One book is required for this course. You can purchase it online via Amazon. There will also be a few articles and book chapters which will be available online on the course’s website.

O’Neil, Patrick. 2015. Essentials of Comparative Politics. W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 5th edition. (abbreviated Essentials).

<https://www.amazon.com/Essentials-Comparative-Politics-Fifth-Patrick/dp/0393938972/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1502316503&sr=8-1&keywords=Essentials+of+Comparative+Politics.+W.W.+Norton+%26+Company>

***Every week, I will be assigning additional readings focused on current affairs on CANVAS.***

### Original Work + Honor Code

It is expected that all work you do in this course represents original work not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course. All work for this course falls under the University’s Honor Code. If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to your instructor or consult with the office of the Dean of Students. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected.

### Questions and Absences

If you have questions about the course, please come see me after class or during office hours. I will also be happy to answer questions via email. If you have to miss class on the day of an exam, then you must write and explain beforehand in all but the most unusual circumstances. Attendance is required.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Aug 24 Introduction

**Concepts and Definitions**

Aug 26-28 What is Comparative Politics?

Essentials: “Chapter 1: Introduction

Aug 31 + 2 The State

Essentials: “Chapter 2: States”

Sept 4 + 7 Ethnicity and nationalism

Essentials: “Chapter 3: Nations and Society” .

“Daniel Pozner’s Chiwa and Tambuka” case-study

Sept 9 +11 Political Economy

Essentials: “Chapter 4: Political Economy,”

**The World of Democracy**

Sept 14 Democratic regimes – origins…

Essentials: “Chapter 5 – Democratic regimes”

Sept 16+18 Executive

GLM, Ch. 2, The Executive (pp. 23-46)

Sept 21 Readings: TBD

Prime Minister powers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvNyNLai2js>

Presidential Powers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5l02sK5LovI> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnHb-zyWh14>

PM or a President?

Imagine that you are the PM of the United States (the US is a parliamentary democracy) - how would you solve a specific problem that our nation is facing today? Now imagine that you are the President of the US - how will you go about solving the same problem?

Sept 25 Legislature

GLM, Ch. 3, Parliaments (pp. 47-78)

Sept 28 + 30 Elections

GLM, Ch. 11, Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referendums (pp.366-406)

Oct 2 Readings on Political Psychology TBD

Online Assignment: Watch and Discuss on Canvas:

Political ideologies: Socialism, liberalism, conservatism, libertarianism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7rHGydPFjY&index=3&list=PLi3U-nPPrbS6Uk6vGaihfQ0CjcIAlJYcr>

Moral Roots of liberalism and conservatism: How one’s personality determines one’s political views?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs41JrnGaxc>

Do you think that Haidt’s argument makes sense? Can you think of any examples based on your own experiences that support or defy this argument?

UK Party system:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LrZVn4u8qQ>

Oct 5, Oct 7 Parties

GLM, Ch. 8, Party Families (pp. 238-75) and parts of Ch. 9, Cleavage Structures and Electoral Change (pp. 278-92)

Inglehart, R. 2008. “Changing Values among Western Publics 1970-2006.” West European Politics 31: 130-46.

Oct 9+12+14 Coalitions

GLM, Ch. 12, Making and Breaking Government (pp. 412-54)

Online Assignment: Watch and Discuss on Canvas:

Movie: Five Days that changed Britain: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRHUNxVCnxw>

Why did the UK have to seek a rare coalition government after this election? Why did both the Conservatives and Labour feel that they could make an alliance with the Liberal Democrats?

Oct 16 +19 + 21 Welfare States

Esping-Anderson, G. 1990. The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism. Princeton: Princeton UP, 9-34.

Online Assignment: Watch and Discuss on Canvas:

The happiest people: Denmark: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKa-3lbLeyA>

Workers’ power in Germany: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NqIoxo29FU>

How do the Danes and the Germans differ from their US counterparts in their views on what matters most for quality of life? If you could choose to live in Denmark or Germany as opposed to the US, what will make you happy about this? What will make you miss the US?

Oct 23 Online Assignment: Watch and Discuss on Canvas: Documentary: Sick around the world.

Think of how these systems compare in terms of:

1. Quality

2. Affordability

3. Sustainability

Why do you think politicians in some countries (e.g. US) might be more concerned to not alienate the interests of doctors or healthcare businesses (like hospitals, insurance companies, or pharmaceuticals) while politicians in other countries are more afraid of making healthcare less affordable for their citizens? Which of the systems presented did you like and why?

**Oct 26 Midterm Exam**

**The World of Authoritarianism**

Oct 28 + 30 Authoritarian regimes

Essentials: “Chapter 6: Nondemocratic regimes”

Talk about presentations

Nov 2 The Dictator’s playbook: Mussolini - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppHh-ubHnFk>

or

*Absolute Power (*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtAG-eTri8E&t=451s>)

How does one become a successful dictator? If you had to become a dictator in America today, what were going to be your first 3 moves in consolidating power? Justify your strategy.

Nov 4+6+9 Communism and post-communism

Essentials: “Chapter 9”

Nov 11 The Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe

Good Bye Lenin or a documentary (TBD)

Darton, R. 1991. “The Stasi Files.” In *Berlin Journal*. New York: Norton, 129-137.

What made people dislike living in these societies? Did communism (the way it was implemented) have any redeeming qualities?

Is there any reform or policy that you saw here appropriate to implement in our society today? What is good about it?

Nov 13 Presentations on countries and their institutions

Nov 16 TBD

Nov 18 + 20 Presentations on countries and their institutions

Nov 23 **Movie Entries** **Due**. Final Paper Assignment Presentation (by me). Tips for Good Writing.

“Tips for Good Writing”

**The Developing World**

Nov 25 Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries.

Essentials: “Chapter 10”.

**Thanksgiving Break**

Nov 30 Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries.

Essentials: “Chapter 10”.

Recommended: How the Europeans divided Africa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJ1uo5jvpe8&t=2653s>)

**The Experiment in Supranationalism**

Dec 2+4 EU Origins

Phinnemore, D. 2010. “The European Union: Establishment and Development.” In *European Union Politics*, 3rd ed., eds. M. Cini & N. Perez-Solorzano Borragan. New York: Oxford UP, 32-47.

Dec 7 Review Session. **Paper due.**

**Final Exam: Thur Dec 10: 1:30-4pm**

**A few final points:**

# Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) and the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/sites/default/files/attached-files/2019-2020_student_code_of_conduct_0.pdf).

# Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

* maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
* wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
* clean local work area,
* practice hand hygiene,
* follow public health orders, and
* if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](https://www.colorado.edu/healthcenter/coronavirus-updates/symptoms-and-what-do-if-you-feel-sick).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](https://www.colorado.edu/policies/covid-19-health-and-safety-policy) and [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) and the [Student Code of Conduct](http://www.colorado.edu/osccr/). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

Before returning to campus, all students must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/how#anchor1). Before coming on to campus each day, all students are required to complete a [Daily Health Form](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/daily-health-form).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and complete the [Health Questionnaire and Illness Reporting Form](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/daily-health-form) remotely.

In this class, if you are sick or quarantined, please try to communicate this to me soon, but by no means feel that it has to be right away! Focus on your immediate health concerns first. Getting sick and/or quarantined can be very stressful, so I do not want you to feel extra pressured to immediately let me know. Please, do try your best though to inform me that you cannot attend class for some time as soon as you safely and calmly can. Last, please, do not share with me any details about your specific condition or circumstances. Just knowing that you are sick and recovering will be sufficient.

# Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed.  Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment.  Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](https://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance.  If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students/temporary-medical-conditions) on the Disability Services website.

# Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

# Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](https://www.colorado.edu/osccr/honor-code).

# Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PnqVK4kkIJIZnf), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

# Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absences-classes-andor-exams) for full details.