

*****Draft Syllabus*****

****Please Note: Course Text Will Remain the Same but Assignments May Be Adjusted****

GOVT 133 - 001: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2016
M,W 10:30-11:45, Planetary Hall 131

Professor: Eric McGlinchey
Email: emcglinc@gmu.edu
Phone: 703.993.2960

Office Hours: TBA
Office: Robinson Hall A 225

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the central concepts of comparative politics—state formation, political economy, democratization, authoritarianism, social mobilization, political culture, and decision making in democracies. Particular attention is paid to the comparative method, logic, and game theory, analytical tools used not only in comparative politics, but also in the social sciences broadly. Our conceptual travels will take us to concrete places, to states in the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the close of this course, students will be able to

1. Identify patterns and processes related to political change
2. Devise analytical, practical, or creative responses to global problems or issues
3. Write a policy paper for a US government audience using key comparative politics concepts in the courses 5 pages
4. Assess research design strengths and weaknesses of existing social science scholarship
5. Apply the scientific method to questions of comparative politics using survey data.
6. Explore how game theory can help address central questions of comparative politics

Course Readings:

1. William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, Sona Nadenichek Golder, ***Principles of Comparative Politics, 2nd Edition*** (CQ Press, 2012/13). The textbook can be purchased at the university bookstore. The text is also available as an ebook: <http://store.vitalsource.com/show/978-1-4522-2895-2> .
2. Course Reader (Blackboard):
 - i. Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, “The Science in Social Science,” from *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Interest in Qualitative Research* (Princeton UP, 1994).

- ii. Keith Darden and Anna Gryzmala-Busse, “The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse,” *World Politics* 59 (October 2006): 83-115.
- iii. Estévez-Abe, Margarita, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice, “Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State” in *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* edited by Peter Hall and David Soskice (London: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Course Requirements:

The following requirements are designed to promote an optimal learning environment for motivated students. This syllabus is a contract; your continued enrollment in this class constitutes your acceptance of these requirements.

1. Students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to class.
2. Students will complete four exams and one comprehensive final exam.
3. Students will submit written answers to problem sets on a weekly basis. Problem sets are to be submitted during the class period. Knowledge of elementary algebra is required for successful completion of problem sets.
4. Phones, computers, and tablets may be used prior to and after but not during class. Please use a notebook and pen/pencil to take notes.
5. Make-up exams and problem set extensions will be given only if students have proper documentation that can be verified. In place of an email, please see me during office hours to discuss missed / late work. If you anticipate you will have a conflict due to medical / health care, religious holidays or travel, please inform me within the first two weeks of class. I strictly adhere to the University’s Attendance and Absence policies.
6. Students are expected to stay for the duration of the class period. Late arrivals and early departures are distracting to classmates. If you are unable to stay for the full duration of a class period, work with a classmate to secure the lecture notes. Please do not interrupt the class with a late arrival or early departure.

Mason EMAIL

- Mason requires that Mason email be used for all courses. I will be sending messages to your Mason email and you are responsible for making sure you have access to these messages.
- You may forward your Mason email to other accounts but always use your Mason email when communicating with me to allow verification of your identity.
- You are required to check your Mason email account regularly and to keep your mailbox maintained so that messages are not rejected for being over quota.
- When you email me, be sure to include GOVT 500 at the beginning of the subject heading to alert me that I have received a message from one of my online students.

Course Logistics

This course will meet twice weekly as well as use Blackboard to facilitate learning outside of class sessions. In a typical week:

- you will read about 50-100 pages
- work on assignments and problem sets to be submitted through Blackboard

To Access Blackboard

1. Go to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>.
2. Login using your NETID and password.
3. Click on the ‘Courses’ tab.
4. Double-click on GOVT-133 (Spring 2016) under the course listings

Technical Help

- If you have difficulty with accessing Blackboard, please contact the ITU Support Center at 703.993.8870 or support@gmu.edu.
- If you have trouble with using the features in Blackboard, email courses@gmu.edu.

Late Assignments Policy

One-third of a grade will be deducted for every day an assignment is late. Incompletes will be extended only in cases of documented emergencies.

Student Responsibilities

Academic Integrity Students must be responsible for their own work, and students and faculty must take on the responsibility of dealing explicitly with violations. The tenet must be a foundation of our university culture.

Honor Code Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. The George Mason University Honor Code states: “Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations.

To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty members must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee.” Students are encouraged to read the full Honor Code : <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/> and to remain vigilant against any violation of the Code in their own work. Any cases of academic dishonesty in this course will be pursued according to the guidelines detailed in the University Catalog.

Time Conflict George Mason University is committed to creating a welcoming, respectful and inclusive educational environment that values diversity. Students should review the syllabus at the beginning of the term to determine if there are any conflicts between class time and religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of these conflicts within the first week of the semester. <http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>

MasonLive/Email (GMU Email) Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. [See <https://masonlive.gmu.edu>].

Patriot Pass Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web, Virtual Computing Lab, and WEMS. [See <https://password.gmu.edu/index.jsp>].

University Policies Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>].

Responsible Use of Computing Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].

University Calendar

Details regarding the current Academic Calendar. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/index.html>].

University Catalog

The current university catalog. [See <http://catalog.gmu.edu>].

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].

Student Services

Writing Center

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>]. You can now sign up for an Online Writing Lab (OWL) session just like you sign up for a face-to-face session in the Writing Center, which means YOU set the date and time of the appointment! Learn more about the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#).

Counseling and Psychological Services

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu>].

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment," is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy>].

Enrollment:

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Registrar calendar: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/index.html>

Grading:

In Class Exams (4 exams, 75 points each)	300
Class Assignments	50
Final Exam	150
Total	500 points

Grading Scale:

A+: 490-500	A: 460-489	A-: 450-459
B+: 440-449	B: 410-439	B-: 400-409
C+: 390-399	C: 360-389	C-: 350-359
D+: 340-349	D: 310-339	D-: 300-309
F: 299 and below		

*****This syllabus may change as the semester progresses.***

Course Assignments

Week 1 (January 20): What Is Comparative Politics?

- CGG Ch. 1, “What Is Comparative Politics?” (available as a pdf under Course Reader link in Blackboard)

Week 2 (January 25 & 27): What Is Science?

- January 25
 - CGG Ch. 2, “What Is Science?” (pages 19-30)
 - Ch. 2 Problems 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 (pages 45-47)
- January 27
 - CGG Ch. 2, “What Is Science?” (pages 30-49)
 - Ch. 2 Problems 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 (pages 44-46)

Week 3 (February 1 & 3): What Is Politics?

- February 1
 - CGG Ch. 3, “What Is Politics”
 - Note: This is a pivotal chapter. Success in the rest of the class is dependent on mastery of the concepts in this chapter.
- February 3
 - Ch. 3 Problems 1-5 (pages 79-86)

Week 4 (February 8 & 10): “The Science in Social Science” & Exam 1

- February 8
 - Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, “The Science in Social Science,” from *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Interest in Qualitative Research* (Princeton UP, 1994) (Blackboard)
- February 10
 - Exam 1

Week 5 (February 15 & 17): The State

- February 15
 - CGG Ch. 4, “The Origins of the Modern State”
 - Note: This too is a pivotal chapter. Success in the rest of the class is dependent on mastery of the concepts in this chapter.
- **February 17**
 - Ch. 4 Problems 1-8 (pages 125-134)

Week 6 (February 22 & 44): Democracy and Dictatorship

- February 22
 - CGG Ch. 5 “Democracy and Dictatorship”
- February 24
 - Ch. 5 Problems 1-10 (pages 168-170)

Week 7 (February 29 & March 2) Exam 2

- February 29
 - Review
- March 2
 - **Exam 2**

Week 8 (March 14 & 16) Economics and Regime Type

- March 14
 - CGG Ch. 6, “The Economic Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship” (pages 170-200)
- March 16
 - CGG Ch. 6, “The Economic Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship” (pages 200-209)
 - Ch. 6 Problems 1-5 (pages 209-212)

Week 9 (March 21 & 23) Culture and Regime Type

- March 21
 - CGG Ch. 7, “Cultural Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship”
- March 23
 - Ch. 7 Problems, 1, 2, 4, 5 (pages 260-263)

Week 10 (March 28 & 30): Exam 3 & Introduction to Democratic Transitions

- March 28
 - **Exam 3**
- March 30
 - Keith Darden and Anna Gryzmala-Busse, “The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse,” *World Politics* 59 (October 2006): 83-115 (Blackboard)

Week 11 (April 4 & 6): Democratic Transitions

- April 4
 - CGG Ch. 8, “Democratic Transitions”
- April 6

- Ch. 8 Problems 1-3 (pages 308-318)
- Read Box 8.7, “Transition Game with Incomplete Information” (pages 320-323)

Week 12 (April 11 & 13): Political Economy

- April 11
 - CGG Ch. 9, “Democracy and Dictatorship: Does it Make a Difference?”
- April 13
 - Ch. 9 Problems 1-4 (pages 346-347)
 - Estévez-Abe, Margarita, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice, “Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State” in *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* edited by Peter Hall and David Soskice (London: Oxford University Press, 2001) (Blackboard)

Week 13 (April 18 & 20): Exam 4

- April 18
 - Review
- April 20
 - **Exam 4**

Week 14 (April 25 & 27): Varieties of Dictatorship

- April 25
 - CGG Ch. 10, “Varieties of Dictatorship”
- April 27
 - Ch. 10 Problems

Week 15 (May 2): Review for Final Exam

- May 2
 - **Review**

Final Exam: TBA