Course Description
This class is an introduction to the study of comparative politics. The basic ideas of “comparative politics” are 1) that politics in different countries works similarly in some ways and differently in others, and 2) that whether we are interested in understanding just one country or in understanding trends across many of them, we can learn a great deal by comparing things across a variety of national cases. By looking at how democracy developed in Britain, Japan, and Brazil, for example, we might hope to say something about what is common about democratization in these different countries—or about how the notion and process of democratization can vary.

In addition to this method of learning by comparison, you will explore some of the field’s main questions: Why are the most powerful, richest countries in the world capitalist democracies, and to what extent are other countries converging on that “Western” model? In other words, is there only one path of “modernity” to democracy and capitalism? Is something driving all countries along that path? Or do other paths exist, with other impulses to other outcomes, such that the world will continue to exhibit very different national political systems? This course will ask these questions across a wide range of countries to introduce students to how politics works and changes around the world. The course will cover a wide range of issues, including the formation of the nation-state, the democratization process, the persistence of authoritarianism in some places, the effects of political institutions, and strategies of economic development. The course also addresses debates in comparative politics that have been important in the policy-making community in recent years, such as the problems posed by failed states, how to promote development, and the challenges of nation-building and democracy promotion.

Required Texts
*Essentials of Comparative Politics*, Fifth Edition, by Patrick O’Neil (W.W. Norton & Company). Ebook versions are substantially cheaper than print and can be purchased at [https://digital.wwnorton.com/esscompol5](https://digital.wwnorton.com/esscompol5) . Do NOT purchase older versions of the textbook because it will not adequately prepare you for the chapter tests. The course structure follows that of this required textbook; there is one exam per chapter.

Course Requirements and Grading:
You will have to complete 11 chapter quizzes, 10 video exercises, and 10 short (2-page) reflection papers, and a final exam by June 10, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (Pacific time). However, you may proceed at your own pace; you can take three quizzes in one week or one per week. This is your choice.

30% **CHAPTER QUIZZES** – You will take one quiz for each chapter that will cover material in the textbook (chapters 1 – 11). These quizzes will be taken on-line via CANVAS and can be accessed through the “Modules” page under the module for each chapter. The quizzes are also all contained within the folder called “Assignments.” Thirty percent (30%) of your grade for the class will be based on these chapter quizzes, all taken on-line via CANVAS.
Each chapter quiz contains 25 multiple-choice questions, each worth one point (i.e.,
each chapter quiz is worth 25 points). You will have 30 minutes to take each chapter
quiz. After completing the test, please make sure you press the submit button about 30
seconds before the 30 minute time limit because it takes the system about that long to
process your quiz. You have two attempts to take each quiz (i.e., you may re-take each
quiz once). You will receive the highest grade of the two attempts. You are not required to
take the quiz two times. You must finish the quiz within the time allotted or you will not get
a grade. If for some reason you lose a connection, you can use your second attempt to take
the quiz again. Please note that your second attempt may have different questions, as
they are randomly picked from a larger test bank.

20% VIDEO EXERCISES – You will also complete a series of short video exercises for
chapters 2-11. These involve watching short videos online (typically 5-10 minutes each) and
writing short-answer essay questions (a few paragraphs each) responding to questions
relating to each video segment. The purpose of these is for you to think more deeply about
how the issues discussed in the text relate to real-world cases. There is no time limit for
completing the video exercises, which will be completed via CANVAS. They are worth
20% of your grade for the class.

30% REFLECTION PAPERS - For this enhanced “writing intensive” course all students will
write ten short (2-page double-spaced) “reflection papers,” one each for chapters 2-11. For
each chapter, you must respond to a question I post on CANVAS. The questions require you
to reflect on and analyze information provided in the corresponding chapters. A reflection
paper is not a summary of the course readings or a stream of conscious mind dump on
paper. Rather, it is a means for you to analyze and respond in a substantive way to the
content, issues and controversies raised in the assigned readings. While you are free to do
any outside research you want, it is not necessary. Your writing assignments will be
securely uploaded to Canvas and automatically checked for plagiarism. Together, these
reflection papers constitute 30% of your grade for the class.

20% FINAL EXAM – Due to new mandatory security requirements imposed by the University,
the final exam (worth 20% of your grade) must be taken in a setting where someone will
check your ID and monitor your taking of the test. On-campus students will take their final
exam at the SSIL Labs in McKenzie 445. Off-campus students in Portland have the
opportunity to test at the White Stag Building. All other students that are not in Eugene will
have to obtain a “Remote Proctor.” Information on how to do this will be sent to all students
and is available on the CASIT website under “Off Campus Students” (see
https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/off-campus). The final exam consists of
50 multiple-choice questions covering information from the entire textbook (Chapters 1-11).
You will have 90 minutes to complete the exam. You will only have ONE chance to take
this final exam.

Please note you must make reservations to take the final exam at one of the testing centers
described above. Friday, June 10 is the last day exams are given for the Spring term. June 10 is the
last day exams are accepted, NOT THE DAY TO TEST. You may take the final exam at any time,
and you are strongly encouraged to do so before the final day of testing. The last testing session of the term is usually 2pm on Friday afternoon, with a 2 hour limit. The testing center usually starts testing at 9am or 10am depending on demand. They usually offer about 35 different times to choose from during finals week, which include AM and PM times. Please make your testing reservation early to ensure a spot.

**Grading Scale:**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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**Technological Requirements:**

- You will need regular access to a competent computer with web access.
- **No incompletes** can be given for this course due to its web-based nature. If you do not complete a quiz for any reason, you will receive a “0.” If you have trouble accessing any quiz, please contact me immediately.
- All quizzes and the final exam must be completed by 5:00 p.m. (Pacific time), June 10, 2016.
- PS 204 cannot be repeated for credit – the traditional lecture course PS 204 is treated as the same course by the Registrar’s office.
- Please email me with any questions from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, and I will respond within 24 hours.

**Class Web Sites:**

- **CANVAS** This web site is the main web site used for this class. All class information will be run through this website.
- All course assignments **EXCEPT** the final exam are administered through the course CANVAS site, and are all due June 10, 5:00pm (Pacific time). As described above, the Final Exam is not given through CANVAS, but must be taken at a testing center.

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is a violation of the UO Student Conduct Code to open the required textbook or other materials during a quiz, collaborate or consult with another person during a quiz, share questions or answers with others, print out the quiz, or use a quiz or quiz answers provided by another person, or to pay another person or organization to assist you in taking these quizzes. If you engage in any of these activities even once, your grade for all the quizzes will be a zero, which will make it essentially impossible to pass the class.