

Syllabus | Fall 2020 | DRAFT
INTL 3300 | Introduction to Comparative Politics | CRN# 25337

Instructor:

Dr Jennifer J White

Class Time:

MWF, 12:40 – 15:30

Office Hours (E-mail, Skype, Zoom):

Fridays, 15:30-17:30, or by appointment

Class Location:

MLC, Room 248 & On-Line, via Zoom

E-Mail:

jenx@uga.edu

Office Mailing Address:

202 Herty Drive, Room 216 ([building #0031](#))

Appointment Scheduling during Office Hours:

[jenx.youcanbook.me](https://www.youcanbook.me)

FlipGrid: F20_IA3300L

<https://flipgrid.com/white0141>

GroupMe: F20_IA3300L (Fall 2020, INTL 3300, Large Section)

https://groupme.com/join_group/61002667/Nipk1koA

TA:

Solbi Kim: Solbi.Kim@uga.edu

Course Description: Comparative political themes in political science. The transition from feudalism to capitalism, state building, democracy, and interaction between political institutions and cultures in various politics. Examples will be drawn from developed, communist/post-communist and developing political systems. **PREREQUISITE:** POLS 1101 or INTL 1100

“Those who only know one country, know no country.” – Seymour Lipset

Raise d’Être of the Course: The crux of comparative political science is this: by examining two or more countries in the light of various political theories – and by comparing two or more themes and/or functions across countries – one learns from the differences and similarities uncovered. Such analysis can also lead to an understanding of one’s own political system, and therefore one can begin to ask and investigate political questions that have a direct bearing on one’s own life and values. This process requires disciplined investigation and critical thinking skills; we shall work to develop these throughout the course.

Texts:

We shall use two main textbooks for the course – **I highly recommend the e-versions**, in case we need to go completely on-line for a portion of the semester (and please **note the editions** of each book):

O’Neil, Patrick, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. Sixth Edition (New York: WW Norton & Company, Inc.) 2018.

ISBN: 978-0-393-62458-8 (paperback) OR

ISBN: 978-0-393-63134-0 (e-book)

Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. (5th Edition) Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. 2017.

ISBN: 978-1-62466-654-4 (paperback) OR (e-book)

Additional Readings: There will also be selected readings from other texts and news articles, some of which are listed in the course schedule below, and some which will be determined later (and will be posted on the course’s site on the eLC). **Please NOTE:** *The readings that will be posted on the course Web site are for use by students in this course ONLY! Please do not share these copyrighted materials with others, else I shall receive a nasty “cease and desist order” from the publishers. Not fun.*

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Goals of the Course:

Over the semester, we shall undertake an examination of the different approaches – both theoretical and thematic – to the study of comparative politics.

By the end of the semester, we shall be able to do the following:

Skills/knowledge related to the course content:

- **identify** the *political institutions* of a society, **explain** their configuration and how & why they may change
- **explain** how a society's *political economy* is organized and how it can affect potential political outcomes (such as elections or legislation)
- **identify & explain** how *political culture and history* structure political choices in a given society
- assess how *political institutions, political economy, and political culture and history may interact* with one another to affect political outcomes
- **compare** different systems and countries to the case of the United States (which we shall use as a base reference) to explain political outcomes

Practical skills/knowledge that can be applied in a job/career setting:

- **perform critical comparative assessments** of the differences and similarities we find, asking whether or not a country's political institutions, economy, or culture may provide **viable answers or policy prescriptions** to some of the current political problems and challenges that many countries face today (such as **immigration policy/migration flows, political violence/extremism, environmental concerns, the impact of protest, the meaning of globalization, and response to public health crises**)
- **develop** sharper **critical thinking skills** that will enable you to better understand and assess the value of news articles, research papers, policy positions, and other content on the political affairs of different systems of governance and different societies
- **apply** theoretical tools from the course to **explain, predict, or prescribe policy reform** and political behavior as a researcher or practitioner in the field of politics
- **explain and communicate theoretical concepts and findings** with more effective written and verbal communication skills
- **apply what we have learned to current world political events**, so that we may better understand their meaning and impact on outcomes

Tools of the Course: eLC, GroupMe, and FlipGrid

We shall be using a number of tools that are accessible on-line to deliver material, assignments, and communication. These tools will respect your privacy at all times, and those outside of the class will not be granted access to them.

The course materials will be primarily located on eLC. We shall use e-mail and **FlipGrid** (your UGA address, please!) as well as **GroupMe** for communication, so please be familiar with each of these apps. FlipGrid is an interactive short video app that will allow us to share ideas and feedback with one another (a **primer for FlipGrid** can be found here: <https://help.flipgrid.com/hc/en-us/articles/360051542894>). The access info you need for FlipGrid and GroupMe can be found at the top of this syllabus.

Be sure to check your UGA e-mail and/or announcements on eLC **at least** once a day! 😊

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About Our Class and Syllabus This Semester

Greetings, and I hope you are all well. Under the circumstances (which are surely affecting us all quite differently), I'd like you to focus on the following as we work together this semester:

- **Do what you can and what is right for you.** I've built flexibility into our weekly sessions to try to help us manage under an in-person hybrid course **AND** an on-line-only course. If you feel the need to participate in the course remotely for any reason, please just let me know (jenx@uga.edu – no justification needed) so that I can make appropriate adjustments to my in-person class schedules. If your circumstances change at all during the semester, **it's OK to change your attendance preference.** Bottom line: don't stress if things are a bit overwhelming – which leads to the second point...
- **Communicate.** If you are not able to keep up, or something is not clear, or you are facing other challenges that are affecting your course work, please let me know. I can adjust things for us if I know there are difficulties. Be sure to check your e-mail AND eLC at least once a day! There is also a GroupMe for the course, in case anyone has wi-fi hindrances.
- **Try to keep to the daily and weekly schedule, and keep up with each week's assignments.** I've tried to make the reading assignments manageable, and I'll be producing "lecture nugget" videos (two or so videos of about 5-7 minutes each, featuring materials, PowerPoints, video clips, me and likely my cats...) each week to go over the main concepts/points of the week's material. These will be available on Mondays, and you should try to view them before that week's discussion session.
- **DON'T FIXATE ON GRADES.** I always say this, but this time, please take it to heart. Focus on keeping up with the material and translating that to the assignments. We're in a different learning environment this semester, but we should be able to work through the material and assignments rather well, and hopefully learn a few things along the way. ☺
- This is still new territory for most of us. Despite last semester's shift to on-line classes, I've not designed a fully-on-line course before this semester. I've worked hard over the summer to learn – and I'll be doing my best – but I cannot foresee how everything will unfold. You may be in a similar boat, so we'll work together, and give each other a break if things get a little weird.
- **Put your health and safety needs first.** Much remains uncertain, but taking care of yourself and your loved ones should be your primary priority. Whilst on campus, please follow these precautions:
 - **WEAR A MASK! I shall *not* conduct in-person classes unless every student in the classroom wears a mask** (and it's UGA policy). **I'll have a *limited* supply of disposable masks that I can give you if you need one.** Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact the Disability Resource Center at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.
 - **DawgCheck:**
Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>
 - **What do I do if I have symptoms?**
Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706.542.1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 AM -5 PM). Please **DO NOT** walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

We are in an unprecedented situation, but we shall do our best together to generate a great learning experience this semester! I know we've got this!! ☺

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My Expectations of You:

As an introduction to an entire subfield of political science, this course will be covering a great deal of ground, and we may not be able to cover adequately a theme or area of the world that is of interest to you. There will be, however, opportunity for you to delve more deeply into particular areas/countries of interest in the group project (described below).

It is *essential* that you prepare each week and keep up with the readings, assignments, and discussions.

Each week's reading and lecture assignments should be completed before our discussion sessions (on-line or in-person), and each student must be ready to conduct a quality discussion during those meetings. In addition, lectures will not be mere repetition of the reading material, and students will be expected to come to class ready to *expand* on the readings and assignments. In effect, we shall be building the class meetings together, so each student must be engaged in the class.

What You Can Expect from Me:

I shall strive to offer you a fair, manageable workload that will address the essential concepts and knowledge you'll need to serve as the foundation for upper-level Comparative Politics courses. I shall also connect what we discuss with current events to help you gain a greater understanding of our course concepts and certain events happening in the world. ***Please note that our discussions of current events will be related to the topic(s) we are discussing in the course; if you're not making the connections, let's please chat about that!***

You can book a specific time during my office hours to see me at jenx.youcanbook.me. Appointments can be scheduled in 15-minute increments; if you think you might need a longer visit than 15 minutes, please book more than one time slot. If you will be unable to meet with me after having scheduled a time, please delete the appointment at jenx.youcanbook.me, so others may be able to schedule at that time.

You should indeed feel free to ***communicate with me*** on any question or issue you are having in the course. This is ***your*** course: you should be active in what you're learning and with regard to what you wish to learn. If something isn't working or isn't clear, please speak up – I'll give you opportunity to give feedback along the way, but the sooner I know about an issue, the sooner I can attempt to correct it!

Ground Rules:

Please note the following:

1. First and foremost: **communicate**. If anything occurs that might affect your ability to participate or do the work for the class, please let me know. I have had many students who have felt overwhelmed yet waited too long to speak to me (or did not communicate at all) about the situation: if I know that you are facing challenges, I can work with you or help you find assistance so that you can successfully manage the course.
2. ***Be sure you know what the heck plagiarism is*** (see www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize). ***Work submitted for this course must be your own work; all necessary citations must be properly provided when you cite anyone or anything else:*** All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for knowing these standards ***before*** performing any academic work, and we shall discuss points of academic ethics and plagiarism in class. For more information, see: honesty.uga.edu/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm. **To reiterate:** any incidents of plagiarism or intellectual fraud (see www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fraud) will be treated as the **most serious offense**, and you ***really*** don't want to go to a University hearing over this – it's scary AF.

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If you need help in determining what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid committing this most egregious intellectual sin, please consult me or our kickin'-est SPIA Librarian, Elizabeth White (elwhite1@uga.edu, no relation).

3. **Late work:** I shall accept late work on an individual basis. For me to consider *any* submission of late work, you must communicate to me *before* the deadline that the assignment will be late; I shall not accept any late submission otherwise.
4. **Back up your work!** Purchase an inexpensive USB drive or use an on-line storage site like Dropbox, and use this storage back-up frequently! If your laptop crashes right before an assignment is due, you want to be sure to have something to turn in. (And this back-up routine is an incredibly good habit to get into for your work in all of your classes!)
5. **Letters of recommendation:** I receive many of these requests each semester. To guarantee that I can complete each request and do so as well as possible, note the following:
 - a. I am limiting the number of new requests for such letters to ten (10) each semester. (This does not apply for those of you for whom I have written a letter in the past).
 - b. In all cases, I shall require at least a **three-week notice** before the letter is due (more time is always appreciated!). 😊
6. Our discussions may touch upon ideas or topics on which we may not all agree – in fact, this will probably be the case. Each student is expected to be courteous and respectful of the viewpoints and ideas of all others in the class, although disagreements are certainly acceptable. ***In discussions, you should make an effort to provide either a theoretical or empirical basis for your comments (i.e., facts – and there is no such thing as an “alternative fact”). This is a major part of becoming a good critical thinker, which is one of the goals of this course.***
7. This syllabus is a general plan; **it may be necessary for me to amend any part of the syllabus as we proceed through the course.** (Let’s face it: it will likely happen.) Announcements will generally be made in class and on the course Web site, so you should be sure to attend each class, and to **check the course Web site on ELC often.** *If you note any errors (likely) anywhere in the syllabus, please let me know.*

Grading:

Participation/Communication	➔	15%
Quizzes (eight)	➔	15%
Journal Reflections (five)	➔	10%
FlipGrid Factoids & Responses (at least three of each)	➔	10%
Discussion Board Posts (around four)	➔	10%
Country Brochure Group Project – Components:		
Individual Research Annotated Bibliography (individual)	➔	15%
Country “Brochure” (one per group)	➔	10%
Peer Evaluation/Critique (one per group)	➔	5%
Final Country Comparison Essay (individual)	➔	10%
<hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>		
Total:		100%

Grading Scale:

Given the array of challenges of the present semester, grading for the course will be deemed as follows:

>=85	A	70-79	C	<60	F (or I, with appropriate communication)
80-85	B	60-69	D		

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Notes on Assignments:

Group Project Components: Each student will work as part of a group on a project consisting of an e-copy “brochure” and an individual written annotated bibliography that summarizes research on a country that the group selects to investigate. The brochure will draw on the research that each individual performs for the country selected. Furthermore, each group will be responsible for critiquing the brochure of one other group. Finally, each student will perform a comparative analysis of the country that their group researched and the country of their peer-reviewed group. Hence, there are certain individual components to the group project. Details concerning the group project will be discussed in class in advance of the respective component assignments.

Quizzes:

Quizzes will generally be given on-line (eLC) most weeks by Friday, and you will have the weekend to complete them. The quizzes will be open-book/open-note (the point is to get you into the book and allow you to *learn* the material, not merely memorize it temporarily for the quizzes!), but **the work must be your own**. Each quiz will cover the material since the prior quiz.

Journal Reflections:

You will be assigned up to four “journal reflections” on topics related to our material and class discussions throughout the semester. These are meant to be **informal** essays that enable you to explore the topics, reflecting on insights, experiences, or questions you have pertaining to the topics.

Additional assignments may also be given during the week. It is therefore essential that you attend either an in-class discussion meeting or a remote Zoom discussion meeting each week to receive these assignments. These assignments will count towards your participation grade.

Participation/ Communication: As objectives of the course include developing better critical thinking skills and being able to communicate concepts and ideas more effectively, participation counts significantly towards your final grade. A higher grade is contingent on **active participation**. I define participation broadly, however: **raising questions or expressing confusion about the material; interacting with me outside of the classroom; posting interesting articles on the eLC course discussion board that relate to our course material**. If you are concerned about participation, contact me and we can discuss strategies to raise your grade, but **do not wait until the last day of class to do this**, as it will be too late by then!

Communication, too, is important. I seriously cannot stress this point enough. If: something does not make sense to you; I am going too fast in lecture; you need help studying for quizzes or in completing assignments; you like/don't like the textbook – **all of these issues will be solved to our much greater mutual satisfaction if you simply communicate them to me BEFORE the end of the semester!** I'm pretty approachable, and this is YOUR class and YOUR learning; so, if something is not working for you (or is working really well), TELL ME! This will allow me to make adjustments to the class that will likely benefit us all. **Communicating, then, is part of your participation in the course, and hence, part of your grade.**

And to reiterate part of the ground rules: if you feel overwhelmed or are having any difficulties that affect your performance in the class, tell me about this, too: I may be able to connect you with resources that can help you manage things better. **Nothing – nothing – is more important than your well-being!**

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Class Schedule: **IN-PERSON ATTENDEES: YOU MUST ATTEND ON THE DAY YOU ARE ASSIGNED!!**

Classes will consist primarily of discussion of the readings, current events, and other topics related to the week's content. This schedule is just a plan (not a contract!); **changes may be necessary as we move through the semester.** If you note any errors or areas of confusion, please let me know!

- Readings marked with asterisks (**) can be found on eLC.
- "O'Neil" indicates a reading from our main textbook.
- "Weston" indicates a reading from the *Rulebook for Arguments* text.
- Lecture videos will be made available on Monday of each week on eLC (**no class on Mondays!**)

IMPORTANT: The remote students joining in on the Friday classes via Zoom (synchronous participation). Those attending the on-line-only sessions will receive a Zoom join code to attend.

We'll start our class sessions at 12:45 (to avoid increased congestion at building entrances).

I shall put together a **roster** regarding which days each student is expected to attend the in-person sessions. Remember: **If you need to change your attendance preference from in-person to on-line or vice versa, PLEASE NOTIFY ME IN ADVANCE,** so I can manage class attendance accordingly.

ALL classes will be completely on-line for all students after Thanksgiving.

Schedule of Assignments and Classes:

MODULE 1

21 August 2020: Welcome, Introduction, & Getting Ready for the Semester: ON-LINE ONLY!!

Friday: Welcome/Intro & "Know How to News" Videos Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **Syllabus**
- **Weston, Anthony:** Introduction & Chapter 1 **

Assignment:

- **Quiz #1 (DUE 8/26)**

MODULE 2

24 – 28 August 2020: What Is This Thing Called "Comparative Politics?"

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **Draper & Ramsay:** "Good Societies" **
- **O'Neil:** Chapter 1
- **Dickovick & Eastwood:** *Comparative Politics* - Chapter 1 - "The Comparative Approach" (pages 14 - 22) **

Assignments:

- **Journal Reflection (JR) #1 – Getting to Know You (DUE 8/30)**
- **FlipGrid Factoid #1: Introduce Yourself! (see instructions on eLC) (DUE 8/30)**

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MODULE 3

31 August – 4 September 2020: Institutions & States

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- O’Neil: Chapter 2
- Dickovick & Eastwood: Ideologies **

Assignment:

- **Quiz #2 (DUE 9/6)**
- **Discussion Board Post: Which is most important to the foundations of a state: Identity, capability, or legitimacy? (DUE 9/6)**

7 September 2020: LABOR DAY

MODULE 4

9 – 11 September 2020: Nations & Society

Wednesday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- O’Neil: Chapter 3
- Welzel & Inglehart: “Political Culture” **

Assignment:

- **Quiz #3 (DUE 9/13)**
- **FlipGrip Factoid #2: What is the political culture of the United States? (DUE 9/13)**

MODULE 5

14 – 18 September: Political Economy & Institutions, Economy, Culture

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- O’Neil: Chapter 4
- Dickovick & Eastwood: Immigration **

Case Study:

- **Film: “The Other Side of Immigration” (view on eLC)**

Assignment:

- **JR #2: Immigration (DUE 9/20)**

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MODULE 6

21 – 25 September 2020: Democratic Systems

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- O’Neil: Chapter 5
- Dickovick & Eastwood: Electoral Systems **

Assignments:

- **Quiz #4 (DUE 9/27)**
- **Discussion Board Post #2: What are the *essential* elements of democracy? (DUE 9/27)**

MODULE 7

28 September – 2 October 2020: Developed Democracies

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- Allen: “The Case for a US Parliament” **
- Weston: Chapters 2-6 (inclusive)

Case Study:

- Reading: “The United Kingdom” **

Assignments:

- **JR #3: How might the US political system be made more democratic? (DUE 10/4)**
- **FlipGrid Factoid #3: The United Kingdom (DUE 10/4)**

MODULE 8

5 – 9 October 2020: Developed Democracies

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Case Study:

- Reading: “Germany” **

Assignments:

- **Quiz #5 (DUE 10/11)**
- **FlipGrid Factoid #4: Germany (DUE 10/11 – optional; counts as participation credit)**

MODULE 9

12 – 16 October: Communism & Post-Communism

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **O’Neil:** Chapter 9

Case Study:

- **Film:** “Good-bye, Lenin!”

Assignment:

- **JR #4: Communism & Post-Communism in Germany (DUE 10/18)**

MODULE 10

19 – 23 October 2020: Developing Countries

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **O’Neil:** Chapter 10

Case Study:

- **Reading:** “Nigeria” **

Assignments:

- **Sign up for project groups on eLC (DUE 10/21)**
- **Quiz #6 (DUE 10/25)**
- **FlipGrid Factoid #5: Nigeria (DUE 10/25 – optional; counts as participation credit)**

Tuesday, 27 October: DEADLINE TO WITHDRAWAL

MODULE 11

26 – 28 October: Developing Countries

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **Weston:** Chapters 7 – 9 (inclusive); Appendix I

Case Study:

- **Reading:** “China” **

Friday: Guest Speaker – Live On-Line (via Zoom): Elizabeth White, SPIA Research Librarian

Assignment:

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30 October 2020: FALL BREAK

MODULE 12

2 – 6 November 2020: Political Violence

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Tuesday: ELECTION DAY!! (11/4)

Main Readings:

- **Dickovick & Eastwood: Political Contention ****

Case Study:

- **Reading: “Israel”** (EuropaWorld – see Library Course Guide at <https://guides.libs.uga.edu/c.php?g=350085>) **

Assignments:

- **Group Discussion Board Post #1: What is the greatest challenge to most developing countries? (DUE 11/2)**
- **Quiz #7 (DUE 11/8)**
- **Group Discussion Board Post #2: Israel Research - EuropaWorld (DUE 11/8)**

MODULE 13

9 – 13 November 2020: Political Violence

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Case Study:

- **Film: “Paradise Now!”**

Assignment:

- **JR #5: Film Reflection: Roots of Political Contention (DUE 11/15)**

MODULE 14

16 – 20 November 2020: Globalization

Monday: Lecture Nuggets Available (eLC)

Main Readings:

- **O’Neil: Chapter 11**

Case Study:

- **Reading: “Brazil” ****

Assignments:

- **Quiz #8 (DUE 11/24)**
- **Group FlipGrid Factoid #3 Brazil Research – Library Course Site (DUE 11/24)**

23 – 27 November 2020: THANKSGIVING BREAK

MODULE 15: ALL CLASSES ON-LINE!

30 November – 4 December 2020: Wrap-Up!

Wednesday & Friday Sessions: Discussion and Q&A

Assignment:

- **Individual Research – Annotated Bibliography (DUE 12/2)**

MODULE 16: ALL CLASSES ON-LINE!

7 – 9 December: Country Brochure Week!

Wednesday & Friday Sessions: Discussion and Q&A

Assignment:

- **Country Brochure Project (DUE 12/7)**
- **Peer Review: One Other Group's Country Brochure (DUE 12/9)**

DUE: 14 December 2020 – Country Comparison Essay (Individual)

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.