Course overview:

The course examines basic concepts and major theories of comparative politics. The goal of this course is to acquaint you with the ideas and analytical tools necessary to understand the structures and processes of different types of political systems, as well as how political systems develop over time. Students will apply these tools to the study of multiple countries throughout the world with different forms of government. By the end of this course students will be able to identify different types of political institutions and how each developed over time. In addition, students will understand the implications different types of institutions have on society and interstate relations.

Grades and Policies


Reading Quizzes 20%
Midterm 25%
Student Presentations 25%
Research Paper 30%

Grades: It is a violation of FIRPA to discuss grades via email. As a result, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL I DISCUSS GRADES OTHER THAN BY APPOINTMENT. All emails asking about grades will be referred to this syllabus.

Moreover, your grades are your responsibility, not mine. If you are doing poorly I am always available to help you outside of class. It is your responsibility, however, to seek help as soon as you know your grades are not as good as you would like. DO NOT wait until the end of the semester to ask how you can improve your grade. By that point there will be little you or I can do to help improve the situation.

Make-up Policy: I do not give make-up exams, quizzes, or assignments unless you have a verified absence by the Dean of Students. In such cases it is your responsibility to contact me to arrange a time to make-up the missed assignment. At my discretion make-up assignments, quizzes, and/or exams may be different than that given in class, but will be of equal difficulty level.

Special Needs: If you are an individual with a disability and require accommodations for this class, please notify the instructor immediately.

Course Material/Readings:


All other readings will be available on the Blackboard system.
Student requirements:

1. A midterm and a final examination.
2. Preparation for and participation in class discussions along with periodic reading quizzes. You are expected to follow the Purdue University Class Attendance and Absence Reporting Policy, meaning that you are required to attend all lectures and events. **Absences will be excused only for documented physical or mental illness, accident, or emergency as determined by the Dean of Students. (See above regarding make-up policy for excused absences.)**
3. Students are required to present on a selected country. Specific instructions regarding the presentations will be provided later during the semester.

For all work, the Purdue University Student Code of Conduct is in effect. Every assignment, quiz, and exam must be your own work. Students who cheat or copy will fail the course and be turned into the Dean of Students.

Note: This syllabus is a living, organic creation, and it may change over the course of the semester in response to changing classroom and campus conditions. More specifically, in the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Use the Blackboard Vista web page to keep track of the most recent version of the syllabus along with my email address lyoungx@gmail.com to get information.

THE ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STATE

Week 1  Introduction and the Origins of Political Order


Week 2  Before the State


Week 3  The State & Nationalism


Connor, Walker. 1978. “A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a . . .” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1, no. 4, Pages 377-400.

**Week 4 Political Culture**


Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Chapter 1


**Week 5 Structure and Institutions**


**THEORIES OF THE STATE**

**Week 6 Capital vs. Coercion**


**Week 7 Alternative Theories of State Formation**


**Week 8 Mid-Term Exam**
COMPARITIVE INSTITUTIONS

Week 9  Student Presentations

United Kingdom vs. Germany


Japan vs. Russia


Week 10  Student Presentations

China, Mexico, and the Politics of Africa


Comparative Politics - Applied

Week 11  Environmental Policy – A Comparison of Regimes


Week 12  Final Exam