

**PSCI 220: Introduction to Comparative Government (Section: 001)**  
**Fall 2019**  
**MWF 9:20 a.m. – 10:20 a.m., LA 302**  
**Department of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies**  
**Montana State University Billings**

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Office Hours: MW 10:30 a.m. – noon, TTh 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course is designed to provide an overview of different political and economic systems around the globe. The American system, which is also not uniform across the states, is just one of many political and systems. This class provides an overview of how elections are conducted, how government is organized, how countries administer economic affairs, and the cause and effects of political violence. We will study these topics through case studies (countries) that feature different systems around the world. The goal of this course is to provide you with a better understanding of the world at large, and how the American system is just one of many.

**Course Objectives**

This course satisfies three credits of the university's Social and History General Education requirement. At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the major theories and concepts that political scientists use to analyze the political, economic, social and cultural features of diverse countries;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the major differences and commonalities between countries with different characteristics and be able to compare and contrast industrialized and developing countries' political institutions and actors;
3. Ability to use theories and concepts to understand the main factors that influence a country's political system and aspirations, and to understand how a country's political, social, and economic characteristics are related to one another and to the international environment.

**General education statement**

General education at MSU Billings is designed to initiate students as participants in the ongoing accumulation of human knowledge and understanding. General education courses promote the development of respect for diversity, along with skills in problem solving, critical thinking, and communication necessary for students to become productive and responsible members of their communities.

## **General education course outcomes**

1. Analyze historical and cultural significance in human behavior, ideas, and institutions.
2. Synthesize multiple perspectives to understand human behavior.
3. Contextualize information from multiple points in time and place to understand society.

## **Required Text**

Orvis, Stephen, and Carol Ann Drogus. 2018. *Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA.: CQ Press. (ISBN 978-1506375465).

The textbook is available online through the MSU Billings Campus store and other online retailers.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Please come to class prepared. This means you need to **read** and **take notes** on the assigned readings beforehand. Attending class and participating is important, as there will be material discussed only in lectures that will be tested on exams and quizzes. We will be discussing controversial issues throughout the semester, with some of you holding passionate opinions on these issues. Please treat your fellow classmates with respect. We each come to this course with diverse backgrounds and different ideas regarding various issues and how government should work. Please respect your classmates by not talking or interrupting when I or others are speaking. You are allowed only one “no-excuse” late pass per semester for an assignment that allows you to turn in the assignment up to 72 hours late without penalty. All you have to do to use your late pass is email me before the assignment is due.

## **Technology Policy**

Use of electronics for web surfing and communicating with others is generally inappropriate, and distracting to both myself and other students. If you need to call or text someone in an urgent situation, quietly leave the room. I reserve the right to ask students to leave if you are using your cell phone or clearly not using a laptop/tablet for note-taking.

## **Grading**

Exam: (60% – Three at 20% each)  
Elections paper: (15%)  
Social welfare policy paper: (15%)  
Quizzes: (10%)

**Final grade scale:** A = 94% and above, A- = 90%-93%, B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83%-86%, B- = 80%-82%, C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+ = 67%-69%, D = 63%-66%, D- = 60%-62%, F = 59% and below (Note: I do not round up final grades if you are just below the cutoff, such as having a 93.8%. I have to define the scale at some point, and some people are always going to fall on the other side of the divide).

*Exams (Three at 20% each):* Three exams will be administered during the semester. These exams will not be cumulative. The format of the exams will be multiple choice and essay. Exams will be given in class. You are allowed to make-up one exam if you miss it for any reason. However, make-up exams must be taken on Thursday, Dec. 5, in the Academic Support Center (no exceptions will be made!).

*Elections paper (10%):* You will write a six- to seven-page paper (12-point double-spaced Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins) describing elections in a country that you must choose early in the semester. You will analyze the country's system of government, electoral system, recent elections, major candidates for president or prime minister, and major issues affecting the election. This paper is not just a description. You will need to make and support an argument how the political makeup of your country affects the election system and vice-versa. You will need to use reputable outside sources such as academic journals, newspapers, or reliable news websites such as the New York Times, Washington Post, The Economist, Foreign Affairs, BBC, or foreign news sites based in the country you chose. You must cite your sources using APA style and include a Works Cited section that does not count toward your page total. You will need to pick a country on the discussion board on D2L by Friday, Sept 27. You cannot choose the United States. The paper is due Friday, Oct. 25.

*Social welfare/health policy paper (10%):* You will write a six- to seven-page paper (12-point double-spaced Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins) describing the social welfare system in a country that you will choose approximately midway through the semester. The country you pick must be on a different continent than the country you chose for the elections paper. This is not just a descriptive paper. You will need to make and support an argument on how the politics and demographics of your chosen country affect its social welfare policy choice. You will need to use reputable outside sources such as academic journals, newspapers, or reliable news websites such as the New York Times, Washington Post, The Economist, Foreign Affairs, BBC, or foreign news sites based in the country you chose. You must cite your sources using APA style and include a Works Cited section that does not count toward your page total. You will need to pick a country on the discussion board on D2L by Friday, Nov. 8, and it has to be a different country than the one you chose for the election paper. You cannot pick the U.S. The paper is due Friday, Dec. 6.

*Quizzes (10%):* There will be quizzes due on D2L every day class is held. Quizzes will be multiple choice and cover the lecture and discussion for the day. Quizzes will be available to take starting at 11:00 a.m. after class are due by 11:59 p.m. that day. Quizzes cannot be made up. The lowest five quizzes will be dropped.

**Grading notes:** Proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure will be assessed as part of your exam and paper grades. Developing the ability to write clearly is an important skill for your future careers. You are expected to carefully read, edit, and proofread their written work. If you would like help with your writing skills, there are on-campus resources that are there to help you. The university offers help in various subjects through the Academic Support Center. Assistance is free and is available in the Student Union Building. Drop-in writing help and tutoring for this course is available from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. – 5

p.m. Friday. Appointments are also available for writing help.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense, and I will generally fail students from the course for academic misconduct. It can also lead to a disciplinary hearing where sanctions can suspension or expulsion from the university. The university's policy on academic misconduct can be found in Section B of the student handbook. I will provide links to how to avoid plagiarism on D2L. I am available to help. However, you are responsible for learning how to properly cite your sources and avoid plagiarism.

### **Student Accessibility**

MSU Billings is committed to providing equal access. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Disability Support Services at 657-2283. It is also located in Room 135 in the College of Education. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

### **Registration Requirement**

University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm enrollment in MyInfo. Registration errors must be corrected prior to university deadlines.

### **Class Schedule**

Readings will come from the *Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context* textbook and other readings that will be available on D2L. You should be prepared to discuss the assigned readings on the days listed below. I may make changes to the schedule as needed.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments</b>
1	9/4	Intro/Syllabus	None
	9/6	Introduction	Chapter 1, pgs. 1-13
2	9/9	Explaining Comparative Politics	Chapter 1, pgs. 13-34
	9/11	Origin of the State	Chapter 2, pgs. 36-58
	9/13	Strong States	Chapter 2, pgs. 58-71 U.S. News, World's Most Powerful Countries
3	9/16	Weak states	Chapter 2, pgs. 71-95 Al Jazeera, "Failed state': Venezuelan displacement and starvation multiply" The Spectator, "Lebanon: the world's best

			failed state”
	9/18	Civil Society	Chapter 3, pgs. 98-110 The Globe & Mail, “What do we mean when we talk about ‘civil society’?”
	9/20	Liberal Democracy, Communism, Fascism, and Modern Authoritarianism	Chapter 3, pgs. 110-128 Katharina Hofmann De Moura, “The global footprint of right-wing populists”
4	9/23	Personalism, Electoral Authoritarianism, Theocracies	Chapter 3, pgs. 128-143 Erin Handley, “How China's orchestrated tours of Xinjiang echo the 'Potemkin villages' of authoritarian regimes”
	9/25	Identity and Nationalism	Chapter 4, pgs. 146-161 Jo Becker, “The Global Machine Behind the Rise of Far-Right Nationalism”
	9/27	Ethnicity and Race	Chapter 4, pgs. 161-179 Lewis Hyde, "How Nationalism Can Destroy a Nation" <b>Country name for elections paper due</b>
5	9/30	Religion, Secularism, and Gender	Chapter 4, pgs. 179-208 Kapil Komireddi, “The Kashmir crisis isn’t about territory. It’s about a Hindu victory over Islam”
	10/2	<b>Exam #1</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>
	10/4	Parliamentary and Presidential Systems	Chapter 5, pgs. 214-238 Jason Horowitz, “Horse-Trading Begins for Italy’s Next Government. Who Will Outsmart the Other”
6	10/7	Semipresidential Systems and Judiciary	Chapter 5, pgs. 238-254 Joanna Berendt and Marc Santora, “Poland Reverses Supreme Court Purge, Retreating From Conflict With E.U.”
	10/9	Bureaucracy and Federalism	Chapter 5, pgs. 254-277 Raphael Minder, “Trial of Catalan Independence Leaders Ends in Spain”
	10/11	Electoral Systems and Political Parties	Chapter 6, pgs. 282-305 Megan Specia, “What You Need to Know About Israel’s New Elections”
7	10/14	Party Systems and Civil Society	Chapter 6, pgs. 305-320 Sylvie Kauffman, “The Death and Birth of Europe’s Parties”
	10/16	Case Studies in Electoral Systems	Chapter 6, pgs. 320-351 Australian Federal Elections Deutsche Welle, “How does the German general election work?”
	10/18	<b>Election and Coalition</b>	<b>Election and Coalition Simulation</b>

		<b>Simulation</b>	
8	10/21	Contentious Politics	Chapter 7, pgs. 356-376 Louise Matsakis, "China Attacks Hong Kong Protesters With Fake Social Posts"
	10/23	Civil War and Terrorism	Chapter 7, pgs. 376-394 Stephen M. Walt, "ISIS Is a Survivor"
	10/25	Revolution	Chapter 7, pgs. 394-404 Jonathan Brunson, "Is Ukraine Due for Another Revolution?" <b>Elections paper due</b>
9	10/28	Modernizing Authoritarian Regimes	Chapter 8, 408-421 Alina Polyakova and Chris Meserole, "Exporting Digital Authoritarianism"
	10/30	Electoral Authoritarian Regimes	Chapter 8, pgs. 421-439 Chris Buckley and Steven Lee Myers, "China builds more secret 're-education camps' to detain Uighur Muslims despite global outcry over human suffering"
	11/1	Elections, Parties, and Civil Society in Authoritarian Regimes	Chapter 8, pgs. 439-463 Jen Kirby, "The pro-democracy protests rocking Moscow, explained"
10	11/4	<b>Exam #2</b>	<b>Exam #2</b>
	11/6	Military in Politics	Chapter 9, pgs. 468-482 Tom Chitty, "Why does Thailand have so many coups?"
	11/8	Revolution and Democratization	Chapter 9, pgs. 482-497 Richard Lebaron and Leah Hickert, "Do Arabs Want Democracy?" <b>Country name for social welfare paper due</b>
11	11/11	<b>Veteran's Day</b>	<b>No class</b>
	11/13	Case Studies in Regime Change	Chapter 9, pgs. 498-516 Jonathan Broder, "Iran's Opposition Groups are Preparing for the Regime's Collapse. Is Anyone Ready?"
	11/15	Markets and the State	Chapter 10, pgs. 522-536 Mary Kaldor, "British democracy has been hollowed out by neoliberalism – and Brexit will make it a whole lot worse"
12	11/18	Globalization	Chapter 10, pgs. 536-552 Daniel Moss, "The Rise of India and Cricket Show Globalization Isn't Finished"
	11/20	States and Markets Around the World	Chapter 10, pgs. 552-578 David Slotnick, "No-deal hard Brexit impact on air travel, airlines, and flights"

	11/22	Development	Chapter 11, pgs. 582-604 Stephen Paduano, "China's Investments in Rwanda Raise Familiar Questions About Debt"
13	11/25	Case Studies in Development	Chapter 11, pgs. 604-629 Michael Hobbes, "Stop Trying to Save the World"
	11/27	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	<b>No class</b>
	11/29	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	<b>No class</b>
14	12/2	Welfare Policies	Chapter 12, pgs. 634-659 Nima Sanandaji, "Europe's Welfare States Try Welfare Reform"
	12/4	Health Care Policies	Chapter 12, pgs. 660-677 Saskya Vandoorne and Melissa Bell, "The 'dark side' of Finland's famous free health care"
	12/6	Environmental Policies	Chapter 12, pgs. 677-698 Scott Wallace, "Inside the faltering fight against illegal Amazon logging" <b>Social welfare paper due</b>
15	12/11	<b>Final exam</b>	8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. ( <b>Note different time</b> )