Comparative politics is a very broad and inter-disciplinary field which explores politics and societies across the world and historically. It is concerned with methods of study, empirical accuracy, and learning through comparing. The goals of this course are to introduce students to the tools, debates, and subjects of modern comparative politics. It also aims to expose students to political change and important issues on the global stage. While we will not focus on individual countries, we will cover themes relevant to modern to Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

**Grades and responsibilities**

Students are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as assigned readings. Grading is comprised of five components:

1. Exam 20%
2. Weekly Reviews (8) 10%
3. Analytical Book Review 20%
4. Final exam 40%
5. Participation/Attendance 10%

In addition to two exams during the semester, eight weekly reviews of course readings are required. The participation and attendance grade is based on an objective presence in class and on a subjective assessment of being prepared (i.e. having done assigned readings and prepared to discuss). You are allowed three excused absences (with documentation); any absences beyond three will affect the grade as well as possible failure. A key to doing well in the class is keeping pace with the readings and actively participating in class discussion.

**Required Text, available in book store:**


**Please turn off mobile phones**

**More than three unexcused absences from class will result in failure.**

**Laptops may only be used in class for note taking. Please see me for permission**

**Due dates and times for all assignments are strictly enforced.**
LECTURES and READINGS
All readings are available in the documents section of our class blackboard site.

Week 1  Introduction: Comparative Politics and Political Order


Week 2  Concepts: Power, Legitimacy, Community, Violence

1/18  Martin Luther King Day


Week 3  What is Political Development? Why should we care?

1/25-27  Samuel Huntington, “Political Order and Political Decay” World Politics, April 1965, focus on pp. 386-417


Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?” Comparative Politics, April 1973 (selection)

Week 4:  The State Debate: How is the state defined, what are its boundaries, and what does it do?

2/1-3  Theda Skocpol, Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research,” in Bringing the State Back In, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and their Critics,” American Political Science Review 85;1, March 1991

Week 5  States: Origins and Importance in Europe


Alexander Gerschenkron, “Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective” in

**Week 6**

Exam Week

2/15 No Class

2/17 EXAM I

**Week 7**

States and Late Development in Africa and the Middle East


**FILM NIGHT: The Ambassador**

**Week 8**

Regime Types: Debating Democracy


Larry Diamond, “Thinking about Hybrid Regimes,” Journal of Democracy, 2002

**Week 9**

SPRING BREAK

3/7-9 NO CLASS

**Week 10**

Comparative Political Economy


### Week 11
**Comparative Outcomes and Processes: England and East Asia**

**3/21-23**


### Week 12
**The Resource Curse Debates: Middle East and Latin America**

**3/28-30**
Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53 no.3, 2001


### Week 13
**Cases Study: Iraq**

**4/4-6**

Peter Van Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 1-87

### Week 14
**Intervention and Nation-State Building**

**4/11-13**
Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 88-164


Jason Brownlee, “Can America Nation Build?” *World Politics* 59 (January 2007)

### Week 15
**The Aftermath**

**4/18-20**
Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 165-261


Paul Bremmer interview on Al Jazeera, http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/headtohead/2015/12/occupation-create-isil-
“ISIS” *Middle East Report*, Winter 2015

**Book Analysis Due, 4/22 noon**

**Week 16**

4/25 TBA