Case Western Reserve University
POSC160: Introduction to Comparative Politics
(TTh 2:30-3:45)

Professor Pete W. Moore
216-368-5265
pete.moore@case.edu
Office Hours: TTH 12:00-2:00pm (Mather House 221)

Comparative politics is a very broad and inter-disciplinary field which explores politics and societies across the world and across time. It is concerned with methods of study, empirical accuracy, learning through comparing, and investigating some of the most important issues facing the world today. The goals of this course are to introduce students to the tools and subjects of modern comparative politics and also engage political issues relevant to wide parts of the world. While we will not focus on individual countries per se, we will investigate debates and themes relevant to modern to Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

Grades and responsibilities
Grading is comprised of four components:

1. Exams (2x) 40%
2. Participation/Attendance 20%
3. Final Short Paper 40%

There are two in-class exams scheduled during the semester. 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). During the semester I will assign individual short presentations which will also factor into this grade. A final short paper based on the Van Buren book and drawing on course readings will comprise the final assignment and will be due after the last class (exact date to be determined).

Class Policies to Note:
Computers or portable devices may only be used in class, with instructor permission, to take notes. 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.

**Please turn off mobile phones
**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. Any rescheduling and/or extensions of exams and/or papers that are not completed at the designed time must be discussed before the deadline to receive a rescheduling/extension.

Plagiarism whether from digital or printed sources will not be tolerated. Failure to give credit in footnotes for other’s ideas, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another source, and/or failure to acknowledge another author’s conclusions will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of university regulations.
Required Text, available in book store:


**LECTURES and READINGS**

All readings are available through our class canvas site.

**Week 1**  
**Introduction to Concepts and their Importance:** One of the great historical debates centers on what constitutes political order and how it is achieved. Hobbes and Rousseau exemplify strong positions on these questions.

*8/29-31*


**Week 2**  
**Concepts II:** Other concepts key to modern politics across the world are power, legitimacy, and violence. How do we differentiate and what are sources of political and social power in the modern world?

*9/5-7*

George Orwell, “Shooting an Elephant” (this short story can be found online)

**Week 3**  
**The modern state is the most powerful association in the world. What is the state and how do we understand its origins?**

*9/12-14*

Hendrik Spruyt, “The Origins, Development, and Possible Decline of the Modern State”  

**Week 4:**  
**States and Late Development in Europe:** In modern European history, the building of states, economies, and social power was deeply intertwined.

*9/19*


*9/21*  
**NO CLASS**
Week 5  States and Late Development in Africa and the Middle East: In the developing world, states, economic development, and social power unfolded under very different conditions.


Week 6  Exam Week

10/3  Film: The Ambassador

10/5  EXAM I

Week 7  Regime Types: What is democracy in global terms? How do we conceptualize non-democratic regimes?

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

Week 8  Comparative Political Economies: The mutual constitution of the economy and politics is basic to understanding wealth and poverty in the world.


Week 9  Political Economy and Development: One of the classic political economy treatments comes from Barrington Moore’s study of democracy and dictatorship in Europe.

10/24  FALL BREAK

Rebellions, Revolution, and High Risk Activism: Revolutions constitute one of the most consequential, yet rare, political events. How do we understand the roots of revolution? More to the point, how do we explain the willingness of individuals and groups to participate in such high risk activism?

10/31
Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?” *Comparative Politics*, April 1973 (selection)

11/2

The Resource Curse Debate: Returning to political economy, a popular explanation for development and democracy today is the emphasis on resource dependency. Too much resource dependency is deemed bad. How does this work?

11/7
Guest Speaker: Guest speaker, Lisa Hajjar, Department of Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara

11/9
Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53 no.3, 2001

Rentier States: Are states and societies reliant on resource export doomed to failure?

11/14-16

THANKSGIVING BREAK

EXAM II
THANKSGIVING

Intervention and Nation-State Building: Iraq

11/28-30
Peter Van Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 1-164
Jason Brownlee, “Can America Nation Build?” *World Politics* 59 (January 2007)
Week 15  The Aftermath

12/5-7  Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 165-261
Paul Bremmer interview on Al Jazeera,
Also recall: Mouin Rabbani, “The Un-Islamic State,” Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, September 2014

(Final Short Paper Due, TBA)