

Case Western Reserve University
POSC160: Introduction to Comparative Politics
(MW 1245-200pm)

Professor Pete W. Moore

216-368-5265

pete.moore@case.edu

Office Hours: MW 11:00-12:45pm (Mather House 221) and by appointment

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 politics in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

This semester we will explore the following themes: methods and concepts, external and internal political dynamics, political economy, and debating the American role in the 21st century.

Grades and responsibilities

Grading is comprised of four components:

1.	Exam	20%
2.	Short Essay	20%
3.	Participation/reviews	20%
4.	Final Paper	40%

There is one in-class exam scheduled for Week 7. A short take home essay will be due Week 14. A short paper will comprise the final assignment and will be due after the last class on May 6.

The participation grade is based on a subjective assessment of being prepared (i.e. having done assigned readings and prepared to discuss) and on an objective requirement to complete 5 weekly reviews during the semester. During the semester I will assign individual short presentations which will also factor into this grade.

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**

****Lap tops 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 Texts (available in book store):

Peter Van Buren, *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*, Metropolitan Books, 2011

Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*

Also please follow national and international news sources, *New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *Washington Post*, and *The Economist* for example.

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, Rousseau, and Locke exemplify strongly contrasting positions on these questions. For these readings and the following weeks also pay attention to political and social assumptions these intellectuals bring to the table.**
- 1/14-16** Thomas Hobbes, "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning their Felicity and Misery" in *Leviathan*, Collier Books, 1962
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Impossibility of Representation" in *The Social Contract*, Oxford University Press, 1960
John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, selections
- Week 2** **Concepts II: Other concepts key to modern politics across the world are power, legitimacy, and violence (yes, a counter-intuitive theme during MLK week). How do we differentiate and what are sources of political and social power in the modern world? What constitutes politics in a modern sense?**
- 1/21** **MLK Day**
- 1/23** Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party"
Hanna Arendt, "On Violence" in *On Violence*, Houghton1/21 Mifflin Harcourt, 1970
- Week 3** **Power of the Powerless and the Rule of No One: A focus on formal political power can sometimes obscure dynamics of resistance and domination no less important for socio-political change. Where are the hidden sources of power and what methods are required to make sense of these relationships? How does Foucault's history of European incarceration and punishment suggest new forms of state power?**
- 1/28-30** James Scott, "Behind the Official Story" in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press, 1992

George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" (this short story can be found online)
Michel Foucault, "The body of the condemned" in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* Random House, 1995.

Week 4: **The modern state is the most politically powerful association in the world. What is the state and how do we understand its origins?**

2/4-6 Charles Tilly, "How war made states and vice versa," in *Coercion, Capital, and European States AD 900-1990*, Basil Blackwell, 1990.
Hendrik Spruyt, "The Origins, Development, and Possible Decline of the Modern State"

Week 5 **States and Late Development in Europe: In modern European history, the building of states, economies, and social power was deeply intertwined. How are states engines of social change but also competitive obstacles?**

2/11-13 Alexander Gerschenkron, "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective" in *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, Belknap Press, 1962.
Ian Lustick, "The Absence of a Middle Eastern Great Power: Political 'Backwardness' in Historical Perspective" *International Organization* 51:4, Autumn 1997

Week 6 **Comparative Political Economies: The mutual constitution of the economy and politics is basic to understanding wealth and poverty in the world. What are the different approaches to the political economy?**

2/18-20 Lant Pritchett, "Divergence, Big Time," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 11:3, Summer 1997, pp. 3-17.
Charles E. Lindblom, "The Market as Prison," *Journal of Politics* 44:2, May 1982, pp. 324-336
Robert Gilpin, "Three Ideologies of Political Economy" in *The Political Economy of International Relations*, 1987
(suggested: Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts")

Week 7 **Case Study, Origins of the Saudi State/Monarchy and America's Kingdom: States and Late Development in Africa and the Middle East unfolded under very different conditions. We will read a critical study of the early Saudi state and the role of the oil giant, ARAMCO.**

2/25 **In class Exam (or possibly on 3/4)**

2/27 Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*, chapters 1-4

Week 8 **America's Kingdom II: What is the relationship between flag and commerce? What does this tell us about politics, oil, and money today?**

3/4 Vitalis, chapters 5-6
Walt Bogdanich and Michael Forsythe, "How McKinsey Has Helped Raise the Stature of

3/5 Authoritarian Governments,” *NYT*, December 15, 2018
3/6 *Happy Dog (west side) talk, 7:30*
Vitalis, chapters 7-8

Week 9 **FALL BREAK (3/11-15)**

Week 10 **Regime Types and The Politics of Comparative Defining: What is democracy in global terms? Who gets to decide and how do we therefore conceptualize non-democratic regimes?**

3/18-20 Phillippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, “What Democracy is...and is Not,” *Journal of Democracy*, Summer 1991
Lisa Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, pp. 105-113.
Steve Levitsky and Lucan Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* 13 (April 2002)
Patrick Kingsley, “On the Surface, Hungary Is a Democracy. But What Lies Underneath?” *NYT*, December 25, 2018

Week 11 **Rentier States: Are states and societies reliant on resource export doomed to failure, i.e undemocratic? These articles take up differing positions on how “causal” resource dependency is and where it comes from. The Huber et al. article stands as the opposite linkage between economic development and democracy. Also, don’t forget the Vitalis history in these debates.**

3/25-27 Evelyne Huber, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens, “The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Summer 1993)
Ellis Goldberg, Erik Wibbels, and Eric Mvukiyehe, 2008. “Lessons from Strange Cases: Democracy, Development, and the Resource Curse in the U.S. States,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 41, 4/5 (April/May), pp. 477-514.
Marcus Kurtz, “The Social Foundations of Institutional Order: Reconsidering War and the ‘Resource Curse’ in Third World State Building,” *Politics and Society* 37;4, 2009.

Week 12 **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? Also, recall from the start of the semester the Arendt and Marx takes on power and violence.**

4/1-3 Samuel Huntington, “Revolution and Political Order,” in *Political Order and Changing Societies*, Yale University Press, 1968
Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?” *Comparative Politics*, April 1973 (selection)
Leon Trotsky, “5 Days,” and “Dual Power,” in *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky (skim 5 days for literary history narrative, and Dual Power for theory)

Asef Bayat, "The Disfranchised and the Islamic Revolution: Our Revolution and Theirs," in *Street Politics: Poor Peoples' Movements in Iran* by Asef Bayat (Columbia University Press, 1997)

Week 13

Unpacking and Debating the American Role in the World: Politics in Africa and the Middle East have been fundamentally shaped by multiple forms of American intervention in the last several decades. How do we understand and frame these politics? Humanitarian, Imperial, Security? To what extent do external structures and forms of power shape and determine domestic patterns?

4/8-10

Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, Linkage and Leverage: How Do International Factors Change Domestic Balances of Power?" in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler, Lynne Rienner, 2006

Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, Chapter 10, "Rwanda: Mostly in Listening Mode" (skim for an understanding of debates on intervention)

Toby Jones, "America, Oil, and War in the Middle East," *The Journal of American History*, (June 2012).

Max Boot, "American Imperialism? No need to run away from label," *USA Today*, 5/5/2003 (see also Max Boot, "The Democrats need a new foreign policy," *Washington Post*, 26 December 2018)

Tony Judt, "Dreams of Empire," *New York Review of Books*, 11/4/2004

Week 14

Intervention and Nation-State Building in Iraq? Bringing back discussions of power, violence, social order, and states we spend the remainder of the semester examining American efforts at intervention and nation building. Compare and contrast these accounts with the previous historical role of the US in Saudi Arabia.

4/15-17

James Dobbins, "Who lost Iraq?" *Foreign Affairs* 86: 5 (Sep/Oct2007)

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

David Waldner, "The Limits of Institutional Engineering: Lessons from Iraq," Special Report #222, United States Institute of Peace, (May 2009),

Peter Van Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 1-164

4/19

Short Essay Due

Week 15

The Aftermath: How do we explain failure in this case? With unparalleled military and financial power, the US was never able to achieve its goals.

4/22-24

Buren, *We Meant Well*, pp. 165-261

Paul Bremmer interview on Al Jazeera,

Nir Rosen, "What America Left Behind in Iraq," *Foreign Policy*, September 7, 2010.

Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack, "Democracy in Iraq?" *The Washington Quarterly* 26 (Summer 2003)

Week 16

4/29

TBA

(Final Short Paper Due, TBA)