

San José State University
Political Science Department

POLS 2, Introduction to Comparative Politics online, Section 80, Spring 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Jeremy Abrams

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Office Hours: In office: Tuesdays 3:00pm-4pm, in Clark 402F
Online via Zoom: Thursdays 3:00pm-4pm, link in Canvas
And by appointment

Class Days/Time: Online - asynchronous

Classroom: online

GE/SJSU Studies Category: D2

Course Format

This is an asynchronous online class. You will need to be familiar with your computer, web navigation, and email since most of the communication between you, me and your fellow students will happen online. The primary mode of interaction will be through SJSU's Canvas Website, which you may find at <https://sjsu.instructure.com>. On Canvas you will find a copy of this syllabus, additional reading materials and the various methods of assessment. If you are not already familiar with Canvas, you should log on and familiarize yourself with it. You can find helpful information about Canvas at <http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/index.html> and at http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources/index.html.

Course Description

From the SJSU Catalog: Comparative analysis of different kinds of political systems; their political institutions, processes and policies; the environments in which they occur and their consequences.

This course is an introduction to the field and discipline of Comparative Politics. More than simply reviewing the domestic politics of other countries, in this course we will begin the task of systematically examining the myriad of political systems that exist by comparing and contrasting key elements of these societies in order to make generalizations about them. During this course, basic concepts such as institutions, the state, nation and democracy will be introduced, as will the comparative method. We will then examine the variety of democracies across the globe and how they differ from each. We also will look at non-democratic regimes, how transitions to democracy can occur and the impact of globalization. Though the breadth of the material presented in the course touches on only a fraction of the subjects studied by political scientists, by the end of

the semester you will have acquired a greater appreciation of the complex world we live in as well as the tools to make sense of that world.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

This class satisfies the D2 general education requirement (Comparative Systems, Cultures and Environments). Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental and spatial contexts;
- 2) Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them;
- 3) Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications to appropriate to contemporary social issues;
- 4) Compare and contrast two or more ethnic groups, cultures, regions, nations, or social systems.

Assessment of these outcomes will be measured as follows:

- GELO 1: Discussion Board, Paper, Quizzes, Final Exam
GELO 2: Discussion Board, Paper, Quizzes, Final Exam
GELO 3: Annotated Bibliography, Paper, Exams, Final Exam
GELO 4: Paper, Quizzes, Final Exam

Political Science Learning Outcomes

The Political Science Department has the following objectives for its students:

- 1) Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
- 2) Application and Disciplinary Methods: Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
- 3) Communication Skills: Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.
- 4) Citizenship: Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Contacting Me

Because of the online nature of this class, I will always be just an email or text message away to address any questions or concerns you may have. I will be available through a number of different channels. The best method will be through Canvas Inbox or via email at jeremy.abrams@sjsu.edu. I will always do my best to respond promptly. During the week I will usually respond within 24 hours, though often much quicker than that. **When you send me an email, please put your class section information (eg. 'Comparative Pol online) in the Subject: field.** I teach several classes with many students and I need to know to which class you are referring. You may also leave me a voice mail at the number listed above, though I check it less frequently than email.

An online course places a great deal of responsibility on you, the student. It will require discipline and motivation on your part. You are responsible for keeping up with the readings, meeting deadlines, taking the exams and contacting me as needed. Since you will not be attending class, you must plan to spend some time each day or week on this course. Again, I will always be an email or message away if you need assistance but the responsibility to initiate the contact is yours.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

[*Essentials of Comparative Politics \(Seventh Edition\)*](#) by Patrick H. O'Neil, W. W. Norton & Company: 2020. ISBN: 978-0-393-53278-4

Other Readings

There will be additional handouts provided by the instructor during the course of the semester which will be available on Canvas.

Wireless laptop/tablet/smart phone is required in class

You will need access to the internet outside classroom to complete readings from Canvas, complete online homework assignments, upload assignments, and access syllabus, announcements, and course updates on Canvas. Computer access is available in the campus library and in Clark Hall 102.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Please review the following policies and resources:

- [SJSU's Syllabus Policy S16-9](#)
- [SJSU's Syllabus Information web page](#)

Course Requirements: Your grade will be determined by (1) nine of 11 quizzes, each worth 20 points (36%), (2) three Discussion Boards worth 15 points each (9%), (3) one annotated bibliography, worth 45 points (9%), (4) one paper, worth 80 points (16%), and (5) a final exam worth 150 points (30%). See the section on 'Grading Information and Policy' below for more details.

The quizzes and final are designed to measure your understanding of basic concepts and Course Learning Outcomes related to Comparative Politics and political science as listed above. As such, the exams will draw on materials from the books as well as class discussions and additional readings available on Canvas. The writing assignments will delve deeper into key concepts that require more thoughtful treatment and reflection on the part of the student to understand some of the core problems the founders faced when the Constitution was written. Taken together they will help you, at the completion of the course, to better understand how political decisions are made and major obstacles to policy development. The deadlines for these assignments are listed in the course schedule below.

Course materials such as assignments and instructions, syllabus, handouts, notes, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You will need to be familiar with a computer, web

navigation, e-mail and the Canvas system since your assignments and a number of readings are online. Your assignments will be submitted to me through Canvas. **Do not e-mail me your assignments as an attachment.** Due to the potential for computer viruses, I will not open nor accept any assignments sent via e-mail. They will be deleted. Please save your files in Word or PDF format and upload it to Canvas. You are responsible for knowing how to submit assignments through Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking your email and with the messaging system through MyJSU on [Spartan App Portal](#) to learn of any updates.

NOTE that University policy F15-12 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf> states that “Students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student.” You may find form information at the [University’s Syllabus Information](#) web page at <https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>

In a course that examines the politics of foreign governments and world regions, it is important that you understand what is going on in those areas. You will be better able to learn from this class by having a command of current events. Please keep up-to-date with national and world events by reading daily newspapers and listening to the news. I anticipate spending time in many classes discussing current political events and linking them to theories and ideas discussed in the course.

Final Examination

The final exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 19, from 5:15 PM – 7:30 PM.** Final exams may not be taken early. Please plan your travels accordingly. The final exam in this course will be cumulative and will cover course readings, lectures, activities, and discussions for the entire term. It will consist of short answer, multiple choice and other questions and will comprise 30% of your course grade.

Grading Information and Policy

There is a possible total of 500 points. Your final grade will be determined by your total accumulation of points as follows:

Total Points	Percentage	Grade
485-500	97-100	A plus
465-484	93-96.9	A
450-464	90-92.9	A minus
435-449	87-89.9	B plus
415-434	83-86.9	B
400-414	80-82.9	B minus
385-399	77-79.9	C plus
365-384	73-76.9	C
350-364	70-72.9	C minus
335-349	67-69.9	D plus
315-334	63-66.9	D
300-314	60-62.9	D minus

Below 300 points is a failing grade. There will be no extra credit available. Please note that you must take all exams and turn in all assignments to pass the course. Since I will drop the lowest quiz, I will not give make ups for except in the most extreme of cases (e.g. verifiable medical emergencies, etc.). It is your responsibility to make sure you are available to take the quizzes. Late papers will be penalized one point per calendar day. **Please retain ALL of your exams, papers, and other assessments until after you have completed the course and received your grade.**

Note that "All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Classroom Protocol

E-mail: Each student must have an e-mail address which they check regularly. Please make sure you have updated your records in MySJSU. You must monitor your account on a regular basis. When I send out classwide messages it will be to this account. Failure to monitor this account may result in you missing important messages such as class cancellations, change of exam dates, and requests for timely information.

Quizzes and Exams: There will be a quiz following each chapter. You will take each quiz on the Canvas website. There will be a total of 11 quizzes, **of which I will drop the lowest two scores.** I urge you to take the quizzes and final from a computer that is wired into the internet. **Losing a wi-fi connection during a quiz or the final is no more an excuse than running out of ink or forgetting a scantron during a paper-based exam.** You are responsible for having a reliable internet connection while taking the quizzes. **Because I will drop the lowest two quiz scores, there will be makeup quizzes only under extraordinary and verifiable circumstances.** The final exam may not be dropped and will be open during the scheduled final exam period listed in the schedule. It will be a comprehensive exam. On Canvas you can find the quizzes by clicking the 'Modules' link on the left side of the page.

Discussion Boards, Annotated Bibliography and Paper: I will post information on this on the Canvas Website and send e-mails during class giving the details of these assignments.

Academic Freedom: Each student is strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical writing, particularly about political ideas, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. Students may not only disagree with each other at times, but the students and the professor may also find that they have conflicting views on sensitive and volatile topics. It is my hope that these differences will enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere in which students and professor alike will be encouraged to think and learn. Therefore, be assured that students' grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class or in assignments. Rather, we will all respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.

Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This university policy (S12-7) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate university and state law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling,

and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas. It is your responsibility to sign into Canvas regularly and check for any important announcements and updates.

Other Useful Information

Voter Registration (From <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions/>)

Who can register to vote?

To register to vote in California, you must be:

- A United States citizen,
- A resident of California,
- 18 years of age or older on Election Day,
- Not currently imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony, and
- Not currently found to be mentally incompetent by a court of law.

California Direct Primary Election: June 7, 2022

California Statewide Election: November 8, 2022

“The deadline to register to vote is 15 days prior to Election Day, often called E-15. You must submit the voter registration application by midnight on the registration deadline day. A timestamp will be attached to your online voter registration application. If you register to vote using a paper application, it must be postmarked or hand-delivered to your county elections office by E-15. After the registration deadline, in most elections any individual may conditionally register to vote and cast a provisional ballot by visiting their county elections official.”

You may find more information and register to vote at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>

Political Science Scholarships – see <http://www.sjsu.edu/polisci/scholarships/> for info. From the website:

“The Political Science Department is fortunate to be able to award more than 10 scholarships to our students each year—this is an extraordinary level of support that surpasses what any other department on campus can offer. The scholarships were created by generous benefactors—often former faculty, students, and friends of the department—who desired to ease the financial burden on our students as they seek to earn their degrees in Political Science. The department encourages all of our students to apply for one or more of these awards.”

Library information:

liaison for Political Science: Paul Kauppila
University Librarian (Political Science Liaison)
(408) 808-2042
Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu

Political Science subject guide: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

POLS 2: Intro to Comparative Politics, Spring 2022, Course Schedule

*Refers to textbook. Other required readings will be on Canvas

Course Schedule

Week	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines	Quiz and Assignment Due Dates	Chapter*
1	Intro to Course		
2	Introduction	February 3 -4	1
3	States	February 10 - 11	2
4	Nations & Society	February 17 - 18	3
5	Discussion Board 1	February 21 - 26	
6	Political Economy ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE	March 3 – 4 March 3	4
7	Democratic Regimes	March 10 - 11	5
8	Developed Democracies	March 17 - 18	8
9	Discussion Board 2	March 21 - 25	
10	SPRING BREAK		
11	Political Violence	April 7 - 8	7
12	Developing Countries	April 14 - 15	10
13	NonDemocratic Regimes	April 21 - 22	6
14	Discussion Board 3	April 25 - 30	
15	Communism and Post-Communism PAPER DUE	May 5 – 6 May 5	9
16	Globalization	May 12 - 13	11
Final Exam		FINAL EXAM Tuesday, May 19, from 5:15 PM – 7:30 PM	