

## POLS306: Comparative Politics

### College of Graduate and Continuing Studies, Norwich University

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#### Course Description

This course introduces students to the basic methods, concepts and substance of comparative politics. Special attention will be paid to institutions and behaviors as well as development and modernization theories. The course provides students with tools to address such questions as:

- What is a political system?
- What are the different varieties of democracies and authoritarian regimes?
- Are some regimes more vulnerable to political violence than others?
- What explains the transition from authoritarianism to democracy and can that process be reversed?
- How do political systems affect the economic and social development of a region?

(3 credits) Pre-requisites: None

#### Course Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Assess key concepts to address in the study of political systems.
- Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of political systems on a range of dimensions (i.e. impact on economics, individual and group rights, innovation).
- Analyze the interplay between a political system and the culture and geography in which it is situated.
- Analyze the impact of domestic political systems on international relations.
- Analyze how political systems evolve and change over time.
- Evaluate the requirements of successful writing at the college level.

#### Required Textbooks

The following books are required for this course:

- **Danziger, James N. *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science* (13th ed.). 2019. Pearson.**
- **Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2011). *The Future of Power*. Public Affairs.**

See the [Required Readings](#) page for additional seminar readings.

#### Discussion Groups

In this course, you will be assigned to a small discussion group. Each week your group will discuss two questions. The quality of your posts and those of your fellow students will create a lively discussion and ensure that a high level of learning occurs.

You are expected to contribute at least three posts to each question every week. Your **first post** should be substantive (approximately 200-300 words) and it should be made by Wednesday at the latest (note: the earlier you make your initial posts, the more time your classmates, and you, will have to work with it). It should answer the question using your own experience, if appropriate, and, very importantly, it should refer to the readings of that week, using correct citations. Your **second two posts** should be responses to posts of your fellow group members. Responses such as, "Good point," or, "I agree," are not sufficient. Your response posts should be substantive –ask questions, point out additional thoughts, etc. Posts should build on the course content and add momentum to our collective learning. In short, each post should be a valuable contribution! Disagreement and critical feedback are part of an academic classroom, as is respect for the diversity of opinion.

For more information about what is expected in regard to Discussion Forum postings, please review the [Grading Guidelines and Rubrics](#).

**Late Work**

It is important that writing assignments and discussion posts be completed on time. Extensions of deadlines will be given only for serious extenuating circumstances. In the absence of such extensions, assignments may be downgraded for lateness at the discretion of the instructor.

**Grades**

As a student in this course, you have a number of responsibilities that will affect the level of learning you achieve. These responsibilities include: 1) working actively to create a challenging and useful learning experience for yourself, your discussion group and the class as a whole; 2) encouraging and supporting the learning of each member of the class; 3) preparing and participating fully in discussions as well as group and/or class activities; and 4) completing all assigned work on time or making prior arrangements if an absence of late submission is unavailable. In this course you have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that will help you become effective, confident, and focused in your learning.

You will be provided a weekly commentary/lecture and have [required readings](#) and discussion assignments. There will be a number of written assignments and exercises. A total of 1000 points are available in the course distributed across the components.

The following table shows the graded assessment types contained within this course and the assigned weighting to determine the final course grade.

Graded Assessment Types	Points	Weights (%)
Weekly Discussions: 8 at 40 points each	320	32%
Nye Book Questions: 3 at 75 points each	225	22.5%
Independent Research Questions: 2 at 90 points each	180	18%
Final Paper	275	27.5%

Letter grades for the course will be based on the following grading scale.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A	93-100%	4.0
A -	90-92.9%	3.7

B +	87-89.9%	3.3
B	83-86.9%	3.0
B -	80-82.9%	2.7
C +	77-79.9%	2.3
C	75-76.9%	2.0
C -	73-74.9%	1.7
D +	70-72.9%	1.3
D	67-69.9%	1.0
D-	63-66.9%	0.7
F	0-62.9%	0.0

For complete information on the Grading Policy for Bachelor Degree students, please refer to the [CGCS Online Catalog](#) (Sub-Section of Catalog on "Grades.")

Students are expected to maintain a grade point average of a minimum of 2.0 to remain in good academic standing.

All writing for this seminar must follow the APA writing style. All writing for this seminar must follow APA guidelines for formatting and citation, which can be found at [The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#). Grading rubrics for assignments and discussions are provided from the [Grading Guidelines and Rubrics](#) link.

### [Academic Honesty and the Norwich University Honor Code](#)

A student must submit work that represents the student's own original analysis and writing. Copying another's work is not appropriate. If the student relies on the research or writing of others, the student must cite those sources. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to all hardcopy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. While students are encouraged to seek editing feedback, extensive revisions of one's work by another person is considered a lack of academic honesty, as it is representing another student's work as one's own.

For more information see:

[Academic Dishonesty](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Norwich University Honor Code](#)

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### [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ADA](#)

Please consult [Appendix H: University Policy - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) for instructions on obtaining an accommodation.

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Disclaimer: Please note the specifics of this Course Syllabus are subject to change. Students are responsible for abiding by any such changes. Your instructor will notify you of any changes.