

**Government 103**

**Introduction to Comparative and International Politics**

**Spring 2010**

MWF 10:10 – 11:05 Ladd 307

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**Course Description and Goals:**

This course serves as an introduction to two of the most important and interesting sub-fields of political science-- **comparative politics and international relations**. By the end of the course, you should have a good idea about what the study of political science and government at the college level is like, and hopefully you will also have figured out what types of questions in political science interest you the most. Thus, you will also have a good idea about what other classes you might like to take in the future in the Government Department at Skidmore, what types of research projects you may want to pursue in the future, and so on. Hopefully, you will also learn to approach media coverage of “world politics”, “overseas events” and “international crises” with a more critical eye, applying your new knowledge and theoretical insight to help you understand the world around you in a more informed and fulfilling way.

In the first part of the course we examine the basic question around which political science as a discipline organizes itself-- **how do we (and how have we in the past) balance our individual, separate human existences with the fact that we must also live together on Earth as a community (or rather several communities) of people, and what might be the best way to do this (and the worst ways and the “possible” ways) ?** In this section, we explore how different political thinkers have addressed this fundamental problem of how we should live both individually and together. More specifically, we will address the following ISMS, or political theories: liberalism, conservatism, socialism, nationalism, feminism, anarchism and religious fundamentalism. Throughout this section of the course, you should be asking yourself how these ideas might actually be translated into political practice, or reality, and asking yourself to what degree you believe IDEAS about politics (political theory) actually influences political behavior or political life in the “real world”, if at all.

In the second part of the course, we turn to the question of political practice by comparing different types of political systems. In this introduction to **comparative politics** we are addressing the extremes of political systems: **democracies versus dictatorships, particularly totalitarian dictatorships**. By using this opposition, we are able to examine the goals of different political systems, the institutions they establish to achieve those goals, and the implications of those political systems for the people that live under them. In this section we will use both theoretical articles about democratic and non-democratic political systems as well as personal memoirs from citizens in each of these systems to understand more fully how different political systems function. We also examine the relationship between capitalism, economic development and democratic development.

In the final part of the course, and with full acknowledgments to Tolstoy, we examine another great opposition: **war and peace**. We look at the causes and varieties of war and peace, in the process gaining a broad introduction to the subfield of **international relations**. In this section, we cover some basic theories about international relations and what drives them, and then look at case studies of some of the major conflicts of the 20th century. We conclude by examining the forces of **globalization** and the changes (or lack thereof) in the international system in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and attempt to evaluate the on-going “War on Terror” using our newfound theoretical knowledge.

**Required Books Available For Purchase at the Skidmore Shop:**

Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.

Alfons Heck, *A Child of Hitler*

Joseph Nye, Jr. *Understanding International Conflicts*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

Patrick O’Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 3rd edition

**Other Required Readings:**

**E-RESERVES: Accessible through Skidmore Library Website at :**  
<http://www2.skidmore.edu/library/reserves/index.cfm>

**The Hodges Harbrace Handbook**, 17<sup>th</sup> edition.

--**DAILY NEWSPAPER.** In addition to class reading, you should keep informed about world events by reading the New York Times or another newspaper with a strong international section, such as the Washington Post.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:** The Skidmore College mission statement asks faculty to "create a challenging yet supportive environment that cultivates students intellectual and personal excellence, encouraging them to expand their expectations of themselves while they enrich their academic understanding". To do this, I have devised the following assignments.

**1) Class participation, Attendance, and Comportment (15%):**

**Includes :** INFORMED participation in classroom discussions, in-class simulations and small group activities, in-class quizzes (unannounced, probably will be about 10 or so in total, both multiple choice and short answer) and writing assignments, response papers and active interaction with the class email list. Adherence to the Government Department Comportment Code (\*attached at end of syllabus) enhances your grade for this part of the course, failure to adhere to it negatively impacts your grade for this part of the course. About attendance: I expect you to be here every day, ready to participate. Absences are keenly noted (I take attendance every day) and will adversely affect your grade for this part of the class. Sports team related absences must be requested in writing and all classroom work made up. In general, documentation is useful, but not always sufficient, for absolution of absences.

**2) First Midterm Exam: in-class (20%) : Friday February 26**

**3) Second Midterm Exam: in-class (20%): Monday April 5**

**4) Final Exam (25%): Wednesday May 12 @ 9 AM**

**5) Short papers: (2@10% each for a total of 20%)** (Each will be a 3-4 page paper; assignments to be handed out in class)

**PAPER ONE DUE : Friday February 19**

**PAPER TWO DUE: Friday April 2**

**\*\*Important note for papers:** All papers will be graded according to the grammatical and composition standards of *The Writing Requirement in the Department of Government*. These guidelines are available in brochure form and on-line at: [http://cms.skidmore.edu/government/writing\\_guide/index.cfm](http://cms.skidmore.edu/government/writing_guide/index.cfm)

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

### **CLASS EMAIL LIST:**

I will be sending out reading and discussion questions on the class email list before every class. **It is TRULY in your best interest to use these questions to help guide your reading and your preparation for class EVERY DAY.** The questions for the periodic and unannounced quizzes that are part of your class participation grade will be drawn directly from these email questions, and you will be able to use any notes you have taken for these quizzes (though you may not use the readings/ books themselves).

### **POLICY ON LAPTOPS/TEXTING/SURFING IN CLASS**

Unless you have an accommodation documented by the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities, located in the Office of Student Academic Services (Starbuck Center, First Floor), *the use of laptops during this class, for taking notes or otherwise, is strictly prohibited, as is the use of cell-phones or any other texting or web-surfing device.*

### **ASSESSMENT AND GRADING**

As noted in the *Skidmore College Catalogue* on page 51, Grades are assigned on the following basis (NB: a “B” is “superior work”, it’s official college policy !):

A -- Distinguished work  
A-, B+, B -- Superior work  
B-, C+, C --Satisfactory work  
C-, D+, D--Passing but poor quality work

### **DUE DATES FOR PAPERS**

Papers are due at the beginning of class, on-time, on the day indicated in the syllabus. If your paper is going to be late, it is MUCH better for you to come to class on time that day without the paper and then turn in the paper late. Skipping class on the due date to finish a paper will result in a larger deduction to your grade than had the paper simply been delivered late.

### **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

Don’t do it. I and other faculty members have become sensitized to the popularity of internet paper services, and we routinely employ services such as those found at plagiarism.com and other websites to prevent plagiarism. A great resource to consult if you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism and what doesn’t : *Doing Honest Work in College*, by Charles Lipson (Chicago, 2004, 2008).

**Class Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

<b>Week 1:</b>	<b>Monday 1/25</b>	Discussion of syllabus and class policies
	<b>Wednesday 1/27</b>	Heywood, Ch.1 (How shall we live?)
	<b>Friday 1/29</b>	Heywood, Ch. 2 (Liberalism)
<b>Week 2:</b>	<b>Monday 2/1</b>	Heywood, Ch. 2 continued
	<b>Wednesday 2/3</b>	Heywood, Ch. 3 (Conservatism)
	<b>Friday 2/5</b>	Heywood, Ch. 3 continued
<b>Week 3:</b>	<b>Monday 2/8</b>	Heywood, Ch. 4 (Socialism /Communism)  AND  Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” in O’Neil and Rogowski book, <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p 323- 336.
	<b>Wednesday 2/10</b>	Same readings as 2/8
	<b>Friday 2/12</b>	Heywood, Ch. 5 (Nationalism)
<b>Week 4:</b>	<b>Monday 2/15</b>	Heywood, Ch. 6 (Anarchism)  AND  “Notes from the Underground: Among the Radicals of the Pacific Northwest”, David Samuels, <i>Harpers Magazine</i> , May 2000, <b>E- RESERVE</b>
	<b>Wednesday 2/17</b>	Heywood Ch. 8 (Feminism)
	<b>Friday 2/19</b>	Heywood, Ch. 9 (Ecologism) : <b>PAPER #1 DUE</b>

**Week 5: Monday 2/22** Heywood, Ch. 10 (Rel. Fundamentalism)

**AND**

Mark Juergensmeyer, "The New Religious State", in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 58-66.

**Wednesday 2/24: Catch-up and Review**

**Friday 2/26: \*\*FIRST MIDTERM EXAM\*\***

**Unit Two: Comparative Politics**

**Week 6: Monday 3/1:** "What is Comparative Politics ?" plus "Research Traditions and Theory" and "How Academia Failed the Nation", in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.1-9.

**Wednesday 3/3: Democracies**

**What is a democracy ? Why is it good?  
How do you get one?**

"A Brief History of Human Liberty", Fareed Zakaria, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 135-151.

**AND**

"What Democracy Is..and Is Not", Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, *Journal of Democracy*, 2:3 (Summer 1991)in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.151-161.

**Friday 3/5 :** "Constitutional Choices in New Democracies", Arend Lijphart, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.161-170.

<b>Week 7:</b>	<b>Monday 3/8:</b>	<b>Democracy and Economics</b>  “To Help the Poor”, William Easterly, in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 385-390.
	<b>Wednesday 3/10:</b>	“Why Has Africa Grown So Slowly”, Collier and Gunning, in <i>Essential Readings In Comparative Politics</i> , p. 411-428.
	<b>Friday 3/12:</b>	“Democracy: A Recipe for Growth?” and “Political Regimes and Economic Growth”, in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 428-440.
<b>Week 8:</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK 3/15-3/19</b>	
<b>Week 9:</b>	<b>Monday 3/22</b>	<b>Failed States and Non-Democratic States</b>  “War and the State in Africa”, Herbst, in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 28-42.  <b>AND</b>  “The New Nature of Nation-State Failure”, Rotberg, in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 43-50.
	<b>Wednesday 3/24</b>	“Modern Nondemocratic Regimes”, Linz and Stepan in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 206-218.  <b>AND</b>  “Islam, Democracy and Constitutional Liberalism”, Zakaria in <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p.219-234.
	<b>Friday 3/ 26</b>	“The First Law of Petropolitics”, Friedman, <b>on E-RESERVE</b>  <b>AND</b>  “Combating the Resource Curse”,

Weinthal and Jones Luong, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.241-257.

**Week 10: Monday 2/29 Fascism : Nazi Germany and Italy under Il Duce**

Heywood , Ch. 7  
Heck, *A Child of Hitler*, Ch. 1-4

**Wednesday 3/31**

Heck, *A Child of Hitler*, Ch. 5-10

**Friday 4/2:** Discuss *A Child of Hitler*  
**\*\*PAPER #2 DUE\*\***

**Week 11: Monday 4/5: \*\*SECOND MIDTERM EXAM\*\***

**Wednesday 4/7: Begin Section 3: War and Peace / IR**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, p.1-20 and p. 34-52.

**AND**

Thucydides, “Melian Dialogue”, adapted by Suresht Bald, **E-RESERVE**

**Friday 4/9 Balance of Power and WW1**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, p. 60-87.

**Week 12: Monday 4/12: League of Nations and WW2**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, Ch. 4

**Wednesday 4/14: Beginning of the Cold War**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*,  
p. 116- mid-133

**AND**

“The Sources of Soviet Conduct”, George F.  
Kennan (“X”), **E-RESERVE**

**Friday 4/16 Cold War, MAD and Cuba Crisis**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*,  
p. 145 (bottom) - 155

**AND**

“On the Brink”, Tony Judt, **on E-  
RESERVE (Recommended)**

**Week 13:**

**Monday 4/19 Vietnam to the End of the Cold War:**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*,  
p. 133-top 145,

**AND** “The Crisis of Confidence Speech”,  
Jimmy Carter, **E-RESERVE**

**Wednesday 4/21 Describing The Post-Cold War World**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*,  
p.163-182

**AND**

Stanley Hoffman, “Clash of Globalizations”,  
p. 474-480 in **Essential Readings in  
Comparative Politics**

	<b>Friday 4/23</b>	Nye, <i>Understanding International Conflicts</i> , p.202-208, p. 216-226, p. 231-239
<b>Week 14:</b>	<b>Monday 4/26</b>	<b>Terrorism and Iraq War</b>  Margalit and Buruma, “Occidentalism”, <i>Essential Readings in Comparative Politics</i> , p. 476-484.  <b>AND</b>  “West Point Graduation Speech,” President George Bush, <b>E-RESERVE</b>  <b>AND</b>  “Beyond Bin Laden”, Stephen M. Walt, <i>International Security</i> , <b>E-RESERVE</b>
	<b>Wednesday 4/28</b>	<b>Obama’s War</b>  “Obama’s Afghanistan Speech: Five Points” <i>CS Monitor</i> , <b>E-RESERVE</b>  <b>AND</b>  “Afghanistan: What Could Work”, Rory Stewart, <i>New York Review of Books</i> , January 2010, <b>E-RESERVE</b>
	<b>Friday 4/30</b>	<b>More views on Afghanistan / Pakistan</b>  “Playing al-Qaeda’s Game,” William Pfaff, January 2010, <b>E-RESERVE</b>  <b>AND</b>  “Obama’s Policies Making Situation Worse Afghanistan and Pakistan,” Graham E. Fuller, May 10, 2010, <b>E-RESERVE</b>
<b>Week 15:</b>	<b>Monday 5/3</b>	<b>Wrap-Up and Review for Final</b>

**DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT  
SKIDMORE COLLEGE**

**POLICY ON CIVILITY AND COMPORTMENT IN THE  
CLASSROOM**

**FALL 2005**

The classroom experience is the heart of liberal education, and as such is the most important aspect of your Skidmore College education. Presumably, if you did not agree you would not be attending Skidmore. The faculty of the Government Department takes this understanding as the basis of our educational efforts. It is in an attempt to honor the centrality of the classroom experience that we offer this department policy on civility and comportment.

As is stated in the *Student Handbook*, your presence at Skidmore College is contingent upon your acceptance of, and full adherence to, the Skidmore College Honor Code. This honor code is distinct from the oath you take when writing a paper or taking an exam – it is in fact much more all-encompassing, and much more demanding.

The Code includes the following statement: “*I hereby accept membership in the Skidmore College community and, with full realization of the responsibilities inherent in membership, do agree to adhere to honesty and integrity in all relationships, to be considerate of the rights of others, and to abide by the College regulations.*” Elsewhere, the Code also calls all Skidmore students to “*conform to high standards of fair play, integrity, and honor.*”

What does it mean to do act honestly, with integrity, and according to high standards of fair play, particularly in the classroom? In our view, it includes, minimally, the following.

1. No student shall lessen the learning experience of others in the classroom by arriving late to class.
2. No student shall lessen the learning experience of others in the classroom by leaving the classroom while class is in session, except for true medical emergencies.

3. Cell phones must be turned off during class.
4. No student shall disrupt the learning experience of others in the classroom by talking to a neighbor, writing notes to other students, reviewing one's mail, reading the newspaper, completing homework for other classes, or playing with the laptop computer, while class is in session.
5. No student shall disrespect other Skidmore students, professors or the housekeeping staff by putting feet on the desks or other furniture in the classroom, or by leaving trash, food, or recyclables in the room at the end of the class session.

While we will hold all students to these minimal expectations, we also have some suggestions for those who seek to go beyond the bare minimum of civil classroom comportment to become the type of mature, responsible, active learners who are an asset to any classroom and society at large. These include the following.

6. Every student should take copious and meaningful notes both on assigned readings and during classroom sessions. Note taking is an important skill—if you do not already possess it, you should acquire it.
7. Every student should take some time to review the notes that he or she has taken on the day's assigned reading before each class meeting. You will be amazed how much more invested and engaged in the class you will feel if you go into the classroom well-prepared.
8. Disruptions in class can be a significant impediment to learning, and no member of the Skidmore community—including faculty and students—should tolerate them. Thus every student should take responsibility for holding his or her peers and classmates to both high academic standards and high standards of civility. If people around you are chatting, passing notes or otherwise detracting from the overall quality of YOUR classroom experience, don't let them get away with it.
9. Individual faculty members in the Government Department will determine the level of sanctions for disruptive behavior.