

GO 103: Introduction to Comparative and International Politics

Instructor: Sumita Pahwa

Class hours: Lecture: Mon, Wed. 12:20 – 1:15 p.m.
Discussion: Fri 12:20 – 1:15 p.m.

Classroom: Ladd 206.

Office: Ladd 304.

Office Hours: Fridays 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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Course description:

This course introduces students to the basic concepts and tools that political scientists use to understand contemporary politics and addresses the main questions treated by two of the subfields of political science – comparative politics and international relations. In the first half of the course, we will study different approaches to the exercise of power, kinds of political institutions and modes of political organization, the formation of states and nations, theories of how economic development shapes politics, the evolution of democratic and non-democratic political regimes, and the role of culture and identity in the modern political process. The second half introduces students to the dominant theories of international relations, addressing the questions: on what basis do nation states relate to each other, and what makes them cooperate or enter into conflict? We will explore the insights offered by approaches that emphasize different key drivers of international relations, such as hard power, economic interest, identity and norms.

Class format:

There will be two lectures on Monday and Wednesday which will introduce students to the week's topics and critically assess the contribution of each reading. You will be required to read about 60-70 pages in depth each week, so plan at least 5 hours per week for class reading. Be sure to keep up with the reading – it will be very difficult to make it up later in the semester and you will get more out of each class if you have done the reading.

Each week's class is framed by an overarching question and the different readings offer different ways of answering it. I will also post up a list of discussion questions for each week on Blackboard, which you should look over and be prepared to discuss on Fridays. These questions will also help you prepare for tests and may help you focus your reading as well, so be sure to look at them as soon as you start reading.

You are strongly encouraged to raise your own questions on the readings and the week's topics, and stop me during lecture to ask questions – this is the best way to learn!

Required readings:

This class does not use a single textbook and therefore you will not find a book on order at the bookstore for it. Instead we will use a sampling of articles and book chapters drawn directly from both classic and contemporary research in comparative and international politics, using lectures and discussion questions to draw the readings together.

The only text that you may wish to purchase is the *Hodges Harbrace Handbook* (17th edition) which is available at the book store and also at the library, and is the Government Department's grammatical

reference for all written assignments. If you are planning to major in Government, this is a good investment.

Readings are required and must be completed before class; you will be expected to discuss and answer questions about them. All readings are on reserve at the Scribner library, with most available as e-reserves for you to download and print out. (<http://www2.skidmore.edu/library/reserves/login.cfm>) You will need to enter your Skidmore ID name and password to enter the “reserves hub” and then scroll down to see the reserves for your various classes. Select GO103 for the course and all the readings will show up below (just scroll down). Click on the “e” in the green circle next to the article or chapter title to open up articles and book chapters that are on electronic reserve. If a reading is not on e-reserve, scroll down and you will find it under “books” – these are readings that are too long to be placed on e-reserve. Write down the call number and go up to the main circulation desk at the library to request the book. These reserve books can only be taken out for three hours at a time, so be sure to give yourself plenty of time before class to do the reserve reading as you may have to wait for the relevant book to be returned by the person before you. Or you can just photocopy the reading and do it at your leisure.

Please familiarize yourselves with the e-reserve system right away, and ask the reserves librarian for assistance if needed.

Assignments, Grading and Your Responsibilities:

Reading quizzes: There will be five quizzes, unannounced, on Wednesdays, covering very simple questions related to the reading. They will take no more than ten minutes and you should find the questions very easy to answer if you have done the reading. Your four best grades for the quizzes will be taken to count for 20% of your final grade. There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes.

News analysis response paper: Each week I will post up articles from the news that relate to the week’s topic (or you may select and submit your own from a list of recommended newspapers and magazines) on Blackboard. If you wish to write a response paper for the week, analyze one or two of these articles with the help of the week’s discussion questions and write a 2-3 page paper in which you critically analyze the article and discuss how the week’s readings might shed light on the questions it discusses. Be sure to print out the article and attach it to your paper. I encourage you to write this paper early in the semester as it is a good exercise in training yourself to read critically. Papers should be handed in at the beginning of class on Friday for the week that the reading will be covered in the course. This counts for 5% of your grade; an *exceptional* paper covering more than one article with a truly rigorous application of the theories discussed in class may receive extra credit.

Classroom participation: This counts for 15% of your grade and is based on both your attendance and your ability to discuss and engage the ideas in the week’s readings. You will get a good grade for being a “good citizen” of the class – attending regularly, being engaged in the reading, participating and supporting a productive and courteous classroom environment.

Mid-term exam: 30% of your grade.

Final exam: 30% of your grade.

Attendance and Office Hours:

Attendance at lectures and discussion sections is required and it is your responsibility to make up missed work. If you cannot attend a class, you are responsible for making up the material. Please be sure to do the reading and get lecture notes from your colleagues first, go over and prepare to answer the discussion questions, and then schedule a meeting with me during regular office hours if you still have questions. If

you have a documented, serious illness that requires you to miss class for more than one or two sessions, and if tests are held during those sessions, you may request a make-up test.

If you have questions or concerns about the readings or anything else about the course, you can drop by to office hours on Fridays from 10 to 12, or email me in advance to schedule an appointment at other times (likely to be difficult so your best bet is to come to office hours). For the week before mid-terms and finals, office hours meetings will be by appointment only, to accommodate everyone. I encourage you to stop by early in the semester and chat with me, go over any concerns and see if you are on track with readings and concepts!

A note on emailing the instructor: Please try to limit emails to questions that truly cannot wait till the next class or till office hours, such as: difficulties with reserve readings that cannot be resolved by contacting the reserves librarian, illness, errors in the syllabus that might cause confusion about the reading due for the next day, important questions on an assignment, and so on. I generally respond to emails between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. If you have a question or concern that requires some time to go over, please come to office hours.

Writing standards and guidelines:

Please take a copy of the Government department's booklet on written assignments from me at the end of the first day of class, if you do not already have a copy, and follow the guidelines in it.

Please review and be prepared to abide by the Government Department guidelines for civility and comportment in the classroom.

Cell phone use, texting or messaging during class are disruptive for your learning and the learning of others as well as for the instructor, and you will be marked absent for the day if you use electronic devices without prior permission.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Sept 8: *Introduction to comparative politics*

What are we comparing in comparative politics? What are the common processes and forms of political organization, and why and how do differences evolve across time and place? How have people organized societies and power over the centuries? Discussion questions to prepare for next class: Who has power over you and why? Why do abstract entities like states and cultures have so much power over us?

Sept 10: *The building blocks of political analysis*

If power is the key building block of politics, where does it come from? What are the different ways in which power works? We will discuss institutions, norms, legitimacy and authority and what they tell us about how power can be exercised. We will also consider why we focus on formal institutions of government in modern political analysis, and how these institutions shape and are shaped by broader power relations in society.

Readings:

Ted Lewellen Political Anthropology: An Introduction Ch 2 pp 15-24 on Types of Preindustrial Political Systems;

Donald Kurtz Political Anthropology Ch 2 Political Power, pp 21-26, 29-38.

Sept 13-17: *What are nation-states and why are they the main units of politics in the modern world?*

In this week's readings, we will study the origins of the modern nation-state and consider why national loyalties trumped other kinds in the modern era, and why nationalism still shapes politics today. We will also consider the ways in which the territorial state has evolved in the West and why it takes different forms in postcolonial countries.

Readings:

David Held et al., Global Transformations Ch 1 "The Territorial State and Global Politics" pp. 32-49 (On Blackboard)

Anthony Smith and John Hutchinson, eds. Nationalism. Extracts (Anderson, Connor, Gellner, Giddens, Hobsbawm, Weber – check e-reserve)

Christopher Clapham "The Third World State" in Third World Politics.

Sept 20-25: *How does economics shape politics? Marx to Modernization Theory*

The idea that economic interests drive politics goes back to Aristotle and was taken further by Marx, who argued that relations of production shaped political power. Modern social scientists have argued that democracy only emerges in countries that have "modernized" economically. How can we understand the ways in which economics shapes politics today?

Readings:

Seymour Martin Lipset "Some Social Requisites of Democracy" *APSR* 53 (1) 1959

Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, "The Myths of the Market and the Common History of Late Developers," *Politics and Society* 21 (3) September 1993.

For discussion section:

"Beyond Wisteria Lane" OR "The Other Moore's Law," *Economist*, February 12, 2009 (Will be posted on Blackboard)

Patricia Cohen, "An Unexpected Odd Couple: Free Markets and Freedom," *New York Times*, June 14, 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/14/world/14democracy.html?ref=world>

Sept 27 – Oct 1: *What is democracy, how did it come about, and why does it work differently at different times and places?*

Democracy is arguably a "universal value," and the product of liberal political thought, but it has also been the result of very specific historical developments in the places where it has taken root. What are the different historical paths by which countries have arrived at democracy, and how does this make a difference in how democracy actually works?

Readings:

Robert Dahl, Polyarchy Ch 3 "Historical sequences"

Karl and Schmitter, "What Democracy is and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 1991.

Fareed Zakaria "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy" *Foreign Affairs* November 1997.

Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value" *Journal of Democracy* 10 (3) 1999.

Oct 4-8: *Why do people organize politically and vote as they do?*

Why do we have political parties and what function do they serve? Do the rules of the electoral game benefit some kinds of interests more than others? If you had to design an electoral system that gave the most representation to the maximum number of people, how would you do it? Could you run a government with it?

Readings:

Arend Lijphart "Constitutional choices for new democracies" *Journal of Democracy* 2 (1) 1991.

Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties: A New Typology," *Party Politics*, 9 (2) 2003. (OPTIONAL)

Lipset and Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction" in Party Systems and Voter Alignments.

Oct 11-15: *What is an authoritarian state, and why do such states persist in modern times?*

Monarchies and good old-fashioned dictatorships may be rare these days but a surprising number of today's states, despite the modern trappings of bureaucracies and legislatures and constitutions, are still not democratic. How do these states survive and function? Are they destined to become more democratic as they get richer and more developed?

Readings:

Linz and Stepan, "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes" in Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation pp 38-54.

Michael Ross "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53 (April 2001).

Andrew Nathan, "Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of Democracy*, 14 (1) 2003

Jose Maria Maravall, "The Myth of the Authoritarian Advantage," *Journal of Democracy* 5 (4) October 1994 pp 17-31.

Oct 18-20: *Why do religion, identity and culture still matter in modern politics?*

Religion was supposed to go away, and identity and culture become less important as people became more 'rational' in pursuing their political and economic interests. Yet, surprisingly, culture, identity and religion have stayed important in modern political systems. Why is this so, and what does it mean for democratic politics?

Readings:

Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civic Politics in the New States" in The Interpretation of Cultures, pp. 255-278.

Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph, "Modern Hate: How Ancient Animosity Get Invented," *New Republic*, March 22, 1993.

Mark Juergensmeyer, "Is Religion the Problem?"

<http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/4n92c45q#page-1>

Oct 22 is a study day – no class.

OCTOBER 25: MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS

Oct 27-29: *Introduction to International Relations and the Perspective of Realism*

International relations is concerned mainly with explaining peace and conflict. The dominant theories of IR understand the "state system" and international order in different ways depending on their view of what motivates states and how they defend their power and security and achieve their interests in the international arena. We will start with classic 'realist' theorists of IR and consider their assumption that raw power and military force ultimately govern relations in the international arena because of the absence of meaningful international laws or government.

Readings:

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan Chs 13-15 (Download text at Project Gutenberg or go here: <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-c.html#CHAPTERXIII>)

Waltz, Man, the State and War Chs 1 and 6

Keohane Neorealism and its Critics Ch 1. "Realism, Neorealism and the Study of World Politics" (pp. 7-25)

John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics Ch 2 “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power”

For discussion section: Ethan Bronner, “Painful Mideast Truth: Force Trumps Diplomacy,” *New York Times* Oct 19, 2009.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/world/middleeast/20mideast.html?scp=1&sq=israel%20palestine%20force%20violence&st=cse>

Nov 1-5: *Perspectives on International Relations: ‘Liberalism’*

The first major challenge to the realist view of IR came in the form of ‘liberal’ theory which argued that states behaved differently in the international arena when they were democratic and economically liberal. We will analyze the arguments made by liberal theorists for why states that are more interested in trade will be less likely to wage war and why democratic states rarely fight other democracies, and consider whether this undermines the realist argument.

Readings:

Bruce Russett Grasping the Democratic Peace Ch 2 “Why Democratic Peace?”

Michael Doyle Ways of War and Peace Ch 7 “Commercial Pacifism: Smith and Schumpeter” and Ch 8 “Internationalism: Kant”

Nov 8: *Perspectives on International Relations: ‘Constructivism’*

Traditional realist and liberal perspectives on IR were challenged in the 1990s by a new approach called constructivism that argued that states’ identities and the ways in which they related to each other mattered more than their domestic interests or political systems in shaping how they would behave in the international arena. We will explore constructivist thought and consider how it helps explain why the world is not actually as violent as traditional theorists might predict.

Readings:

Alexander Wendt “Anarchy is What States Make of It” *International Organization* 46 (2) 1992

Nov 10-12: *Conflict and strategy conference*

Each student will participate in the ‘conference’ on the basis of assigned roles (e.g. Mearsheimer, Waltz, liberal theorists, US policymakers, Chinese policymakers, US and Chinese business leaders, Serbs, Kosovars).

Nov 10: The Kosovo War

Watch the PBS Frontline “War in Europe” documentary on the 1999 NATO-Serbia war over Kosovo (on reserve at the library/viewing to be scheduled outside class) OR read the transcript here: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/etc/tapes.html>.

Prepare to discuss your (i.e. your role’s) interests, negotiating position and behavior during the war. Consider what theories are most useful in understanding why the Kosovo conflict erupted into war. How did domestic politics prevent or trigger conflict? Does it matter that the countries in question were democratic?

Nov 12: China as a Rising Power

Read the following articles (to be posted on Blackboard) and consider the question of whether China is more likely to be peaceful or warlike as it becomes economically liberal and involved in international trade. Are you with the realists or the liberal theorists on the future of China?

Kishore Mahbubani, “Understanding China,” *Foreign Affairs*, Sept-Oct 2005.

Mearsheimer and Brzezinski, “Clash of the Titans,” *Foreign Policy*, Jan-Feb 2005.

David Lampton, "The Faces of Chinese Power," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan-Feb 2007.
Deudney and Ikenberry, "The Myth of the Autocratic Revival," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan-Feb 2009.

Nov 15-19: *The search for international order: regimes, institutions and laws*

What makes states cooperate in the contemporary international arena? Why do we have so many international institutions and rules despite international anarchy, and why do states obey these rules? We will consider the differences between 'federal' and 'functional' institutions and ask whether they are moving the world beyond anarchy.

Readings:

Robert Keohane, "International institutions: Can interdependence work?" *Foreign Policy* Spring 1998: 110.

Robert Keohane After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy Ch 4 "Cooperation and regimes"

Anne-Marie Slaughter "The Real New World Order" *Foreign Affairs* Sept-Oct 1997.

Discussion section: Debate what would have made the climate change conference at Copenhagen succeed (reading packet provided)

Nov 22: *Globalization and the decline of state sovereignty*

'Globalization' is shifting states, nations, loyalties and identities radically – or is it? What is new about the current phase of globalization that distinguishes it from earlier historical forms of interconnectedness? We will consider what globalization means for the world today, particularly what it means for the centrality of the nation-state in the international system.

Readings:

Stephen Krasner, "Think Again: Sovereignty," *Foreign Policy* Jan-Feb 2001.

Keohane and Nye, "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? And So What?" *Foreign Policy*, Spring 2000.

Ferguson and Mansbach, "The Past as Prelude to the Future: Identities and Loyalties in Global Politics" in Lapid and Kratchowil, eds. *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*.

Nov 24-26 – No class, Thanksgiving vacation

Nov 29-Dec 3: *Can there be morality in war?*

Hobbes argued that "the notions of Right and Wrong, Justice and Injustice have...no place" in the natural "war of all against all." At the other extreme, contemporary international institutions like the UN are founded on the principle that war should be made illegal. Yet states both continue to wage war and use moral reasoning to justify war. Why? Is there such a thing as a just war?

Readings:

Michael Walzer Just and Unjust Wars Ch. 1 "Against Realism," Ch. 2, "The Crime of War," Ch. 3, "The Rules of War," Ch. 10 "War Against Civilians," Ch. 11 "Guerrilla War." (Each chapter is only about ten pages! The last two chapters are NOT on e-reserve due to page limitations; the whole book is on desk reserve)

Discussion section: Does the US decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003 stand up to Walzer's conditions for just war?

Dec 6-10: *Has terrorism changed our basic assumptions about conflict?*

Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism" *APSR* 97 (3) August 2003, pp. 1-14
(leave out appendix)

Mark Juergensmeyer, "Terror in the Name of God," *Current History* November 2001 pp. 357-361.

Grenville Wyford, "The Wrong War," *Foreign Affairs*, July-Aug 2002.

Graham Fuller, "A World Without Islam," *Foreign Policy*, Jan-Feb 2008.

Final examination: Wednesday, December 15, 1:30-4:30 p.m. in Ladd 206.