

**Government 103**  
**Introduction to Comparative and International Politics**  
**Fall 2008**

Tu / Th 9:40-11, Harder Hall Room 203

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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**. 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.

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.

**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*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

Patrick O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

**Other Required Readings:**

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

Individual readings will be listed on day due. I will also occasionally hand out shorter readings that we will cover in class.

--**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. I will often be referring to world events and NYTimes coverage of these events to illustrate points we are discussing in class--keeping up with these events will not only make class more interesting for you, it will enhance your class participation.

**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%) : Thursday October 2**

**3) Second Midterm Exam: in-class (20%): Tuesday  
November 4**

**4) Third Midterm Exam: in-Class (25%): Tuesday December 9**

**5) Short papers: (20%)** (Two 3-4 page papers, assignments to be handed out in class; See checklist attached to end of syllabus for expectations and assessment of written assignments)

**PAPER ONE DUE : Thursday September 25**

**PAPER TWO DUE: Thursday October 30**

## **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.

### **PLAGARISM 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 [plagarism.com](http://plagarism.com) and other websites to prevent plagiarism.

**Class Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

- Week 1: Thursday 9/4: Introduction to course: How should we live ?**  
Heywood, Ch. 1
- Week 2: Tuesday 9/9: Liberalism**  
Heywood, Ch. 2
- Thursday 9/11: Conservatism**  
Heywood, Ch. 3
- Week 3: Tuesday 9/16: Socialism and Communism**  
Heywood, Ch. 4
- AND**
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” in O’Neil and Rogowski book, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p 353-366.
- Thursday 9/18: Anarchism**  
Heywood, Ch. 6
- AND**
- “Notes from the Underground: Among the Radicals of the Pacific Northwest”, David Samuels, *Harpers Magazine*, May 2000, **E-RESERVE**
- Week 4: Tuesday 9/23: Feminism**  
Heywood, Ch. 8
- Thursday 9/25: Ecologism : PAPER #1 DUE**  
Heywood, Ch. 9

- Week 5:        Tuesday 9/30:        Religious Fundamentalism**
- Heywood, Ch. 10
- AND**
- Mark Juergensmeyer, “The New Religious State”, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.37-45.
- Thursday 10/2:        \*\*FIRST MIDTERM EXAM\*\***
- Week 6:        Tuesday 10/7:        Begin Section 2: Democracies and Dictatorships**
- 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. 231-247.
- 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.247-256.
- AND**, “Constitutional Choices in New Democracies”, Arend Lijphart, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.257-266.
- Thursday 10/9:        Yom Kippur , NO CLASS**
- Week 7:        Tuesday 10/14:        Democracy and Economy in the “Developing” World**
- CHAPTER 9 (all) of *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p.400-456.

**Thursday 10/16: Problems of State Weakness in the “Developing World”**

“War and the State in Africa”, Herbst, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 46-60 .

**AND**

The New Nature of Nation-State Failure”, Rotberg, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 61-69.

**Week 8: Tuesday 10/21: Varieties of Non-Democratic Regimes**

“Modern Nondemocratic Regimes”, Linz and Stepan in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 154-165.

**AND** “Islam and Authoritarianism”, Fish, in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 214-228.

**AND** “The First Law of Petropolitics”, Friedman, on E-RESERVE

**Thursday 10/23: Fascism : Nazi Germany and Italy under Il Duce**

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

**Week 9: Tuesday 10/28: Fascism Continued: Life under Hitler :**

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

**Thursday 10/30: Discuss *A Child of Hitler*  
\*\*PAPER #2 DUE\*\***

**Week 10: Tuesday 11/4: \*\*SECOND MIDTERM EXAM\*\***

**Thursday 11/6: Begin Section 3: War and Peace / IR / Levels of Analysis in International Relations**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, Ch. 1 and 2

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

**Week 11: Tuesday 11/11: Continue IR intro and WW 1**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, Ch. 3

**Thursday 11/13: World War 2 and the Beginning of the Cold War**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, Ch. 4 and p. 112-131

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

**Week 12: Tuesday 11/18: Cold War, MAD and the Cuban Missile Crisis**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, p. 135 (bottom) - 152

**AND** “On the Brink”, Tony Judt, **on E-RESERVE**

**Thursday 11/20 Vietnam to the End of the Cold War:**

Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, p. 131-135,

**AND** “A Greek Tragedy in Five Acts—Vietnam”, John Stoessinger, **E-RESERVE**

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

- Week 13:      Tuesday 11/25:      Describing The Post-Cold War World**
- Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts*, Ch. 7 and 8  
**AND**
- Stanley Hoffman, “Clash of Globalizations”, p. 474-480 in **Essential Readings in Comparative Politics**
- AND**
- Richard Florida, “The World is Spiky”, p. p.496-500 in **Essential Readings in Comparative Politics**
- Thursday 11/27**      Happy Thanksgiving, No Class
- Week 14:      Tuesday 12/2      Terrorism and Iraq War (Yes, lots of readings today, but they are all short and all important !)**
- Goldstone, ‘States, Terrorists, and the Clash of Civilizations’ *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 552-566,
- AND**
- Margalit and Buruma, “Occidentalism”, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, p. 544-552.
- AND**
- “West Point Graduation Speech,” President George Bush, **E-RESERVE**
- AND**
- “X + 9/11”, Robert L. Hutchings, *Foreign Policy* (July/August 2004), **E-RESERVE**

**Thursday 12/4**

**What now ??**

Robert Kagan, "The End of the End of History", **E-RESERVE**

**AND**

Daniel Kimmage, "Fighting Terrorism With YouTube", **E-RESERVE**

**Week 15**

**Tuesday 12/9**

**Third In-Class Midterm**

**Sample Checklist for Evaluating Written Assignments**  
**Prof. Kate Graney**

**ON-TIME** : One Point For Each Day Paper is Late

**FORMAT**

Title page

Double-Spaced

Page Numbers

Citation and Bibliography : Is Citation Adequate ?Are All Citations Complete? (Author, Journal Title, Publisher, Date, if a web-based source, are both full title of source and full address documented ?)

**STYLE**

Spelling

Punctuation

Their/There

Grammar: Verb Tenses, Syntax

Creativity with Language

**CONTENT**

Length

Does the Paper Address Assigned or Chosen Topic ?

Use of Sources : Proper Balance of Internet vs. Library Sources (as indicated in assignment)

All Sources Cited and Cited Properly (Author Name, Date, AND PAGES CITED)

Strong and Coherent Argument Supported by Evidence

**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.