

Point Loma Nazarene University
Department of History and Political Science
Political Science 370: Comparative Politics

Instructor: Dr. Lindsey Lupo

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Course Time: T/TH 10:00-11:45am

Course website: On Canvas

Class Location: Taylor 314

"Without comparisons to make, the mind does not know how to proceed."

- Alexis de Tocqueville, 1830

"A man who has tasted only his mother's soup has no basis to claim that hers is the best."

- African proverb

"And what should they know of England, Who only England know?"

- Rudyard Kipling



PLNU Mission:

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description:

This course examines the many ways in which we can make meaningful comparisons across political systems throughout the world. We will compare and contrast the variety of ways in which different countries have chosen to shape their political institutions and processes, and assess the costs and benefits of these choices. In other words, we will ask: how and why do political choices matter to the people living in that country? For instance, we will analyze the variety of public policies different countries have adopted to address common problems, such as poverty, disease, and pollution. Special emphasis will be placed on the comparative structures and functions of government, as we survey contemporary politics and political trends in selected countries and regions around the world.

In the first part of the class, we will learn the different political structures that have been erected in countries throughout the world, focusing on theories for assessing these structures and analyses of the processes and policies in place. In the second part of the course, we'll read and study one of the major comparative politics books today – *Citizen Politics* by Russell Dalton. This book looks at advanced, industrial democracies and studies how they compare to one another in terms of public opinion and political parties. In the final and third part of the course, we'll travel around the world and touch on every continent (well, not Antarctica) as we study 8 countries in-depth.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Understand why comparative politics continues to be one of the most important sub-fields in political science, both in terms of epistemological advancement and real-world relevance.
- Identify some of the key theoretical approaches, conceptual tools, and methods used in the field of comparative politics.
- Describe political institutions that are common to all governments in the world and identify key distinctions across different types of political systems.
- Utilize ideas to frame explanations of political outcomes around the world.
- Apply concepts learned to country case studies and analyze their similarities and differences.
- Analyze and evaluate the findings of a seminal comparative politics book.
- Write an original research analysis paper that systematically compares two countries on one key structural-functional component.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Evaluate, design, and apply social science research with respect to political phenomena (PLO 2 assessed through the final paper and the in-class paper on *Citizen Politics*).
- Understand and critically assess the processes, theories, and outcomes of political institutions and political behavior (PLO 3 assessed through the midterm exam).
- Demonstrate social scientific information literacy (PLO 4 assessed through the *Citizen Politics* abstracts).

Course Readings:

All readings are required and are available at the bookstore (a copy of Dalton is available on two hour reserve at the library). Please bring your books to class:

1. Dalton, Russell J. 2014 (6th edition). *Citizen Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
2. Kesselman, Mark, editor. 2010 (2nd edition). *Readings in Comparative Politics*. Boston: Wadsworth.
3. Powell, Dalton, and Strom (hereafter PDS). 2015 (11th edition). *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. New York: Pearson.

Course Format and Expectations:

This course will meet two times per week. It is in your best interest that you attend everyday. It is also essential that the readings be completed prior to coming to class as the lecture and discussion will usually expand on and draw from the readings.

Students are encouraged to participate during the lectures. In addition, discussion time will be built in to each class. "Lecture" time will be spent on a combination of lecture, discussion, group activities, and short videos.

To understand the expectations I have for my students, you must first understand my goals as a teacher. My aim in designing this course is to introduce you to comparative politics and help you develop the analytical skills necessary to be thoughtful critical thinkers and active political participants. At the end of this course, you should understand the comparative method of political research, how comparative politics relates to the other three areas of political science (American politics, international relations, and political theory), how institutions, structures, and processes differ throughout the political world, how public opinion varies between advanced, industrial democracies, and finally, have a detailed understanding of the political system of eight countries in particular.

To be sure, these are ambitious goals. But in my experience students are more than able to achieve them. Indeed, with hard work they often exceed them! As such, the basic expectation I have is that you will work hard in this course. I expect you to...

1. Attend: Regular attendance is strongly encouraged. I try to design lesson plans in a way that makes coming to class a good use of your time. Think of the class as a community or group that depends on your involvement to function well. If that is unpersuasive, however, let me say that you are accountable for everything that occurs in class including all material covered in lectures and any announcements made during class meetings. If you can not attend, have a friend take notes for you.
2. Prepare: A central goal of this course is to link the abstract world of political science with the real global world. I expect you to keep up with the readings so you'll be better able to recognize and apply these concepts during the class lectures and team activities. Read assigned materials, prepare questions, and talk with each other about the issues outside of class. Feel free to contact me by e-mail to seek clarification of lecture material or to chat about other class related matters. Questions regarding grades or grading should be addressed in person. I am committed to helping students improve their performance and to addressing concerns. Please, see me before a minor concern becomes a major problem.
3. Think: While I certainly want you to know what political scientists have said and learned about the various phenomena we'll study, I care more that you figure out what you think about those things. Regurgitation is not enough. Hence I expect you to be able to offer more than a summary of materials presented in this course. Does the argument make sense? Is the evidence credible? Does it support the claims? Do the conclusions seem reasonable given the argument and evidence? Simply put, I want *your* well-considered insights.
4. Talk: Interesting and engaging are not adjectives often used to describe political science. In my assessment, that's a shame. The combination of interesting subject-matter (politics) with interesting people (students) should make for dynamic learning environment. You can

contribute to creating such an environment and I hope (and expect) that you will. Please come prepared to engage in active learning.

Assessment Requirements:

Midterm Exam – the midterm exam will focus on main concepts from the reading, lecture, and in-class discussions. The exam will consist of eight short answer questions, of which you'll choose four to answer. The midterm will also include a map quiz. You will identify 10 countries on a map. You will not have a choice of the 10 countries that you will place on the blank map. A "study guide" list of possible countries and concepts that will be used in the short answer questions will be posted on Canvas before the midterm exam.

Abstracts and In-Class Paper for *Citizen Politics* – For this in-class writing assignment, you'll be writing an essay on Dalton's *Citizen Politics*. You will have the entire class period to write the essay and it will be open-note and open-book. In preparing for the assignment, you will be asked to write short abstracts of each chapter as you read them. These abstracts will be due (on Canvas) in the weeks leading up to the in-class essay (please see the schedule below for due dates). Generally, your abstract should accurately convey the content of the chapter and should be comprehensive and balanced with clear sentence structure and logical and smooth transitions between points. Specifically, it should briefly summarize the overall purpose of the chapter, the main findings of the chapter, and the chapter's contribution to the overall argument of the book. Each abstract should be 150-250 words and I will be firm with this – the goal is to help you practice to be robust but concise in your written communication. Finally, each abstract is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points. The paper itself is worth 60 points, making the point total for this assignment 80 points. Please see the last page of the syllabus for an example of an abstract.

Attendance/Participation – I will not be grading on attendance per se, but rather on your participation in the class. Attendance is, of course, wrapped up in participation in the sense that if you don't come, you're not participating and your grade will go down. Participation grades will therefore be a combination of general attendance patterns, in-class discussion contributions (whether with the whole class or in small groups), contribution to in-class presentations, out-of-class contact with the professor, and your general attitude toward and involvement with the course.

Final Paper – Your final paper will have you researching either two separate countries or one country pre- and post-regime change. At least one of your countries must be from the list of countries assigned on the schedule below (the last section of the course); the second is your choice and can come from the list as well or be an entirely different country (or non-state nation). You will compare these countries using one particular criterion. The full paper prompt is on Canvas.

Final Paper Prep Sheet – To help you in your research and writing process, I am asking you to submit a short prep sheet approximately two weeks before the final paper is due. Please see the assignment on Canvas for more information.

Country Study News Articles – During Part III of the course (“Politics Around the World”), you’ll be reading chapters from our PDS text that focus on a particular country. These are a great introduction to the politics of the country, but I’d like you to also gain some insight into current developments in each of these countries. Therefore, for each of these days, you should read one current (within the last 6 months) news article about that day’s assigned country and come prepared to tell the class about your news story. In particular, you should prepare a 45 second “elevator speech” telling us: 1) the general topic of the story 2) how the story relates to the assigned PDS chapter for that country and 3) why Americans should pay attention to this story. Also, the article must come from one of the following approved sources: *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *The Economist*, *BBC News*, *International Herald Tribune*, *NPR*, *Al Jazeera*, or *The Atlantic*. Each day, I’ll ask 3-4 students to volunteer to share their insights with the class. Everyone must volunteer at least one time. And while there are no graded points associated with this exercise, your effort, articulation, and insight will be factored into your participation grade. Finally, please practice keeping to the 45 second time limit as I’ll be keeping time and will alert you when you hit this mark. This is to help you practice the art of publicly articulating complex topics in a very concise manner – a useful skill in both the professional world and in life.

Buffer Points – Another goal of this class is to familiarize students with how politics is actually practiced around the globe. This activity provides students the opportunity to check their learning, understanding, and ability to apply course concepts to events outside of their textbooks. During the course, you may bring in up to six 1-2 page (12 point font, double spaced, standard margins) analyses of a current (within the last 15 days) news article. Your write-up should link the news story to any of the course’s topics and should analyze (*not* summarize) the article, drawing on lessons from lecture, the readings, and class discussions. For instance, what concept is this story an example of? Does the article support or contradict what you have learned in class? A sound analysis (insightful, articulate, and cogent) will earn you one point, with a maximum of six such extra-credit or “buffer points” being possible during the course. *Earning a point is not guaranteed*; if the write-up is deemed as too much of a summary, no points will be given. There are two further restrictions: 1) You may turn in only one analysis per class session (you can bring a hard copy or email your response, but either way it must be turned in by the start of class) and 2) the article must come from one of the following approved sources: *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, *BBC News*, *International Herald Tribune*, *NPR*, *Al Jazeera*, or *The Atlantic*. Please attach the article to your analysis.

**All late assignments/exams (in-class and out of class) will have points deducted unless notification and arrangements are made with the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the assignment’s due date. The instructor reserves the right to change the structure of any make-up exam or assignment given. If you have some special circumstance that might affect your ability to meet all the course’s expectations – e.g., a brother’s wedding, a learning disability, or whatever – come and talk to me immediately. With abundant notice I’ll be as accommodating as possible, as long as it does not compromise fairness for all.*

Grading:

Midterm Exam	90 Points
In-Class Paper on <i>Citizen Politics</i>	80 Points (60 points for the paper; 20 points for the abstracts)
Participation (including attendance)	25 Points
Final Paper Prep Sheet	5 Points
Final Paper	100 Points
TOTAL	305 Points
(optional) Buffer Points	6 Points

Schedule - Full citations appear at the end of the syllabus along with URLs if available:

	Topic	Reading/Research Assignment
	Part I: Concepts and Issues in Comparative Political Science	
January 11	Introduction and Welcome!	No Reading
January 16	Comparative Politics in Political Science	PDS, chapters 1- 2; Kesselman, chapter 1.1
January 18	Doing Comparative Politics I <i>If you are able, please bring a computer or tablet to class.</i>	Kesselman, chapters 4.3 and 2.4; Freedom House essay on press freedom; Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index (on Canvas).
January 23	Doing Comparative Politics II	PDS, chapter 3; Diamond article
January 25	Political Culture and Socialization; Interest Articulation	PDS, chapter 4; Kesselman, chapter 5.1
January 30	Interest Aggregation & Political Parties	PDS, chapter 5; Kesselman, chapters 6.5 and 6.6
February 1	Policymaking	PDS, chapter 6; Kesselman, chapter 6.1
February 6	Public Policy	PDS, chapter 7; Kesselman, chapters 5.4 and 7.7
February 8	Midterm Review	No Reading
February 13	Midterm Exam	No Reading
	Part II: Citizen Politics	
February 15	Citizen Politics	Dalton, chapters 1-2; Kesselman, chapter 7.3 Due: Abstracts for <u>each</u> of the following chapters: chapters 1-2 (see description above)
February 20	Getting Involved: Political Participation	Dalton, chapters 3-4; Kesselman, chapter 7.2 Due: Abstracts for <u>each</u> of the following chapters: chapters 3-4

February 22	Value Change	Dalton, chapter 5
February 27	Issues and Ideology	Dalton, chapter 6 Due: Abstracts for <u>each</u> of the following chapters: chapters 5-6
March 1	Party Time: Elections and Political Parties Around the World	Dalton, chapter 7
March 6 & 8	No Classes; Spring Break!	No Reading – Relax!
March 13	Social Groups and Political Parties <i>Mid-semester Grades Available</i>	Dalton, chapter 8 Due: Abstracts for <u>each</u> of the following chapters: chapters 7-8
March 15	Partisanship and Electoral Behavior	Dalton, chapter 9; Levin article
March 20	Attitudes and Electoral Behavior	Dalton, chapter 10 Due: Abstracts for <u>each</u> of the following chapters: chapters 9-10
March 22	Citizens and Democracy	Dalton, chapter 12
March 27	In-Class Paper	No Reading
March 29	No class; Happy Easter!	No Reading
	Part III: Politics Around the World	
April 3	Politics in Britain	PDS, chapter 8; country study news article (see description above)
April 5	Politics in China	PDS, chapter 13; Xuecan article; country study news article (see description above)
April 10	Politics in Russia	PDS, chapter 12; country study news article (see description above)
April 12	Politics in Mexico	PDS, chapter 14; country study news article (see description above)
April 17	Politics in Iran	PDS, chapter 16; country study news article (see description above) Due: the “Final Paper Prep Sheet” (it’s posted on Canvas; please submit your completed prep sheet on Canvas)
April 19	Politics in India	PDS, chapter 17; country study news article (see description above)
April 24	Politics in Nigeria	PDS, chapter 18; country study news article (see description above)

April 26	Politics in the U.S.	PDS, chapter 19; country study news article (see description above)
Tuesday, May 1		Final paper due by 10:30am on Canvas. We will also meet at 10:45am in the classroom to informally discuss our papers.

Full Citations

Diamond, Larry. January 2015. "Facing Up to the Democratic Recession." *Journal of Democracy* Vol 26 Issue 1: 141-155. Available at <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/facing-democratic-recession>.

Levin, Yuval. "Partisanship is Good." *Newsweek*, February 23, 2009, page 30. Available at <http://www.newsweek.com/yuval-levin-defense-partisan-politics-82735>.

Xuecan, Murong. May 22, 2014. "I, Too, Will Stand Up for Tiananmen." *New York Times*. Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/23/opinion/23iht-edmurong23.html?_r=0.

Course Website and Email:

Please check your PLNU email regularly for class announcements. You should also check Canvas for announcements, links, lecture PowerPoints, and assignments.

Incompletes and Late Assignments:

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU Copyright Policy:

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy:

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy:

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Latasha Lomaland
POL 370: Comparative Politics
Sample Book Chapter Abstract¹

Book: Haire, Susan B. and Laura P. Moyer. 2015. *Diversity Matters: Judicial Policy Making in the U.S. Courts of Appeals*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Abstract of Chapter 4: "Diversity on the Panel"
Number of Words: 248

This chapter examines how gender and racial diversity on appellate panels affects deliberative processes. At the outset of the chapter, Haire and Moyer note that there are two dominant perspectives on diversity in the court system. The first perspective suggests that stereotypes will shape expectations toward one's colleagues and fuel processes that diminish the influence of women and minority judges. The second perspective suggests that the presence of nontraditional judges will enhance the robustness of information processing in deliberations. In this chapter, Haire and Moyer analyze the validity of both perspectives and find higher levels of support for the second. Although the analysis finds that white male judges' voting behavior is more variable in the presence of nontraditional judges (as would be predicted by the first perspective), they are no more likely to author a dissent in response to a majority opinion by a woman and/or a minority judge. Additionally, the analysis provides support for the premise that diverse panels yield opinions with more points of law when compared to those produced by panels composed of only white males – as would be predicted by the second perspective. However, this effect held only if two of the three panel judges were nontraditional judges. Thus, this chapter illustrates how the makeup of appellate panels drives decisional outcomes, adding to the book's main argument about the ways in which diversity on the bench affects not only individual judges' choices, but also the overall character and quality of judicial deliberation and decisions.

¹ This sample was partially adapted from The University of Virginia Press website. The original can be found at (<http://www.upress.virginia.edu/content/abstract-guidelines-samples>).