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: Austin S. Matthews
: Stubbs 320

: Wednesday 12:30-1:30 or by appt.
: amatt18@lsu.edu

This course introduces students to the comparative study of nation and governments throughout the world. The goal is to better understand how governments are organized, what roles they play for their citizens, and how they differ across borders. This will include study of a wide range of government types including democracies, anocracies, autocracies, and failed states. We will explore how governance and freedoms are defined, measured, and applied in differing contexts. This will include in-depth studies of various national governments across continents and throughout history.

All readings for this course are open source online or available for download through the LSU Library's website. Due to this class meeting often and not for long periods of time, I will attempt to space out readings to provide you enough time to prepare before their discussion date. It is up to you to make sure you plan accordingly by starting readings prior to the day before they are discussed. All required readings are listed under the day in which they will be discussed.

Quizzes: 20%

Unannounced quizzes will be distributed throughout the semester at either the beginning or end of class.

Participation: 20%

Includes discussion of assigned readings, contributions to classroom discussion, and general willingness to engage in academic effort.

Mid-term examination: 30%:

This will be a timed, multiple-choice examination testing you on subject matter from the first half of the course.

Final examination: 30%

This will be a timed, multiple-choice examination testing you on subject matter from the second half of the course. It is non-cumulative.

Final grades will be determined in accordance with the current plus/minus system of alphabetical grading utilized by LSU. Below are the possible grades and their numerical range.

One tool available to assist you in correct citations is the “References” function in Microsoft Word. This program automatically formats the information you input according to the citation method you select for the document. This program also has the ability to generate a reference or works cited page for your document. The version of Microsoft Word with the “References” function is available in most University computer labs. A demonstration of how to use this tool is available online at www.lsu.edu/saa.

Late Work

I will not accept any late work unless under extraordinary circumstances. This includes deaths in the immediate family and dire illness. To qualify for an extension, you must inform me of the situation and provide some proof of the issue (doctor’s note, etc.) within a day of the due date. Otherwise, your work will be considered late and not accepted for credit. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

Technology:

Laptop use for notes-taking and research purposes is contingently permitted. Cell phone use is not allowed under any circumstance. Any technology privileges may be collectively or individually revoked during the semester at the discretion of the professor. Continued abuse of technology privileges may result in punitive adjustments to a student’s grade.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit may be offered collectively at the instructor’s discretion. I will not allow individual students to earn extra credit that is not available to the entire class.

Week 5, Feb 5

Week 13, Apr 9 - 13: The Resource Curse

Read: Basedau, Matthias, and Jann Lay. 2009. "Resource Curse or Rentier Peace? The Ambiguous Effects of Oil Wealth and Oil Dependence on Violent Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 46 (6): 4s5 07