

2053-2: Introduction to Comparative Politics
1:30 – 2:50pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays
Location: 220 Tureaud Hall

Professor: Dr. Yann Kerevel
Office: 230 Stubbs Hall

Office Hours: T/Th - 3:00pm – 4:00pm, or by appt.
Email: ykerev1@lsu.edu

Course overview:

Comparative politics is more than just the study of foreign countries, it is an approach designed to answer interesting questions about the world. By studying and comparing nations, we can better understand how governments function and how to develop useful generalizations about complex political phenomena. At the same time, comparison also helps us understand our own political system better, and helps us evaluate other potential political arrangements. The bulk of the course is dedicated to the study of democracies, dictatorships and the transitions between these two types of regimes. The final part of course will ask you to then apply the material learned throughout the course as you develop a new constitution for an authoritarian country undergoing a transition to democracy. This course helps fulfill LSU's general education requirements and supports LSU's learning competency goal that LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.

Required texts:

All readings will be provided in PDF format on Moodle.

Components	Points	Grading Scale
Class Participation/Homework	80	485-500 A+
Exam 1	50	465 - 484 A

will take attendance to record your participation. I may also ask you to complete short assignments based on class activities. If you fail to attend a class and you miss one of these assignments, you cannot make it up.

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester that relate to the readings, lectures and videos. The exams are not cumulative. Prior to each exam I will provide you with a study guide. All exams must be taken on the specified date. If you have a DOCUMENTED illness, emergency or excused absence on the date of an exam, you may take an alternate exam during the scheduled final exam period.

Final Paper and Constitutional Convention Simulation: At the end of the course you will be provided with a prompt to develop a 4-5 page proposal for a new constitution for an imaginary country. The paper should draw on the material learned in the course along with outside readings to defend your proposal. The proposal is due on November 29th. During the final week of the course we will then simulate a constitutional convention as the entire class then attempts to agree on a single constitution. Students who do not come to class with a proposal on 11/29 will not be able to participate in the simulation. After the simulation is completed, you will be expected to write a 2-3 page reflection on the simulation experience. The reflection is due on the specified day and time of the final exam period.

World Values Survey Assignments: Throughout the course you will have the opportunity to examine how the attitudes and behaviors of people in the United States compare to those of other countries. At the beginning of the course I will introduce you to a public opinion data set with survey data from over 50 countries. I will teach you some very basic skills that will allow you to

Student Advocacy and Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

Plagiarism and Citation Method: As a student at LSU, it is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation methods for all coursework. Ignorance of the citation method is not an excuse for academic misconduct. Remember there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively. If you have questions regarding what is appropriate, please consult with the library's tutorials on avoiding plagiarism and proper citation formats (links are also provided on the course Moodle page).

Lectures and Readings:

All assigned readings **MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE ATTENDING CLASS**. I reserve the right to alter specific readings or the timing of certain lectures, but I will announce any changes in class or through email with sufficient advance notice.

Week 1: Democratic Regimes

8/23 (T): no readings

8/25 (Th): Samuels. 2013. "Democratic Political Regimes"

Week 2: Models of Democracy

8/30 (T): Lijphart. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy*, Chapters 2-3.

BRING A USB DRIVE TO SAVE YOUR WORK

10/6 (Th): No Class, Fall Break

Week 8: Federalism and Group Representation