

POLS105

Comparative Politics – Introduction



Lecturer:
Associate Professor James Headley

Semester 1
2018

Course description

Providing a foundation for understanding how politics operates in different countries, this paper constitutes a key introduction to Comparative Politics. The first part of the course provides context through introducing the state and nation, forms of government, and theoretical approaches and methods in Comparative Politics. The second part examines the institutional framework in which politics happens and the relationship between the different branches of government. The third part examines the ways in which people participate in politics, how politics is communicated through the media, political parties and interest groups, voting and elections, and how policies are made.

Course details

Lecturer: Associate Professor James Headley

Office Hours: Tues 1-2pm, Wed 10-11am (or make an appointment or just knock on my door!)

Room 4S1, 4th Floor, Arts/Burns Building

Tel: 479 8616

Email: james.headley@otago.ac.nz

Lectures and tutorials: There are two **lectures** per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-10:50am. The lectures give an introduction to the main themes and issues of the course. There is also one **tutorial** per week, starting week three, for student-centred discussion, debate and group work.

Highly recommended textbook: Rod Hague, Martin Harrop, and John McCormick, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, 10th edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Assessment:

- Essay (25%)
- Group project (25%)
- Group presentation (25%)
- In-class test (25%)

Course objectives

Knowledge of Comparative Politics

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge of the political systems of a range of countries and compare them analytically;
- display awareness of the various theories of Comparative Politics and be able to evaluate them critically;
- show understanding of research methods in Comparative Politics;
- understand and interpret political news/events better!

Academic skills

The course will enable students to:

- construct effective academic essays (coursework and test) displaying coherent arguments drawing on relevant evidence;
- locate appropriate resources in the library and online;
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of various kinds of sources and use them appropriately;
- effectively communicate ideas and knowledge orally;

- work collaboratively.

Provisional lecture and tutorial outline

Theme	Week	Lecture date	Lecture topic	Tutorial topic
Studying Politics	1	Tues 27 Feb Thurs 1 Mar	Introduction to course Key concepts	-
	2	Tues 6 Mar Thurs 8 Mar	The state Democratic rule	-
	3	Tues 13 Mar Thurs 15 Mar	Authoritarian rule Case study: The Middle East (Prof. Bill Harris)	Tutorial 1. Key concepts
	4	Tues 20 Mar Thurs 22 Mar	Theoretical approaches Comparing government and politics	Tutorial 2. Group discussion: Democracy and authoritarianism
	5	Tues 27 Mar Thurs 29 Mar	Constitutions and courts Legislatures	Tutorial 3. Essay planning and writing
<i>Mid-semester break</i>				
Institutional Framework	6	Tues 10 Apr Thurs 12 Apr	Executives Bureaucracies	Essay writing workshop
	7	Tues 17 Apr Thurs 19 Apr	Sub-national government Case study: The UK and the EU	Tutorial 4. Constitutions, legislatures, executives
	8	Tues 24 Apr Thurs 26 Apr	- Political culture	Tutorial 5. Group work: Drafting a constitution (1)
Participation and Policymaking	9	Tues 1 May Thurs 3 May	Political participation Political communication (Dr Chris Rudd)	Tutorial 6. Group work: Drafting a constitution (2)
	10	Tues 8 May Thurs 10 May	Political parties Elections (Prof. Janine Hayward)	Tutorial 7. Group work: Drafting a constitution (3)
	11	Tues 15 May Thurs 17 May	Case study: China (Dr Nicholas Khoo) Voters	Tutorial 8. Group work: Creating a political party
	12	Tues 22 May Thurs 24 May	Interest groups Public policy	Tutorial 9. Group presentations: Political party launch
	13	Tues 29 May Thurs 31 May	Revision In-class test	Tutorial 10. Test preparation and writing

Sources

The following is a guide to the sources available for this course. We will also provide advice in tutorials to help you find relevant materials especially for your essay.

Highly recommended textbook

The course follows closely the **highly recommended textbook**:

Rod Hague, Martin Harrop, and John McCormick, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, 10th edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

You will need to read the appropriate chapter for each topic – I suggest **before the lecture**, and certainly **before the tutorial** on that topic.

Other recommended textbooks

For your essay and for revision of specific topics for the test, you should also consult a selection from the other available introductory textbooks or reference books listed below. All of these textbooks will be available in Course Reserve in the library or are available as ebooks.

Boix, Carles and Susan C. Stokes (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Caramani, Daniele (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder and Sona Nadenichek Golder, *Principles of Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2013).

Danziger, James N., *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science*, 11th edition (Boston: Pearson, 2013).

Heywood, Andrew, *Politics*, 4th edition (Basingstoke/New York : Palgrave Macmillan 2013).

Hislope, Robert and Anthony Mughan, *Introduction to Comparative Politics: The state and Its Challenges* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Krieger, Joel (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Comparative Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Mahler, Gregory S., *Principles of Comparative Politics* (Boston: Pearson, 2013).

Newton, Kenneth and Jan W. van Deth, *Foundations of Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

O'Neil, Patrick H., *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 4th edition (New York: Norton, 2013).

Other books

There is a large range of books in the library and e-books held by the library relating to specific topics covered in the course and to particular countries or regions, which will be useful particularly for your essay. You can find these by searching the library catalogue as well as looking on the shelves in the appropriate section of the library. Given the constantly-changing nature of politics, more recently-published books are often the most useful.

At the end of each chapter of the Hague, Harrop, and McCormick textbook there is also a list of recommended further reading.

The following two books are in Course Reserve and are a good starting point beyond the textbooks for looking at particular topics and countries:

O'Neil, Patrick H., Karl Fields and Don Share, *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 4th edition (New York: Norton, 2013).

O'Neil, Patrick H. and Ronald Rogowski (eds), *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics* (New York: Norton, 2013).

Article databases

You can find journal articles for your essay by searching on the library home page or from databases such as Academic Search Complete, Factiva, and ProQuest; they can be accessed through the Article Databases section of the Library web-site (browse by Database name or click 'Politics' under 'Browse by Subject').

Websites

There are numerous online resources relevant to Comparative Politics, ranging from country profiles to institution websites, etc.. See the 'Guide to Comparative Politics on the Internet' on the textbook website, <https://he.palgrave.com/companion/Hague-And-Harrop-Comparative-Government-And-Politics-Tenth-Edition-Political-Science-Eighth-Edition/learning-resources/Guide-to-Comparative-Politics-on-the-Internet/>

It is also worth keeping up with the world news and thinking about how current political events relate to themes covered in the course. '7. Searching the News Online' in the textbook website's 'Guide to Comparative Politics on the Internet' lists some useful sites.

Also, the CIA World Factbook is a useful starting point for information on the political system of specific countries: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

There is useful advice on using websites under '3. Assessing Internet Sources' in the textbook website's 'Guide to Comparative Politics on the Internet', and also in the leaflet 'How to Evaluate Websites' under 'Study Skills' on Blackboard.



Assessment

Research essay: comparative study (25%)

Due: **Monday 16 April, 12 noon**

Word limit: 1500 words

N.B. You will not receive a mark for the essay if you have not attended tutorials 1-3 (weeks 3-5).

If you are unable to attend any of these tutorials for reasons beyond your control (e.g. sickness, bereavement, etc.), please contact me with the appropriate documentation to excuse your absence.

Compare and contrast one democratic with one (semi-)authoritarian state.

For this assignment, you will focus on two cases: one democratic state and one authoritarian or semi-authoritarian/hybrid state. The essay must be an analysis (rather than simply a description of the two states): you must compare the cases in the context of what kind of political system the states have as covered in the first part of the course. Topics to be covered include (but not necessarily in this order or structured in this way):

- what are the key features of democratic and authoritarian/semi-authoritarian political systems?
- how do the two states illustrate these features?
- what specific examples from the two states demonstrate the contrast in political system?
- what are the difficulties in categorising states in this way?

The essay will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- structure and organisation;
- analytical development;
- appropriate use of sources;
- understanding of the issues;
- clarity of style;
- correct use and formatting of references and bibliography (I will accept any of the widely-used academic reference styles as long as you are consistent);
- correct grammar and spelling;
- not significantly exceeding the word limit (1500 words), but answering the question in sufficient detail (you should be writing at least 1300 words, and no more than 1700).

You should **plan** the essay carefully so that it develops a **coherent argument**, with clearly 'signposted' links between sections. You may use headings for sections, but not too many as it makes it disjointed, and make sure that you still explain the links between sections. **Proofread** the working draft carefully to check that each sentence is clear and grammatical.

We will give you advice in tutorials to help you to plan and write your essay. Advice on essay writing and referencing can also be found on the Student Learning Website at <http://hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/sld.html>. I have put a number of their study skill guides on Blackboard in the 'Study Skills' folder under 'Course Documents', and you can also find useful information through the 'Study Smart' tab on Blackboard.

Group project: drafting a constitution (25%)

Due: **Monday 14 May, 12 noon**

N.B. You will not receive a mark for the project if you have not attended tutorials 4-7 (weeks 7-10). If you are unable to attend any of these tutorials for reasons beyond your control (e.g. sickness, bereavement, etc.), please contact me with the appropriate documentation to excuse your absence.

As a group (5-7 students), you will submit a portfolio consisting of:

- the main points of a written constitution resulting from the tutorial simulation;
- justification for the choices you have made;
- an outline of any problems/limitations.

Full details will be given in the first tutorial devoted specifically to the simulation (tutorial 5, week 8).

The portfolio will be marked and each member of the group will receive that mark towards their final grade.

Group presentation: creating/launching a political party (25%)

Due: **Tutorial 9 (Week 12, Monday 21 - Wednesday 23 May)**

N.B. You will not receive a mark for the presentation if you have not attended tutorials 8-9 (weeks 11-12). If you are unable to attend either of these tutorials for reasons beyond your control (e.g. sickness, bereavement, etc.), please contact me with the appropriate documentation to excuse your absence.

As a group (5-7 students), you will present the manifesto of your new political party in the tutorial. Full details will be given in the first tutorial devoted to the exercise (tutorial 8, week 11).

In-class test (25%)

Thursday 31 May, 10.00-10.50am

Assesses your understanding and knowledge of themes covered in the second and third part of the course (Institutional Framework; Participation and Policymaking). You will write two short essays, one from each section, from a choice of questions.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you cannot attend the test so that we can make alternative arrangements.



Formatting and submitting the research essay

Please use 1.5 or double spacing, and 'full justify' (align paragraphs to the left and right margins). You may print the essay double-sided.

Make sure that you provide a full bibliography of sources used.

The department does not have a specific referencing style; the emphasis is on the consistent application of the chosen style selected by the student. For recommended referencing styles please go to <http://www.otago.ac.nz/politics/study/current-students/index.html#assessment> and scroll down to Style and Formatting.

Essays must be put in the 100-level essay box by the corridor to the Politics Department (Arts Building, 4th floor, North end) by **12 noon on the due date**. You must attach a **cover sheet** (template on Blackboard) to the hard copy giving title and code of paper, title of essay, your name and id. number, date of submission, word count (excluding bibliography), and signed plagiarism declaration:

Declaration: I have read and understood the University plagiarism policy. I declare that this assignment is entirely my own work, all sources have been properly acknowledged, and that I have not previously submitted this work, or any version of it, for assessment in any other paper.

You must also upload an **electronic copy** of your essay to Blackboard (under 'Assignments'). This will allow it to be automatically checked for plagiarism by the University's Safe Assign software as explained below:

Safe Assign is a plagiarism detection tool which can report matches between sections of students' work submitted to it and material on a comprehensive database to which Safe Assign has access. This includes material on the internet and other students' assignments which have previously been submitted to Safe Assign.

Assignments will need to be submitted to the Final Version assignment folder under 'Assignments' on Blackboard. You may submit your assignment to this folder only once.

You also have the option of submitting a draft assignment to the 'Draft' folder. If you choose to utilise this option, you will receive the report generated which contains a percentage mark of the paper that matches other sources. [N.B. the percentage figure under 'Matching' can be misleading; it is best to check the 'SA report' to see if there are any issues]. Assignments submitted to the 'Draft' folder will not be assessed; however, the report will be available for the paper co-ordinator to view.

You can find further information on Safe Assign at:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/blackboard/assessing-your-students/anti-plagiarism-safeassign/anti-plagiarism/>

Plagiarism

The University of Otago takes the issue of plagiarism – copying or paraphrasing another's work, whether intentionally or otherwise, and presenting it as one's own – very seriously. Plagiarism is regarded by the University as one form of academic misconduct (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity/>). Any of the following may constitute plagiarism and result in investigation and possible punishment:

1. copying or cutting and pasting text from others without using quotation marks or block quotes to identify that text, nor clearly indicating the source (this includes paper and electronic sources)
2. copying visual materials, images and/or physical objects without clearly indicating the source

3. using poor paraphrasing of sentences or whole passages without referencing the original work
4. using another person's ideas, work or research data without acknowledgment
5. copying computer files or computer code without clearly indicating their origin
6. submitting another student's work in whole or in part, where this is not specifically permitted in the course outline
7. submitting work that has been written by someone else on a student's behalf
8. resubmitting portions of previously submitted work without indicating the source.

Note that the University's policy on academic integrity states that while plagiarism can be unintentional or intentional, even if it is unintentional, it is still considered to be plagiarism (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity/otago006307.html>).

Any student found responsible for plagiarism in any piece of work submitted for assessment shall be subject to the University's academic misconduct regulations, which may result in various penalties, including forfeiture of marks for the piece of work submitted, a zero grade for the paper, or in extreme cases exclusion from the University.

Please speak to me if you have any queries regarding the citation of material.

Department policy on extensions

Essays must be handed in by the due date unless an extension has been granted. Essays that are not submitted on time without an extension will receive a mark of 0.

The Extension Request form can be downloaded from the Politics webpage, or may be available on Blackboard. Completed forms must be emailed to the Department at politics@otago.ac.nz in advance of the assignment due date. **No retrospective application will be accepted except in the case of a serious medical condition, for which a medical certificate is required.**

Extensions will be granted only for the following cases:

1. Ill-health
2. Bereavement
3. Personal difficulties of a serious nature
4. Provincial or national representative activities
5. Job interviews outside Dunedin.

Nothing else (such as pressure of other university work) will be accepted as a legitimate reason for extensions. Computer problems do not constitute an exceptional circumstance unless it is an officially-notified failure of University equipment.

Your application for an extension **must be accompanied by evidence:**

1. Medical certificate for ill-health
2. Documentary evidence for bereavement
3. Written statement in support of your application from another university officer for personal difficulties of a serious nature
4. Documentary evidence for provincial or national representative activities

No other evidence will be accepted. The evidence must be submitted to the Department of Politics at the same time as the application for an extension either in hardcopy or as an email attachment of scanned image.

Application with evidence does not guarantee the grant of extensions. **The maximum length of an extension is ONE WEEK, i.e. five working days (except in the case of serious medical conditions).**

Return of marked work

Assignments will be handed back in tutorials or lectures in the first instance. After that they will be available for collection from Politics reception (room 4C12, 4th floor, Arts Building) between 9-

10am or 2-3pm Tuesday to Friday. NB: Assignments/tests will only be available for collection during these hours.

Student support

Class representative

You will be asked to nominate a class representative who will meet with the Head of Department to provide feedback on the course. This is an important role which is valued by the Department and can be added to the service section of your CV. OUSA provide training and resources.

I will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have about the course. Alternatively, you can report your concerns to the Class Representative who will follow up with departmental staff. If, after making approaches via these channels, you do not feel that your concerns have been addressed, there are University channels that may aid resolution. For further advice or more information on these, contact the Departmental Administrator or Head of Department.

Student Learning Centre

The Student Learning Centre at the University of Otago provides support for students in reading, writing, study skills, note taking and sitting exams and much more. They even provide individual essay consultations and can assist with your grammar and essay planning. Check their website for information and contacts: <http://hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/learning/>

Library support

Library Website

The Library website provides online access to resources and services, including Library Search | Ketu (the library catalogue), Article Databases, Group Room Bookings, Opening Hours, Library Locations, Library News, Course Reserve, Past Exam Papers, Subject Guides, Information on Referencing / Citation style, our Self-help videos, Guides and more!

Library Website: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/library>

Politics Subject Guide

This guide will help you find information for your assignments including articles, books, useful websites and more!

<http://otago.libguides.com/politics>

Ask a Question

Library staff are available at the Central Library 'Hub' from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5pm to answer any questions you might have about using the Library. They are easily identified by their vests! Or:

Tel: 64 3 479 8910

Email: ask.library@otago.ac

Subject Librarian for Politics

If other Library staff are unable to answer your questions, phone or email Christopher Seay for assistance. Or you can phone or email to make an appointment to meet with Christopher in person.

Tel: 64 3 479 8976

Email: christopher.seay@otago.ac.nz

Study Smart

The Study Smart tab in Blackboard offers advice and links to services and resources to help you with your studies. It includes information about the Library, Student IT and the Student Learning Centre. Access via the link in Blackboard, or go to:

<http://otago.libguides.com/studysmartarts>

Māori and Pacific Island students

Politics Department contact

Prof. Philip Nel is the Politics Department's kaiāwhina (support person) for Māori and Pacific Island students. Prof. Nel's contact details are:

Room 4N6, 4th Floor, Arts/Burns Building

Email: philip.nel@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 6549

Humanities Division contacts

Ana Rangi is the Kaiāwhina Māori – Māori Student Support Officer for the Division of Humanities. She is of Ngāti Porou/Ngāti Kahungunu/Whakatōhea/Ngāti Kuia/Ngāti Koata descent, and originally from Christchurch. Her contact details are:

Room 5C9, 5th Floor, Te Whare Kete Aronui (Arts/Burns Building)

Email: ana.rangi@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 8681

Inano Walter is the Pacific Island Students' Support Officer for the Division of Humanities. Her contact details are:

Room 5C9a, 5th Floor, Arts/Burns Building

Email: pacificsupport.humanities@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 9616

Office hours: Tues to Thurs, 9.30am – 2.30pm

International students

If you are experiencing difficulty with your studies due to a disability, temporary or permanent impairment, injury, chronic illness or deafness, you may contact, in confidence, the University support staff to discuss adaptations in teaching and learning strategies and resources that may be helpful.

The Department of Politics encourages international students to seek support if they are having difficulties with their studies or meeting other challenges while they are a student at Otago. The Department of Politics contact is Dr Lena Tan. Dr Tan's contact details are:

Room 4N9, 4th Floor, Arts/Burns Building

Email: lena.tan@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 8661

Students can also contact International Student Support:

Archway West Building

Email: international.support@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 8344

Website: www.otago.ac.nz/international

Disability support

If you are experiencing difficulty with your studies due to a disability, temporary or permanent impairment, injury, chronic illness or deafness, you may contact, in confidence, the University support staff to discuss adaptations in teaching and learning strategies and resources that may be helpful.

Disability Information and Support

Email: disabilities@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479 8235

Website: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/disabilities>

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate, it is subject to change. Changes will be notified in class and via Blackboard. Students are encouraged to check Blackboard regularly. It is the student's responsibility to be informed.

