

POLS 451: POLITICS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, FALL 2018, 3 CREDITS

Basic Information

Professor: Dan Pemstein
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Office: Putnam 104C

Class Location: Music Ed 117
Class Time: TuTh 2:00–3:15
Office Hours: TuTh 3:30-4:30

Course Description

Overview

This course examines the political institutions of advanced democracies. Note that the goal of this class is not simply to introduce students to a wide array of democratic institutions and traditions, but rather to identify general themes and to explicate causal relationships between democratic institutions, political behavior, and policy outcomes. Students will develop a basic understanding of broad variations in democratic institutions, learn how democratic party systems form and evolve, examine how parliamentary and presidential systems channel legislative behavior and party politics, explore the roles that electoral systems play in democracies, delve into the creation and maintenance of governing coalitions, investigate relationships between policymakers and bureaucrats, study the political economy of gender, and learn about variations in how democracies manage their economies.

Texts

You should purchase the texts below. All other required readings will be available on Blackboard.

- Torben Iversen & Frances Rosenbluth. 2010. *Women, Work, and Politics: The Political Economy of Gender Inequality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Isabela Mares. 2015. *From Open Secrets to Secret Voting: Democratic Electoral Reforms and Voter Autonomy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The following textbook is optional but highly recommended, especially for students who have not taken POLS 225. It is on reserve at the library (for POLS 225). I refer to this book as CGG in the schedule.

- William Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder. 2012. *Principles of Comparative Politics, 2nd Ed.* Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Evaluation

Summary

Short Papers	30%	(10% + 20%)
Discussion Leadership	15%	(2 × 7.5%)
Discussion Participation	15%	
Midterm Exam	15%	
Final Exam	15%	
Participation	10%	

Short Papers

You will write two short (8-10 pages, 8 pages means the text makes it onto the 8th page, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, no title page, 1 line for your name, 1-2 line 12 pt title, no subheadings, no blank lines between paragraphs, bibliography does not count towards page length) papers during the semester. Your lower-scoring paper will count for 10% of your final grade, while your higher scoring paper will be worth 20%. Each paper will take the form of a theoretical review & extension of one italicized reading (see the schedule). You must sign up for two slots on Blackboard corresponding to particular italicized readings. You must sign up for slots both before and after October 23rd; in other words, you will sign up for one of the first five slots, and for one of the second five slots. Slots are allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

You will ground your paper in some aspect of the reading assigned for the week for which

Section	Criteria	Percentage Points
Grounding	Clear, situates reader, correctly represents reading	10
	Acts as a concise foundation for argument	10
Extension	Clearly stated thesis	10
	Argument is logical, fully developed, and persuasive	30
	Discusses testing/falsification thoroughly and logically	20
	Clearly describes/justifies potential evidence	20
Deductions	Late draft or revision	100
	Missed discussion	100
	Revision lacks bibliography that meets requirements	10-100
	Revision shows poor citation style	10-100
	Revision has too few pages	10/page
	Revision has too many pages	10/page
	Revision has poor grammar, spelling, etc	1-20
Revision ignores formatting instructions	10	

Table 1: Short Paper Rubric

you sign up. I do not expect you to write a thorough review of the reading. Rather, you should use the reading as a foundation or jumping-off point for your argument. Nonetheless, your paper must establish a clear link between your argument and work that inspired it. You will propose an extension to the reading that is grounded in social scientific reasoning. Crucially, you should use the bulk of your paper to propose your own objective (i.e. not normative) argument that builds on the reading. This argument should propose a cause-and-effect theory that could be tested with real data, and should build on your background in political science. The paper should have a clearly stated thesis, elucidate the mechanism that causes the proposed independent variable(s) to affect a specified dependent variable, and draw on relevant literature to support the logical foundations of the argument. You must also discuss what kind(s) of evidence would support or falsify your argument. In some cases, you may even be in a position to provide such evidence, although doing so is not required. You must actively cite work beyond the class reading to support your argument; at least 4 of these citations must be works of political science published in peer reviewed journals or university press books and you should make active use of no fewer than 6 sources beyond the class reading. We will read, evaluate, and discuss examples of strong—and not so strong—short papers during the second week of class.

Paper drafts are due in digital form (PDF, Word or Open/Libre Office document), no less than 50 hours before the bold-dated class meeting (see schedule) for the week that your selected paper is assigned. For example, if you sign up to write about Kam (2009), your draft is due at noon on September 25. You will distribute your draft to the instructor and your group members (see below) through email. Final versions of your short papers are due in digital form, two weeks (not counting midterm week) after the bold-dated class meeting for the week that your selected paper is assigned. For example, if you sign up to write about Kam (2009), your final version will be due October 18th (note midterm week) at **noon**. I will not accept drafts or revisions after they are due. Students will forfeit both their paper and associated discussion leadership grades (see below) if they miss the draft submission deadline. Table 1 provides a grading rubric for the short papers.

Discussion Leadership

I will assign students to groups containing roughly five members. Discussion leaders should send their papers both to the instructor and their fellow group members. Students will lead 30 minute discussions within their groups, based on their short papers, on the bold-dated class meetings that correspond to their chosen readings. Students will be expected to provide an informal presentation of their papers, lasting roughly five minutes. Students should carefully explain both the logic of their arguments and their reasoning for why the potential evidence that they mention in their paper would support or falsify their argument. After their initial comments, presenters will engage in a constructive discussion with their group members, and the instructor, who will rotate between groups. With the help of their group members, discussion leaders will identify the key strengths and weaknesses in their papers and develop a plan of action for improving their drafts. Discussion leaders should strive to make sure that the discussion is productive. To this end, presenters should prepare a series of questions to ask their groups about their papers, with the goal of eliciting feedback that can help them to revise their papers most effectively.

Criterion	Percentage Points
Establishes plan for thesis clarity	10
Establishes plan for effective explanation of argument	25
Establishes plan for effective testing/falsification	25
Effective use of time	20
Discussion well managed	10
Plan annotated thoroughly	10
Deductions	
Draft or summary late	100
Miss discussion	100
Draft too short	10/page
Draft too long	10/page
Draft has poor grammar, spelling, etc	1-10
Draft ignores formatting instructions	1-10

Table 2: Discussion Leadership Rubric

Discussion leaders should take careful notes throughout the session, paying special attention to comments and suggestions on thesis clarity, the development of hypotheses, the quality and clarity of argument, and the appropriateness of proposed tests for falsifying hypotheses. They will use these notes to draft a one to two page (same rules as above) summary of the discussion, identifying strengths and weaknesses in the draft, and outlining the plan of action developed during the group discussion. These action plans are due before the next class period and, along with the instructor's in-class observations, form the basis of discussion leadership grades. Discussion leaders should annotate—for example, using Word's comments feature—their action plans, indicating how group members contributed to each point in the plan. Table 2 provides a rubric for discussion leadership grades.

Discussion Participation

All students are expected to read presenters' papers, and the readings that they extend, in advance. Non-presenting students will type up an evaluation form (available on Blackboard) in response to each presenter's paper and must bring two copies of each evaluation to class. These documents should evaluate each presenter's paper according to the rubric in table 1. Students should pay special attention to the presenter's core argument and discussion of falsification/potential evidence. They should prepare two carefully thought-out pieces of constructive criticism for the presenter that focus on these two points (one for each) and explain these critiques, in short paragraphs, containing full sentences, on their evaluation forms. I will grade students' discussion participation on a pass/fail basis. Students will obtain full points for discussion participation on a particular day if they hand in fully completed evaluation forms for each presenter at the beginning of class and actively engage in group discussion. Students should share key points on their evaluation forms verbally during the discussion period, although they are free to go off script. Indeed, while prepared criticisms will help to ensure that we have fruitful sessions, this will work best if students engage in

the discussion in real time and voice thoughts that come to mind, rather than relying fully on their prepared comments. Groups should collaboratively develop a plan of action for improving the draft under consideration during their in-class sessions. Students who miss class, fail to hand in complete and constructive evaluation forms, fail to speak constructively during each discussion, or who fail to contribute substantively during group discussions, will obtain no points for the day. Remember that presenters provide annotations on their plans of action that identify group member contributions! Total discussion participation points will be distributed evenly across all discussion days. I will not accept handwritten evaluation forms and students should give one copy of their evaluation forms to the presenters.

Exams

The midterm and final exams will each count for 15% of your total grade. Each exam will contain a series of short essay questions. Generally, students choose four of six questions to answer. The final exam is non-cumulative and each exam covers about half of the course material.

Participation

You are expected to attend every class and to participate in class activities and discussions. Participation (beyond discussion participation, which is graded separately) is worth 10 percent of your final grade and will reflect your engagement in and contribution to class discussion, not simple attendance (which should be a given, although lack of attendance will negatively impact your grade). Participation can take many forms, including—but not limited to—asking questions, answering my queries, engaging in class debate, organizing or participating in study groups, and taking an active role in group activities. Towards the end of the semester, each student will write a short (1-2 page) paper making an evidence-based case for the participation grade that she feels she deserves. These papers, and the persuasiveness of their arguments, will form the basis for students' participation grades. Although you have substantial leeway in how you make your case for your participation grade, your self-evaluation should follow this rough rubric:

- A Strong attendance, frequent and thoughtful verbal participation, active participation in group work
- B Strong attendance, regular and thoughtful verbal participation, active participation in group work
- C Strong attendance, some verbal participation, satisfactory participation in group work
- D Missed more than 3-4 classes, little to no verbal participation in class lack of engagement in group work
- F Frequently miss class, no verbal participation, leave your group members hanging

Class Policies

Grades

I use a flat grade scale: A=90–100, B=80–89, C=70–79, D=60–69, F=59 or lower. If you have a complaint about a grade you must type a formal appeal describing the problem.

Your appeal should make a cogent argument for improving your grade. Attach a copy of the original assignment/exam to your appeal.

Reading and Discussion

You **must** do the reading ahead of time to succeed in this course. You also need to participate in class discussion to get the most out of this class. While I will do some lecturing, this is largely a discussion-based course and the quality of the discussion will suffer if you, and your classmates, fail to read in a timely fashion, or do not speak up when you have a question or comment to contribute. If the discussion suffers, your understanding will suffer. If your understanding suffers, your grade will suffer. This course requires a substantial amount of reading (typically around 70, but sometimes as much as 150 pages per week). Much of the reading consists of recent research and is, therefore, often complex. This means that reading will take time and concentration. Furthermore, students who have not taken POLS 225, and therefore lack a basic grounding in comparative politics should plan on doing the optional readings in the POLS 225 textbook. If you do not want to do this much reading, to read with care, or to engage in class discussion, you should drop this course.

Late Assignments, Missed Exams and Discussion Sessions

I will not accept late assignments except in extreme, and unexpected circumstances. Students should notify the professor of exam scheduling issues at least two weeks before the exam in question. You will need a very good reason to reschedule an exam and the fact that you're leaving town before the end of finals week does not qualify as a good reason. The same policy holds for discussion leadership. As participants, students will be penalized for missed discussion sessions unless they have a documented and valid (medical, etc) excuse. Students must provide such excuses ahead of time if possible (if you get hit by a truck, and you survive, you can tell me after the fact).

Academic Honesty

The academic community operates on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the Office of Registration and Records. Please do make sure that you understand common standards of academic integrity and plagiarism. You can find information about academic honesty at www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty. I will deal with academic dishonesty and plagiarism *harshly*. If you violate accepted standards you will certainly fail the relevant assignment. In most cases, you will, at minimum, fail the class.

Electronic Devices

You may never use a cell phone in class. I strongly discourage using laptops to take notes during class.

Students with Disabilities

Any students with disabilities or other special needs who need special accommodations in this course are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and contact the Disability Services Office (<http://www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices/>) as soon as possible.

Veterans

Veterans and student soldiers with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
8/21, 23	Visions of Democracy	Lijphart (1999) Ch. 1–3, GLM (2006) pp. 441–457; CGG Ch. 12 (pp. 457–462), 13 (pp. 542–546, 564–578), 15 (pp. 673–712)
8/28	Social Science	CGG Ch. 2 (req), Short paper examples
8/30	Library Research Skills	
9/4, 6	Party Systems	Boix (2007), <i>Boix (1999)</i> ; CGG Ch. 14
9/11	Why Parties?	Aldrich (1995) Ch. 2, Stokes (1999)
9/13, 18, 20	Party Development	<i>Cox (1987) Ch. 2–3, 6–11</i>
9/25, 27	Parties & Parliaments	<i>Kam (2009) Ch. 1–3, Ringe (2010) Ch. 1–3</i>
10/2, 4	Parties & Presidents	<i>Samuels & Shugart (2010) Ch. 2–4</i> ; CGG 12
10/9	Review/Catch-Up (Skype)	
10/11	Midterm Exam	
10/16, 18 , 23, 25	Gender Politics	<i>Iversen & Rosenbluth (2010)</i>
10/30, 11/1	Electoral Incentives	<i>Golden (2003), Pekkanen, Nyblade, & Krauss (2006), Shomer (2009)</i> ; CGG Ch. 13
11/6, 8	Coalition Government	Laver (1998), <i>Golder & Thomas (2012)</i> ; CGG Ch. 12
11/13, 15	Delegation & Oversight	McCubbins & Schwartz (1984), Bawn (1997), <i>Alter (2002)</i>
11/20	Catch-up	
11/22	Thanksgiving	
11/27, 11/29 , 12/4	Political Economy	<i>Mares (2015)</i>
12/6	Review/Catch-up	
	Participation Due	
12/13	Final Exam (3:30PM)	

CGG readings are optional, unless otherwise noted, but strongly recommended for students who have not taken POLS 225, or who are rusty on the material covered in that class. All other readings are required. Italicized readings may be used as the basis for a theoretical review and extension paper.