

POL 4770-01: Comparative Political Behavior

University of Missouri

Spring 2016

MWF 2:00-2:50PM, Middlebush 310

Laron K. Williams, Ph.D.

Office location: 203 Professional Building
Phone: 573-882-2820
Email: williamslaro@missouri.edu
Office hours: MW 1:00-2:00pm (or by appointment)

Teaching Assistant: Ed Goldring
Office location: McAllister 307
Phone: 573-882-0881
Email: egfg8@mail.missouri.edu
Office hours: T 9-10:30, R 2:00-3:30

Purpose: The course introduces students to the subfield of comparative political behavior. The seminar discussions will explore research questions relating to cross-national differences and similarities in public opinion formation, political culture and values, voting behavior, and other forms of political participation. We will also address violent forms of political participation, including strikes, protests, revolutions, and terrorism. While the focus of the class will be on comparing and contrasting the US, Britain, France and Germany, we will also address political behavior in both developed and developing democracies.

To take this course, the Department of Political Science lists POL SC 1100—Introduction to American Politics—as a prerequisite.

Grades: Your final grade will be a function of the following components:

1. 2 exams (20% each)
2. Puzzle/hypothesis weekly assignment (15% total)
3. 3 hypothesis development assignments (10% each)
4. Class participation (15%)

Examinations: There will be a mid-term examination and a final examination. Exams will cover both lectures and reading materials. Since the study of comparative political behavior relies on a number of theories, these tests will reflect cumulative knowledge. **I do not scale or curve exams. The grade you earn is the grade that you will receive. At this point, I do not envision extra credit opportunities.**

Weekly puzzle/hypothesis assignment: Due at the beginning of class each Friday (except the following occasions: a) the first week of class, b) those weeks where we don't have class on Friday, and c) when a hypothesis development assignment is due), these assignments consist of typing up a puzzle that occurs to you based on the reading for the assigned topic. One way to begin is to write down a one sentence question (puzzle) prompted by the topic of the week. Then you will turn that question/puzzle into a one-paragraph statement of a relationship that you could test as a topic for comparative politics research.

These questions are intended to improve understanding of the material and inspire discussion, so they should be the most interesting questions or arguments that the student has identified based on the week's readings. You may also include questions of clarification if there are areas in the reading that you find difficult to understand. However, keep in mind that I will evaluate the quality of your questions as a critical part of this grade component. So put some thought into these questions and be prepared to have your question presented/asked in front of the entire class.

- Please bring 3 typed copies of your puzzle to class every Friday.
- One copy will be turned in.
- You will exchange the other two copies with other members of the class and will discuss in a small group format, with group members helping to refine the puzzles.

Hypothesis Development Assignments: For each of these 3 assignments you will develop a testable hypothesis that would benefit from study with a comparative research design. By "comparative research design", I mean either the analysis of a non-US case study, or the comparison of behaviors in more than one country. In essence, these assignments are more detailed and developed versions of the weekly puzzle/hypothesis assignments. While the particular topic is open, the three assignments will fit broadly into these topics:

- The first hypothesis will state an expected relationship about the factors influencing why individuals form opinions, or the determinants of political participation.
- The second hypothesis will state an expected relationship about the formation of political values or the political consequences of these opinions.
- The third hypothesis will examine either the influence of electoral institutions on party systems and elections, influences on voting behavior, or party representation in general.

Feel free to ask me whether a potential topic fits these broad requirements. These are to be 1-page assignments (single-spaced, Times Roman 12 point font, 1" margins) in which you a) state a formal hypothesis, b) discuss the types of evidence (i.e., case studies, survey data, etc) you would need to use to test your hypothesis and why, and c) briefly explain why the literature (i.e., readings) leads you to expect the relationship you posit in your hypothesis. Grades will be based on fulfilling all 3 parts of the assignment and on clear, concise, error-free writing, with each part and writing quality weighted equally.

Class Participation: Attendance at lectures is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for a passing grade. Ideal answers to questions on the examinations will express clear knowledge of both

the assigned reading materials and the content of the lectures. In addition, the lectures will be used to deliver important class information. I will take attendance at each class, and will incorporate this into the class participation component of your final grade. I also expect active participation in the lectures and the discussion opportunities.

Final class grades will be assigned with the following grading scale:

A+ = 97.0 - 100
A = 90.0 - 69.99
B+ = 87.0 - 89.99
B = 80.0 - 86.99
C+ = 77.0 - 79.99
C = 70.0 - 76.99
D+ = 67.0 - 69.99
D = 60.0 - 66.99
F = 0 - 59.99

Readings: There will not always be perfect unity between the course lectures and assigned readings. Thus it will be necessary to attend all lectures and to read the assigned materials in order to be exposed to all of the material that you are responsible for in this course.

The following required text is available at local bookstores (as well as through online sources).

- Dalton, Russell J. 2013. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. 6th Edition. CQ Press.

Blackboard: We will be using Blackboard (courses.missouri.edu) to display grades, post additional readings, and for announcements.

Other Considerations

- Out of respect for fellow students, each person will refrain from talking, whispering, eating, making offensive remarks, newspaper reading, and other disruptive behavior during lecture. Cell phones must be turned off and may not be used during class time. Inappropriate classroom behavior may result in the student being requested to leave the classroom. More information about my electronics policy will be given in class.
- Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. In this course, you are expected to submit original work and behave in a respectful manner toward both the professor and other students in the class. Breaches of the academic integrity rules are extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach range from instructor-imposed academic

sanctions, such as a failing grade for the course, to University-imposed disciplinary sanctions, such as probation or expulsion. If you have questions, please consult the University's academic integrity website, <http://academicintegrity.missouri.edu/>, and the University M-book, www.missouri.edu/~mbook. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student plagiarizing (or cheating on tests) will receive an automatic "F" for that assignment, no exceptions!**

- Final Examination: Each student must take the final examination at the time assigned in the University's schedule of classes. You **MUST NOT** make any travel arrangements for holidays, family occasions, or the like that would require you to miss this examination. There will be no exemptions from the final or early final examinations given.
- If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

- University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may make audio or video recordings of course activity unless specifically prohibited by the faculty member. However, the redistribution of audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course is prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Make-up Exams/Excused Absences

Make-up exams will only be given for university-excused absences. For any of these absences to be "excused," you must provide me with written documentation. To be excused the student must notify his or her instructor in writing (acknowledged e-mail message is acceptable) prior to the date of absence if such notification is feasible (in particular in times of university-excused absences). In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. unanticipated illness, accident, or emergency) the student must provide notification by the end of the second working day after the absence by 5:00 PM. This notification should include an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the class.

The student must also provide documentation substantiating the reason for the absence that is satisfactory to the instructor prior to taking the make-up exam. Failing to take a make-up exam at a previously agreed-to time will result in a zero. The make-up exam must be taken within one

week of the original test date listed in the syllabus, except under extreme circumstances approved by the instructor. For illness, documentation should include an official note from a doctor or clinic.

Also, keep in mind that an exam proctored outside of the normal exam time may be of a different format than the original exam. If you do not have an excused absence you will receive a zero for the exam. **No exceptions.**

Late assignments lose a letter grade per calendar day late. Also note that papers are due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Any time after that is considered to be a day late.

Class Schedule

We will spend as much time as necessary on each topic for this course. Because I am unable to predict in advance how long each topic will take, the schedule below is only a rough guideline. *I expect that you will have read the assigned readings **before** the class period for which they are assigned. I also reserve the right to announce additional required readings during class meetings.*

Readings

Part 1: Politics and the Public

Week 1: January 20-22: the Nature of Mass Beliefs

- Wednesday: Class Overview
- Friday: Dalton Chapter 1

Week 2: January 25-29: Political Knowledge

- Monday: Dalton Chapter 1 (Continued)
- Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 2
- Friday: Discussion

Week 3: February 1-5: How We Participate

- Monday: Dalton Appendix A: Statistical Primer
- Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 3
- Friday: Putnam, Robert D. 1995. "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America." *PS: Political Science & Politics*. December: 664-683.

Week 4: February 8-12: Who Participates?

- Monday: Dalton Chapter 4
- Wednesday: Models of voter turnout
 - Dubner, Stephen J. and Steven D. Levitt. 2005. “Why Vote?” *the New York Times* November 6, 2005.
 - Gelman, Andrew, Nate Silver and Aaron Edlin. 2008. “What Is the Probability Your Vote Will Make a Difference?” Working Paper.
- Friday: Discussion

Week 5: February 15-19: Unconventional Participation

- Monday: Models of protests
- Wednesday: Models of revolution
- Friday: Discussion

Week 6: February 22-26: Political Terrorism

- Monday & Wednesday: Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. “The Causes of Terrorism.” *Comparative Politics*. 13: 379-399.
- Friday: Discussion & **Hypothesis Development Assignment #1 Due**

Part 2: Political Orientations

Week 7: February 29-March 4: Values

- Monday: Dalton Chapter 5
- Wednesday: Inglehart, Ronald. 1988. “The Renaissance of Political Culture.” *American Political Science Review* 82: 1203-30.
- Friday: Discussion

Week 8: March 7-11: Issues and Ideological Orientations

- Monday: Dalton Chapter 6
- Wednesday: Rational actor models
- Friday: Henrich, Joseph et al. 2001. “In Search of *Homo Economicus*: Behavioral Experiments in 15 Small-Scale Societies.” *The American Economic Review*. 91: 73-78.

Week 9: March 14-18: Test

- Monday: Review
- Wednesday: Examination #1
- Friday: **NO CLASS**

Part 3: Elections and Voting Behavior

Week 10: March 21-25: Elections and Political Parties

- Monday & Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 7
- Friday: Discussion & **Hypothesis Development Assignment #2 Due**

Week 11: March 28-April 1: Spring Break: No Classes

Week 12: April 4-8: Sociological Models of Party Support

- Monday: Caplan, Bryan. 2006. "The Myth of the Rational Voter." *Cato Unbound*.
- Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 8
- Friday: No Class

Week 13: April 11-15: Sociopsychological Models of Party Support

- Monday & Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 9
- Friday: Discussion

Week 14: April 18-22: Attitudes and Electoral Behavior

- Monday & Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 10
- Friday: No Class

Week 15: April 25-29: Representation

- Monday & Wednesday: Dalton Chapter 11
- Friday: Discussion & **Hypothesis Development Assignment #3 Due**

Week 16: May 2-6: Values and Democracy

- Monday: Dalton Chapter 12
- Wednesday: Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1960. "Economic Development and Democracy" in *The Political Man*. Doubleday. Pages 31-51.
- Friday: No Class: Reading Day

Final Examination

- Wednesday, May 11, 7:30-9:30 AM