



**COURSE SYLLABUS  
GLB/Intro to Comparative Politics  
PSCI 415  
FALL 2022**

**August 30 through December 13, 2022  
Location: EDS (Education South) Room 129**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Dr. Robert G. Rodríguez  
Associate Professor, Political Science  
Coordinator, Latin American & U.S. Latino Studies Minor

Office Location (Fall 2022 ONLY): **PAC 130 (Performing Arts Center)**

Office Hours:

**Tu/Th 12:15pm-2:00pm, 3:15pm-4:00pm** (please send me an email in advance if you would like to meet at a specific time); or by appointment (in-person or zoom).

The BEST way to contact me is via email.

Office Phone: None.

University Email Address: **robert.rodriguez@tamuc.edu**

*Check the Syllabus to see if your question is answered FIRST.*

**\*\*CHECK YOUR EMAIL AND D2L FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS DAILY\*\***

**Course Description:**

Welcome to Intro to Comparative Politics! The purpose of this course is to study the dominant issues in comparative politics. We will analyze important concepts, theories, and debates in the field, in addition to the underlying structures and processes of institutional design in major types of political systems throughout the world. This course will explore how political scientists have analyzed historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces that affect political systems.

We will begin our journey with an introduction to the field of comparative politics. Then, we will delve into substantive issues that help us differentiate between political systems such as state/society relations, comparative political economy, and development. Subsequently, we will discuss modernization and political development in both democratic and non-democratic political regimes. Special attention will be given to regime theory by examining communist and post-communist states, as well as developing countries.

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

### **Required Book**

**ESSENTIALS OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS WITH CASES- 7th AP Edition, by Patrick O'Neil, ISBN (for Digital Version): 9780393542202**

Note: You can purchase the digital or printed version of this book, but in any case, make sure to purchase the "7<sup>th</sup> AP Edition". Do not be thrown off by the "AP"-- all of the chapters in this version of the book are (literally word-for-word) the exact same text as the "college" version that I have used many times at A&M-Commerce, however this edition includes case studies, which is sold as a separate book in the college version (i.e., by selecting the AP version, I am saving you from having to purchase two books).

### **Format:**

**Lectures and discussions:** Each class session will feature PowerPoint lectures and a discussion of current events in comparative politics. Lectures will not be recorded. The course materials are divided into FOUR units:

- **Unit 1: Introduction; The State (August 30-September 22)**
  - *Student Statement of Personal Responsibility DUE ONLINE through D2L ONLY by 11:59pm, Thursday, September 8*
  - *QUIZ Thursday, September 15, in-person*
- **Unit 2: Nations and Society; Political Economy; Exam 1 (September 27-October 20)**
  - *UNIT 1 & 2 Exam Thursday, October 20, in-person*
- **Unit 3: Democratic Regimes; Non-Democratic Regimes (October 25-November 17)**
  - *Writing Assignment DUE ONLINE through D2L ONLY by 11:59pm, Thursday, November 17*

- **Unit 4: Communism and Postcommunism; Poster Presentations (November 22-December 8)**
  - *Poster Presentation Symposium, Thursday, December 8 (Location TBA)*
- **Finals Week- Exam 2**
  - *UNIT 3&4 Exam December 13 in-person in our regular classroom at 1:15pm (the designated Final Exam time for this course)*

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

### **Learning Outcome:**

Students will understand the dominant issues in contemporary comparative politics, including important concepts, theories and debates in the field.

### **Global Learning Outcomes:**

**Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).

**Learning Outcome 2:** Students will be able to apply knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics.

**Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to view themselves as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Grading**

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following scale and criteria:

<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Participation:</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Pop Quizzes</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Quiz:</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Exam 1 (Units 1&amp;2):</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Exam 2 (Units 3&amp;4):</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Writing Assignment:</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Poster Presentation:</b>	<b><u>18%</u></b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Submit Statement of Personal Responsibility on D2L: 1% extra credit if submitted on or before Thursday, September 8 by 11:59pm.*

**A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%**

Each element of your grade is described below.

**A) Examinations:** In this course, **all students are required to take TWO exams**, each of which will consist of 50 questions in a multiple-choice format. Exams will be given in-person, consequently, you **must bring a GREEN or BROWN Scantron and a #2 pencil** to the exams. You will have 75 minutes to complete each exam. Together, these exams will comprise **56%** of your grade (each exam is worth 28%). The exams are NOT comprehensive. There is NOT a final exam in this course, but you will take your second exam during Finals Week.

**If you do not complete an exam during the designated class session, you will receive 0% for that exam.**

If you have a **legitimate reason** for not completing an exam during the designated class session (e.g. severe illness or injury *requiring professional medical care*, emergencies in your *immediate* family, participation in *official* university activities, legal obligations) **AND** you have **supporting documentation** for your inability to take the exam, then you may **request** taking a make-up exam that will take place during the professor's office hours. Requests for make-up exams **MUST** be made either in advance of the exam date (for example, if missing class to participate in a university activity) OR within 72 hours of missing an exam if the absence was caused by a legitimate unexpected reason.

***\*NOTE: Forgetting to take an exam is NOT a legitimate reason for missing an exam and you will not be allowed to make it up.\****

Requests for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing VIA EMAIL and include SCANNED documentation** explaining and substantiating why your inability to take the exam during the designated class session was legitimate. An approval to allow you to take a make-up exam **will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and any supporting documentation.**

#### **EXAM DUE DATES:**

- *UNIT 1&2 (Exam 1) October 20 in-person*
- *UNIT 3&4 (Exam 2) December 13 in-person*

**B) Quiz:** You will have ONE quiz in class on September 15. This quiz will be graded and is worth **4%** of your grade in this course. The purpose of this quiz is to prepare you for Exam 1. **You MUST bring a GREEN OR BROWN SCANTRON AND A #2 PENCIL** to the classroom for this quiz. **Note: If you are absent on the day of this quiz, the same policy for missed exams will apply.**

- *Quiz September 15 in-person*

**C) Writing Assignment:** You will be assigned a case study from the textbook. There will be one short (5 page) writing assignment in this course, which will focus on a description of the contemporary political situation in your assigned case study. Your writing assignment will be **DUE ONLINE via D2L ONLY on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17 by 11:59pm**. This writing assignment is designed to provide political science majors with an artifact for their senior portfolio. Specific details on the requirements and expectations for the short writing assignment, which is worth **10%** of your grade, will be provided later in the course.

**\*\* DO NOT EMAIL ME YOUR WRITING ASSIGNMENT- IT WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED THROUGH D2L \*\***

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:**

- *Writing Assignment Due ONLINE through D2L ONLY on Thursday, November 17 by 11:59pm*

**Note:** *Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.*

**IF YOU HAVE A TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEM SUBMITTING YOUR WRITING ASSIGNMENT, YOU MUST FOLLOW THE PROCEDURES LISTED HERE!!**

Should you encounter D2L Brightspace based problems while submitting an assignment, the following procedure must be followed:

**FIRST: SEND YOUR PROFESSOR AN EMAIL IMMEDIATELY**, regardless of what time it is. If necessary, use your smartphone to send an email. **SECOND:** report the problem BOTH to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please. Other support options can be found here:

1. FIRST Contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 AND <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>
2. SECOND Send me an email IMMEDIATELY to advise me of the specific problem.
3. I will confirm your problem and follow up with you on how to proceed.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your personal computer and internet access problems are not legitimate excuses for turning in an assignment late. Only Brightspace-based problems are potentially legitimate reasons to get an extension to complete your assignment.

**D) Poster Presentation:** You will be assigned a case study from the Essentials of Comparative Politics textbook to create a poster presentation. This assignment is an INDIVIDUAL project, not a group project. You MUST follow the provided instructions and format to successfully complete this assignment. **Your poster will be displayed/presented at a open research symposium that will be held on Thursday, December 8 during our class time. You will also be required to make a 5-minute verbal presentation of your case study at the symposium.**

Your case study chapter will be assigned to you. (Students who are minoring in Latin American and U.S. Latino Studies -L.A.L.S.- will be assigned the chapter on Mexico.) Even though more than one student may be assigned each case study, you are expressly prohibited from working together on this assignment. Your poster presentation is worth 18% of your grade. I will provide you with the specific parameters/requirements/rubric for this assignment later in the semester.

**POSTER PRESENTATION DUE DATE:**

- o *Poster Presentation Symposium Thursday, December 8 at 2pm (Location TBA)*

**E) STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

**YOU MUST SUBMIT A STATEMENT ON D2L ACKNOWLEDGING YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY BY THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 by 11:59 p.m.** This is a requirement to remain enrolled in this course and **1% extra credit** will be added to your total grade in this course **IF** you submit it to me by the deadline.

***\*\*DO NOT EMAIL YOUR STATEMENT TO ME- IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I WILL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CLASS ON HOW TO SUBMIT A FILE ON D2L \*\****

*Statement: I have read the syllabus in its entirety, and understand the guidelines and agree to the policies detailed therein as a condition of being enrolled in this course. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this course, and that failure to do so may result in serious consequences, including (but not limited to) being dropped from the course, and/or receiving a grade of "F" in the course.*

**STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY DUE DATE:**

- o *Thursday, September 8, by 11:59pm ONLINE on D2L ONLY*

**F) Attendance:** 7% of your grade is based on your class attendance. Students are required to attend class and attendance will be taken during each class session. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have been signed in. Arriving late and/or leaving early will negatively impact your attendance grade. *Attendance is critical, discussions are irreplaceable, and course sessions cannot be "made up."* ***I will not be managing any excuses for absences.*** It is not necessary to provide me with any excuses for absences (unless you are absent during an examination-read previous section.) ***You can miss up to two class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than two absences will result in a reduction in your grade, REGARDLESS of the reason (excused OR unexcused). On the flip-side, students with perfect attendance will receive a bonus of 2% added to your attendance grade.***

***The attendance grade scale appears below.***

- ***0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade***
- ***1-2 absences= no penalty***
- ***3 absences= -1% from your grade***
- ***4 absences= -2% from your grade***
- ***5 absences= -4% from your grade***
- ***6 absences= -6% from your grade***
- ***7 or more absences= -7% from your grade***
  
- ***Attendance Note 1: If a pop quiz or any other assignment is given when you are absent, you CANNOT make it up, regardless of the reason for your absence (excused or unexcused).***
- ***Attendance Note 2: I will NOT reply to any emails asking what we did in class during your absence- We will follow the syllabus. If you miss class, get notes from a classmate and ask him/her if there were any announcements.***
- ***Attendance Note 3: Students who attend ALL class sessions and do not have ANY unexcused OR excused absences will receive a bonus of 2% added to their attendance grade.***
- ***Attendance Note 4: ARRIVE ON TIME! The classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals 5 minutes after class starts. Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early.***

**G) Participation:** Your participation in this class is worth up to 3% of your grade.

Your contributions to the class discussions are highly desirable and will make class sessions more interesting. Positive participation includes responding to my questions, asking your own questions, and contributing to class discussions. All of these activities will positively impact your participation grade.

Negative participation includes: sleeping in class, side-talk with your neighbors, coming to class late, and any other class disruptions- any of these activities will negatively impact your participation grade, even if you contribute to class discussions. If you use personal electronic devices in class that may result in your removal from the classroom and a pop quiz for the entire class, and it will negatively impact your participation grade.

Also, if you misbehave in class or disrupt class in any way you may be directed to leave the classroom and your participation grade will be negatively impacted.

Your participation grade will be calculated as follows:

Never Contributes to Class Discussions/Disrupts class:	0%
Rarely/Sometimes Contributes to Class Discussions:	1%
Often Contributes to Class Discussions:	2%
Almost Always/Always Contributes to Class Discussions:	3%

**H) Pop Quizzes:** These may be assigned at any time for any reason. The usage of electronic devices in class, as well as sensing that students are not reading the course material are two reasons that are likely to prompt a pop quiz being assigned. Pop quizzes will collectively count for a total of **2%** of your grade. Pop quizzes will be very difficult to pass, as they will be based upon the readings that will be covered in a particular class session. If you are *absent* when a pop quiz is given, you **cannot** make it up, irrespective of the circumstances, and will earn 0% for any quiz you miss. Pop quizzes will be graded on the basis of the content and clarity of your answers. If no pop quizzes are assigned in the course, everyone will receive the full 2%.

## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

### **August 30-September 22**

#### **Unit 1: Introduction; The State**

Required Reading:

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 1  
Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 2

Required Activities:

- **Purchase** your required book (digital version is OK)
- **Submit acknowledgment ON D2L ONLY** that you have read and agree to the Student Statement of Personal Responsibility (By 11:59pm, **THURSDAY, September 8**)
- **Quiz** in-person on **Thursday, September 15**



## **September 27-October 20**

### **Unit 2: Nations and Society; Political Economy**

Required Reading:

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 3

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 4

Required Activities:

- *Take UNIT 1&2 Exam In-Person **THURSDAY, October 20***

## **October 25-November 17**

### **Unit 3: Democratic Regimes; Non-Democratic Regimes**

Required Reading:

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 6

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 8

Required Activities:

- *Writing Assignment DUE **ONLINE** though D2L ONLY by 11:59pm on **THURSDAY, November 17***

## **November 22-December 8**

### **Unit 4: Communism and Postcommunism; Poster Presentation Assignment**

Required Reading:

Essentials of Comparative Politics, CHAPTER 9

Required Activities:

- ***Tuesday, November 22: Watch assigned video on D2L***
- ***Thursday, November 24: Thanksgiving Break***
- ***THURSDAY, December 8: Present Your Poster Presentation in-person at a Symposium at 2:00pm (Location TBA)***

## **Finals Week: December 13**

- *Take UNIT 3&4 Exam IN-PERSON, **TUESDAY, December 13 at 1:15pm***

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS

### Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced.

### Email

**Before you ask me a question in an email, check to see if the syllabus answers your question FIRST.** I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. Emails sent to me over weekends will be replied to on Mondays. I do not reply to emails that ask questions about items covered in the syllabus, such as what chapters are covered on an exam or what the assigned readings are for a given class session.

### TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the University attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

***If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.***

### Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

## **TAMUC COVID-19 Statement**

A&M-Commerce recommends the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories.

## **TAMUC Counseling Center Statement**

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel).

## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

<https://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campuservices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

**\*Some activities in this course will require accessing D2L Brightspace\***

## **TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technology Required**

**USE CHROME OR FIREFOX BROWSERS WITH D2L—DO NOT USE Microsoft EDGE as this tends to have bugs when using this learning platform**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

**Using the learning management system, using Microsoft Word and uploading digital images.**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>