

POLS 11: Introduction to Political Science

FALL 2009

Professor YONG KYUN KIM

TR 10:00–11:50am

McCaffrey Center Pacific Theatre

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

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Office Hours: R 1:00–5:00pm and by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces you to the major questions in political science, exposes you to some of the best answers to those questions, and provides you with the tools to think critically about those answers. It will begin with some of the classical questions in the discipline: What is politics? What is the state and where did it come from? And what is democracy and what are the conditions that make a country a democracy? The second part of the course will examine the theories and realities of democratic decision making. It will involve theoretical discussions on the nature and limitations of majority rule and a survey of different decision making rules that are actually used as electoral rules in different countries. The course will then move on to examining several institutional ways in which democracies vary and discussing the consequences of institutional choices on such important issues as governance, public policy, and ethnic conflicts.

As you progress through this course, you will:

- compare and contrast political systems in the world synthesizing theoretical frameworks such as theories of regime types and of various institutional arrangements
- analyze politics that occur at the various levels using the tools to analyze strategic and political interactions between actors
- attain broad and deep knowledge of politics in at least one country of your choice
- develop and engage in academic writing and communication skills

Required Readings

The required text is:

William R. Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona N. Golder. 2008. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press. (henceforth, CQG)

The text can be purchased at the Bookstore. All the other readings that are not in the text will be available online.

Course Website on Sakai

I will maintain a course site on Sakai, where announcements, the required readings, assignments, and other supplementary materials can be found. The site is located at <https://pacific.rsmart.com>.

Attendance Policy

I will take attendance regularly. Absences may affect your final grade in two ways. First, you are allowed two unexcused absences, but after two such absences, your final grade will be lowered by one-third of a grade (i.e., from a “B” to a “B–”) for each additional absence without a valid excuse. An absence has a valid excuse when written documentation such as a doctor’s note that justifies the absence is provided. You may choose attending an event that is important to you over coming to class. Keep in mind, however, that such an absence won’t be excused as valid. Second, when you are absent from class, you may well miss important in-class activities such as discussions and group exercises, the sum of which accounts for 14% of your final grade. You won’t get any credit for those assignments you missed. You can make up for such an in-class assignment missed only if it was due to an absence with valid excuse.

Course Requirements

Midterm I	14%
Midterm II	14%
Final Exam	15%
Country Reports	15%
Poster Presentation	14%
Class Participation	14%
Additional Writing Assignments	14%
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	100%

Country Reports

You will write two reports on a country of your choice. We will decide which country you will write on by the second week.

1. The first report should address the following questions:
 - To what extent is the country a democracy?

- What do you think is the most important factor that has affected the country's democracy (or lack thereof)?
- Explain why

It should be a well-written formal essay about 1000 words in length. It is due before the beginning of class on September 17.

2. You will write the second report on the same country you wrote about for the first report. Here you will do research on details of institutional arrangements of the country such as electoral systems and government types and present them in a well-organized report form. It should also be about 1000 words in length and is due before the beginning of class on November 17.

Poster Presentation

We will have two back-to-back 50-minute poster sessions on November 24. The whole class will be divided into two groups, A and B. During the first session, students in group A present their posters while those in group B walk around and visit the posters. Students exchange their roles for the second session. For this assignment, then, you will prepare a poster that presents in a visually effective manner your findings about the country that you wrote in the two reports. During the session of your presentation, you will do many brief oral presentations (3–5 minutes) explaining what you have in your poster to whomever visit your post at the moment. During the session when you do not present, you will fulfill the roles of responsible peer: taking a careful look at the posters, paying attention to the presenters, asking questions, taking notes, doing evaluations and the like. Best posters will be chosen based on peer review, and the contents will later be shared by the whole class and will be on the final exam.

Class Participation

Given the size of this class, lectures will be a dominant form of teaching and learning. Nonetheless, I will make sure that each day's class consists of more than just one type of learning. We will have group exercises, simulations, discussions, and debates. On Thursdays in particular, we will devote a significant amount of time to discussions based on the readings that are not in the text. They are usually journal articles (listed in the course schedule below) and will be available at our course website on Sakai. As such, you should come to class having read those assigned for that day and be prepared to engage actively in in-class activities.

Additional Writing

I will assign several short writing assignments (about 200 words in length each), most of which will be a follow-up of class discussions.

Exams

There will be two in-class mid-term exams and a final exam. The format of all three exams will be similar. First, there will be a section on basic knowledge about the countries and topics that we have covered. This section will use a multiple choice format and will be drawn heavily from the text. Second, there will be a section for terms and concepts. For each term or concept, you should be able to write a short answer explaining who or what it is and why it is important. This section will also be drawn heavily from the text. Third, you will write an essay. The short writing assignments will serve as a useful study guide for the essay part.

Pacific's Honor Code

The Pacific policy on academic honesty is detailed in *Tiger Lore*. A violation of the Honor Code may occur in one of the following areas:

- Giving or receiving information from another student during an exam
- Using unauthorized sources for answers during an exam
- Illegally obtained test questions before the test
- Any and all forms of plagiarism

If you violate the Honor Code, you may be required to redo the assignment or complete additional assignments. You may also be assigned a grade of zero for the assignment and/or fail the course. Intentional violations will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (August 25–27): Politics, Power, and Games

- CGG 55–79

Week 2 (September 1–3): The Modern State

- CGG 91–123
- Jeffrey Herbst. 1990. “War and the State in Africa.” *International Security* 14/4: 117–139.

Week 3 (September 8–10): Democracy and Its Determinants

- CGG 147–153; 169–198; 207–232
- Michael L. Ross. 2008. “Oil, Islam, and Women.” *American Political Science Review* 102/1: 107–123.

Week 4 (September 15–17): Bottom-Up Transitions to Democracy

- CGG 255–276
- Joshua A. Tucker. 2007. “Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions.” *Perspectives on Politics* 5/3: 535–551.

First Country Report (September 17)

Week 5 (September 22): Top-Down Transitions to Democracy

- CGG 276–292

Midterm I (September 24)

Week 6 (September 29–October 1): Group Choice and Majority Rule

- CGG 355–373
- John C. Blydenburgh. 1971. “The Closed Rule and the Paradox of Voting.” *Journal of Politics* 33/1: 57–71.

Week 7 (October 6–8): Arrow’s Theorem

- CGG 374–386
- Arthur Lupia and Matthew D. McCubbins. 2005. “Lost in Translation: Social Choice Theory is Misapplied Against Legislative Intent.” *Journal of Contemporary Legal Issues* 14: 585–617.

Week 8 (October 13–15): Electoral Systems

- CGG 463–527
- Andrew Reynolds. 2006. “The Curious Case of Afghanistan.” *Journal of Democracy* 17/2: 104–117.

Week 9 (October 20–22): Social Cleavages and Political Parties

- CGG 533–572
- Daniel N. Posner. 2004. “The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi.” *American Political Science Review* 98/4: 529–545.

Week 10 (October 27): Number of Parties

- CGG 572–598

Midterm II (October 29)

Week 11 (November 3–5): Parliamentary System

- CGG 395–443

Week 12 (November 10–12): Presidential System

- CGG 443–455; 742–762
- Arturo Valenzuela. 2004. “Latin American Presidencies Interrupted.” *Journal of Democracy* 15/4: 5–19.

Week 13 (November 17–19): Federalism and Constitutionalism

- CGG 603–657
- Dawn Brancati. 2004. “Can Federalism Stabilize Iraq?” *Washington Quarterly* 27/2: 7–21.

Second Country Report (November 17)

Week 14 (November 24): Poster Presentations

Thanksgiving (November 26)

Week 15 (December 1–3): Consequences of Democratic Institutions

- CGG 675–723
- Alberto Alesina, Edward Glaeser, and Bruce Sacerdote. 2001. “Why Doesn’t the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 2: 187–277.

Week 16 (December 8): Institutions and Ethnic Conflict

- CGG 723–742

Review (December 10)

Final (December 15; 8:00–11:00 am)