### Course Description

As an introduction to comparative politics, the course will focus on helping students get familiar with the basic themes, concepts and methods in the comparative study of political systems. The course is themed around transformations in the organization of power, particularly the rise of modern territorial state, dynamics of state-society relations and challenges to the territorial state. With this in mind, the course will generally cover the following topics: Approaches and Methods in Comparative Politics; States and Nations; Democratic and Non-Democratic Regimes; Political Violence; Political Economy; Globalization; Conclusion: Political Order and Political Decay.

Each class meeting will be organized in such a way as to strike the right balance between proper communication of key concepts, theories and debates and active engagement of students with course materials. In order to achieve this objective, each meeting will include an hour of lecture followed by a fifty-minute seminar/discussion session, which will allow students to participate in a structured focused discussion of the topic being covered. Two full sessions will be allocated to each of the seven topics identified above, which allows a decent amount of time for both lecture and student participation on each topic, with the remaining two sessions reserved for mid-term and final exams.

### Course Objectives

The general objective of the course is to help students get familiar with major approaches, concepts and substantive issues in the comparative study of political systems. The emphasis
will be on enhancing students’ comprehension of key theoretical perspectives and debates in the comparative politics by situating these debates in their proper historical context. Lectures, readings, and participation in class discussions will help students acquire the ability to understand and critically analyze the following debates in comparative politics: transformations of the state; the role of violence in political processes and modern state formation; the impacts of ideas, religion, and culture on political development; the relationship between capitalism and democracy; the natures of different types of regimes; the role of political parties and civil society play in democratic development; and the challenges of globalization for the territorial state.

**Requirements**

Course assignments have been selected with the intention of ensuring adequate breadth and depth in covering each topic. The required text for the course is *Essentials of Comparative Politics* by Patrick H. O’Neil (Third Edition). Supplementary readings, including articles and book chapters, will be assigned to ensure a deeper understanding of each topic and to help generate class discussion.

Class attendance is mandatory and students are expected to come to class having read all assigned materials. Full preparation for each class meeting is crucial given the fact that the course is condensed into five weeks, as opposed to a normal semester.

Final grade components include: classroom participation (20%), a mid-term exam (40%) and a final exam (40%).

**July 6: Introduction: The Organization of Power**

- O’Neil, Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-20;
- Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order*, Chapters 2-6 (pp. 26-96) (posted on Blackboard)

**July 7: The Rise of Modern State**

- O’Neil, Chapter 2: State, pp. 21-46;

**July 8: Nations and Nationalism**

- O’Neil, Chapter 3: Nations and Society, pp. 47-57;
July 9: The State during the 20th Century

- James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Introduction and Chapters 3 and 6

July 13: Political Ideologies

- O’Neil, Chapter 3: Nations and Society, pp. 58-76;

July 14: Revolutions and Mass Politics

- O’Neil, Chapter 10: Political Violence, pp. 267-73;
- Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, Preface, pp. 1-33 and pp. 161-173;

July 15: Parties, Party Systems and Political Parties

- O’Neil, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pp. 128-29;

July 16: Democracy and Democratization

- O’Neil, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pp. 109-118;

**July 20: Midterm Exam**

July 21: Non-Democratic Regimes
O’Neil, Chapter 6: Nondemocratic Regimes, pp. 141-66;

July 22: Civil Society and Democracy

July 23: Electoral Systems
O’Neil, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pp. 129-139;

July 27: Parliamentary, Presidential and Semi-Presidential Systems
O’Neil, Chapter 5: Democratic Regimes, pp. 118-128;

July 28: Centralism vs. Federalism
The Federalist Papers (nos. 10, 39, and 51);

July 29: Political Economy: Advanced Economies
O’Neil, Chapter 4: Political Economy, pp. 77-108;
- O’Neil, Chapter 7: Advanced Democracies, pp. 167-96;

**July 30: Political Economy: Developing Countries**

- O’Neil, Chapter 9: Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries, pp. 230-60;

**Aug. 3: Political Violence**

- O’Neil, Chapter 10: Political Violence, pp. 261-90;

**Aug. 4: Religion and Politics**


**Aug. 5: Globalization**

- O’Neil, Chapter 11: Globalization, pp. 291-317;

**Aug. 6: Conclusion: Political Order and Political Decay**


**Aug. 7: Final Exam**