



Lakehead University  
Comparative Politics  
POLI-2339-WA  
Winter 2016

Instructor: **Normand Perreault** (Department of Political Science)

Classroom: RC 1001

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday 8:30-10:00 AM

Office: RB 2035

Email: [nperreault@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:nperreault@lakeheadu.ca)

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 10:00 – 10:30 AM, or by appointment

**Course description:**

This course will examine the development, organization and operation of democracies and dictatorships in the contemporary world. This course will pay particular attention to the processes of transition between democracies and dictatorships. In the course of the semester, we will discuss the role of ideologies, the organisation and constitution of governments, and the role of the state, as important factors in the development of different types of political systems. We will also address questions pertaining to the role and importance of nationalism, fundamentalism, political corruption, clientelism, civil society, modernity, political opposition, human rights and federalism, in the modern world.

**Required readings:**

- Stepan, Alfred, ed. Arguing Comparative Politics. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

## **Evaluation:**

The evaluation scheme will consist of the following items:

- A short paper assignment (maximum 1,200 words in length) that is due **in class** on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February, and that is worth 30% of your total course grade.
- A second short paper assignment (maximum 1,200 words in length) that is due **in class** on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March, and that is worth 30% of your total course grade.
- A final research paper (maximum 2,000 words in length) that is due **by email**, at noon, on Tuesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, and that is worth 40% of your total course grade.

**Late papers are not accepted.**

## **Course outline:**

### **Week 1 (January 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>):**

Comparative Politics and the rise of the state.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 1-19.

### **Week 2 (January 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>):**

The rise of bureaucratic-authoritarianism.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 23-38.

### **Week 3 (January 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>):**

Different political systems, regimes and types of state: responses to modernization.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 39-72.

### **Week 4 (January 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>):**

The true nature of authoritarian regimes.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 73-99.

### **Week 5 (February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>):**

How authoritarian regimes fall.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 100-107.

**Week 6 (February 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>):**

Path toward democratic transition.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 109-137.

**The first short essay paper is due in class, on Thursday February 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**Week 7 (February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>):**

Why people want democracy.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 138-158.

**Week 8 (March 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>):**

Democratic opposition and a conflictual model of democracy.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 159-180.

**Week 9 (March 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>):**

How to reconcile individual rights and group rights: democracy v. nationalism, and the politics of identity. Federalism, constitutionalism, nationalism and regionalism: how democracies manage conflicts and transaction costs.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 181-212, 315-361.

**The second short essay paper is due in class, on Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**Week 10 (March 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>):**

Fundamentalism and the search for the self: the post-modern contradiction.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 213-253.

**Week 11 (March 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>):**

Balance of power and separation of powers: how to reconcile governability and accountability.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 255-294.

**Week 12 (March 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>th</sup>):**

Flexibility and adaptability: how democracies survive crises and adapt to a changing world.

- Stepan, Arguing Comparative Politics, pp. 295-314.