



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAMME
POLS114: INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS
20 POINTS**

TRIMESTER 2 2015

Important dates

Trimester dates: 13 July to 15 November 2015

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2015

Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 2015

Study period: 19–23 October 2015

Examination/Assessment Period: 23 October to 14 November 2015

Note: students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Lectures:	Monday	09:00 – 09:50	Hugh Mackenzie HMLT205
	Wednesday	09:00 – 09:50	Maclaurin MCLT101
	Friday	09:00 – 09:50	Maclaurin MCLT101

Tutorials: TBA. Please see the Academic Timetable 2015
www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables

Names and contact details of Course Coordinators

Dr Fiona Barker

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Office hours: Friday 10:00 – 11:00 or by appointment.

Dr Kate McMillan
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Email: kate.mcmillan@vuw.ac.nz
Office hours: Tba

Communication of additional information

This course uses Blackboard and presumes that all enrolled students have valid myvuw.ac.nz addresses. Please check that this account is active and you have organised email forwarding. Additional information and any changes to the timetable or lecture and seminar programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

Prescription

What can we learn by comparing the politics and government of different countries? This course examines competing explanations for democratic and authoritarian regimes including economic, cultural and institutional theories of state development. These theories are then applied to several case studies.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. understand theories of state and regime development
2. identify the purpose and limitations of the comparative method and be able to use this method in their own research to analyse cause and effect
3. be familiar with the political regimes of selected countries and be able to apply this knowledge as evidence to support theoretical arguments
4. develop their capacity to question as they read, critically engaging with arguments and evidence rather than accepting them without challenge
5. distil and synthesise definitions of key concepts and interpretations of central ideas from lectures, tutorials and readings
6. conduct independent research on their own country case studies
7. construct persuasive arguments and express these clearly and concisely

Teaching format

This course is taught by way of three lectures and one tutorial per week. Tutorials begin in the second week of the trimester. Both tutorials and lectures are essential aspects of the course and the primary means by which course content is delivered. Students are expected to attend lectures regularly, participate in tutorial discussions and keep up with the weekly readings.

The **lectures** introduce students to key concepts and theories in comparative politics, using empirical evidence from case studies to support the learning.

The **tutorials** are intended to consolidate students' understanding of the key concepts, assigned readings and case studies. Many tutorials will involve group work and discussion, both in small groups and via plenary discussion. The final examination will be held during the Trimester 2 examination period, which runs from 23 October to 14 November 2015.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. submit both essays in hard copy and electronic format, by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work);
2. sit the final examination for the course;
3. attend a minimum of eight of the eleven tutorials.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

In accordance with University Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 200 hours to the course throughout the trimester. This includes weekly attendance at lectures and tutorials, completion of all set weekly readings and research and writing for set assessment tasks and preparation for the final examination.

Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Essay One (1200-1500 words)	25%	1, 3, 4, 6, 7	5 pm Friday 14 August
2 Essay Two (1200 -1500 words)	25%	1 - 7	5 pm, Friday 25 September
3 Final 3-hour Examination	50%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	TBA

Essays One (25%) and Two (25%)

Each of the essays will require students to gather material on a specialised topic related to the course themes, analyse relevant data and ideas, and present an essay in a literate, clearly argued and structured form. Details on the essay questions, as well as guidelines for carrying out your research and writing your essay, will be provided in the first week of the trimester and posted on Blackboard.

Final Examination (50% of final grade)

A three-hour written examination will be held during the examination period: 23 October to 14 November 2015.

Submission and return of work

Your research essay must be submitted in **hard copy** in the POLS114 essay box placed outside the School office on the fifth floor of the Murphy building. Your essay must have a **signed** Programme cover sheet attached.

The Programme's policy requires that students also submit an **electronic copy** along with the hard copy. This will involve uploading your essay via the Turnitin Assignment tool on Blackboard. This function on Blackboard utilises Turnitin, which is an online plagiarism detection tool. For more information on Turnitin, please see the link provided in the section Other Important Information below.

Essays are marked by your tutor and will be returned in tutorials at a time to be advised. If students are not present, they may collect their essay from the School Office, Murphy 518, between 2.00 and 3.00 pm from Monday to Friday and must show their Student ID card before collection.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Late submission of **assignments** will **not be accepted** unless the student makes an appointment as soon as practically possible with the course coordinator to explain the lateness (preferably before the assignment is due to be submitted). The circumstances under which an extension will be considered are outlined in section 3.2.1 of the Assessment Handbook.

(See: www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf).

Penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of assignments – **a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 2% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 8 days**. Work that is more than 10 weekdays late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but may not be marked.

Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds (for example, illness [presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary] or similar other contingencies). In all such cases, prior information will be necessary. Extensions on deadlines for written work will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

Set texts

The essential texts for this course are:

1. Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. New York, W. W. Norton & Company. 4th edition, 2013.
2. Patrick H. O'Neil et al, *Cases in Comparative Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 4th edition, 2013.

You should purchase both of these texts, which can be bought as a package. Please note that this course uses the 4th edition of the textbook. See www.vicbooks.co.nz for further details on when and where to buy or order textbooks.

A limited number of copies of both texts will be made available on Closed Reserve in the Glass Room of the Victoria Kelburn Campus library.

Additional required readings will be available electronically in a folder in the Course Resources section of the POLS 114 Blackboard page. A list of the weekly lecture topics and required readings will be provided in the first lecture and posted on Blackboard.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

Student feedback on this course indicated that students particularly appreciated the contemporary nature of the case studies examined. The amount of reading required for each lecture has been revised in 2015 in response to student feedback. Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz