

POLS 220: WORLD POLITICS

Spring 2023

Instructor: Dr. Neil S. Williams (he/him)	Time: M W 1:00 – 2:15 p.m.
Email: shaun.williams@louisiana.edu	Place: Mouton Hall, Room 110

Course Pages:

1. <http://www.neilswilliams.com/teaching.html>
2. <https://moodle.louisiana.edu/>
3. <https://www.perusall.com/>

Student Hours: 12:00-2:00pm Thursday in Mouton Hall 118, or by appointment.

Required Texts:

- None

Objectives: Why do some countries hold elections while others do not? Why are some states able to provide security and welfare to their citizens while others struggle to do so? Why are some countries plagued by violence while others enjoy internal peace? These questions have long animated the field of comparative politics and are among the several of which we will explore this semester.

This course will provide students with a firm foundation in the sub-field of comparative politics, preparing them for further analysis of politics around the world and across contexts. The course has two main objectives:

1. To familiarize students with the importance of theory and research design for describing, explaining, and understanding political processes. After taking this course, students should be able to distinguish between different theoretical explanations and evaluate the merit of evidence used to support them.
2. To provide students with an overview of key topics and debates in comparative politics. Students should be able to understand the basis of these debates as well as take and support positions on them.

General Education Student Learning Objectives

1. SB1: Evaluate data, evidence and arguments using discipline specific theory and methods.
2. SB2: Identify theories in the discipline relevant to understanding human behavior and society.
3. SB3: Distinguish the forces shaping human behavior and society.
4. SB4: Describe relations among individuals, groups and society utilizing discipline specific terminology.
5. SB5: Recognize the significance of individual, cultural and societal diversity.

Perusall: All readings and lecture slides will be available on [Perusall](#). Perusall is a cool e-reader that allows for collaborative annotation of readings and videos with both me and your peers. Assignment due dates and reminders are also included in Perusall to help you keep track of readings. It is free to create an account. After you have done so, our course can be accessed by entering the code **WILLIAMS-4B2JK**.

Important Dates: Below are important test and due dates. Note that they, as well as everything else in the syllabus, may be changed as the semester continues. I will notify you in good time of any updates.

- First Half of Perusall Annotations due** Monday, March 6th, 2023
- Project Proposal due** Monday, March 6th, 2023
- Midterm Due** Wednesday March 15th, 2023
- Final Project due** Friday, April 28th, 2023
- Second Half of Perusall Annotations due** Monday, May 1st, 2023
- Project Memo due** Thursday, May 4th, 2023 by 11:59 P.M.

Grading

Late work will be taken 10% off per day and I reserve the right to give a 0 after more than 3 days with no valid excuse.

- **Attendance: (5%)**
- **Participation: (20%)** Participation will be evaluated in multiple ways. Active participation implies paying attention in class, engagement with the material and with your fellow student colleagues. Please come prepared to class having read and willing to discuss the assigned material. Keep in mind these points as you read:
 1. What is the main point or argument?
 2. What evidence do they use to support their argument?
 3. Is there contradicting evidence?
 4. How does the author’s argument relate to the other content from the course?

Participation will also be evaluated by your comments, annotations, and responses to the readings, videos, and content on Perusuall. The **participation breakdown** is as follows:

- **In-class participation:(50%)**
- **Perusall annotations: (50%)**

- **Midterm: (25%)** The midterm exam will be delivered electronically and will cover content up until this point. Although this exam will be open-note and book, I **HIGHLY** recommend studying before-hand.
- **Final project: (50%)** For the final project you are tasked with teaching non-experts about a concept or idea we’ve learned this semester or something else related to this course. You can use whatever medium you want, except for a standard essay or twitter threads. Otherwise, feel free to be creative. You can record a podcast, create a photo exhibit, write a magazine piece or a long-form blog post, write a set of poems, make a poster collage, write a work of fiction, a graphic novel, make a short film or documentary, a stand-up routine, play, etc. The

possibilities are endless, but, regardless of the medium you choose, all projects will be graded on the following criteria:

- **Project proposal: (10%):** 1-2 page proposal of your project idea with description of your main points and planned approach
- **Project: (60%):** Project graded on the below criteria
 - * (30%): Demonstrates a clear understanding of the concept. While accessibility is important, represent the concept or topic accurately and faithfully.
 - * (30%) Makes clear why the concept is important for some aspects of politics (In a particular case or generally)
 - * (10%) Uses language that is accessible to a broad public
 - * (15%) Demonstrates effort commensurate with a final class project
 - * (15%) Showcases creativity and imaginative thinking
- **Project reflection memo: (30%)** 3-4 page memo attached explaining your project, its method, and how it relates to your project topic.

Grade Scale

A		>= 90.00
B		80.00 - 89.99
C		70.00 - 79.99
D		60.00 - 69.99
F		<= 59.99

Academic Honesty *“The University holds that all work for which a student will receive a grade or credit shall be an original contribution or shall be properly documented to indicate sources. Abrogation of this principle entails dishonesty, defeats the purpose of instruction, and undermines the high goals of the University. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Students shall be assumed to know the acceptable methods and techniques for proper documentation of sources and to avoid cheating and plagiarism in all work submitted for credit, whether prepared in or out of class.”* (From [University of Louisiana Lafayette page on Academic Honesty.](#)) Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and if discovered will be appropriately punished, including with the reserved right to give a 0 for the assignment(s). For more information about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or intellectual dishonesty, consult me or the university web page.

Disability Resources: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 337-482-5252 or visit the ODS office in the Agnes Edwards Hall, room 126. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with their instructor to make appropriate arrangements for accommodations.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

Final project adapted from project assignment conceived and developed by Hakeem Jefferson, Stanford University. Contact me in good time for deadlines on make-up work.

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to visit the Counseling and Testing Center page with tips on the [Mental Health & Wellness Resources](#) page. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- Make sure to seek help when needed. FREE counseling is available to you at the University Counseling and Testing Center. For more information, please contact the office at 337-482-6480, counseling@louisiana.edu, or stop by the Saucier Wellness Center (OK Allen Hall).

Technology: I permit laptops and other devices such as Kindles and iPads if they are being used for class-related purposes. If you are off-task (Facebook, Instagram, Myspace, Tik Tok, Neopets, Club Penguin, etc.) while on these devices, it will be deducted from your participation grade.

Coronavirus Information for Students

Fall 2022 Overview

Vaccinations Required

UL Lafayette students are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination, a physician's certification that the vaccine is medically contraindicated, or a written dissent. Learn more about the vaccination requirement.

Boosters are strongly encouraged.

Face masks recommended on campus

The University's Face Covering Policy was recently amended to recommend, but not require, that everyone wear face coverings in all indoor settings and outdoors while on University property.

A department or unit may require all individuals wear face coverings over their mouths and noses if it is determined to be necessary during a specific face-to-face course, in a specific classroom, laboratory, and/or private office/workspace, or other areas.

Additional exemptions and face covering guidelines are outlined in the policy. [Read the Face Covering Policy](#) on the University Policies website.

Courses to return to original delivery methods, employees to return to normal work schedules

The transmission rate of COVID-19 remains high in the Acadiana region and throughout the state, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Louisiana Department of Health. However, the University is seeing a decline in positivity rates among its students and employees.

This decrease, combined with the University's comprehensive testing protocols, is enabling a return to normal course delivery methods and operations. Classes that transitioned to remote learning at the start of the spring semester will begin to transition back to their original course delivery methods beginning Monday, Feb. 7. All courses should have returned to their original modes of instruction by Monday, Feb. 21. Students should check Moodle and with their professors for more details regarding when their classes will transition back.

In-person student organization events, including meetings, socials, and service projects, will continue to be allowed on and off campus provided masks are worn and proper social distancing can be maintained. Additionally, intramural sports will resume.

COVID-19 testing available on campus

COVID testing is available by appointment at Student Health Services on campus.

See a [list of other local COVID-19 testing sites](#) from the Louisiana Department of Health.

University’s COVID-19 testing strategy As of April 7, testing of asymptomatic University employees and students (regardless of vaccination status) is suspended.

Stay home if you do not feel well.

Students

Students who feel ill should stay home and call Student Health Services at (337) 482-1293 to schedule an appointment. Students are required to report illness or a known COVID-19 exposure [via the UL Lafayette Student Quarantine and Isolation form](#).

View pdfs of the CDC’s latest quarantine and isolation guidelines and what to do if you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Staff and Faculty Members

As a reminder, staff and faculty members who test positive for COVID-19 must contact their supervisors and complete the COVID-19 positive test reporting form. Additionally, faculty and staff who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must complete the COVID-19 exposure reporting form.

Reporting forms must be completed by faculty and staff who work on campus or remotely, and by those who are on leave awaiting test results.

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Yellow indicates important information

Week 1: Foundations

Wednesday, January 11th, 2023

- Introductions
- Review Syllabus

Week 2: Social Science & Comparison

Monday, January 16th, 2023

- *Reminder*
 - **MLK DAY NO CLASS**

Wednesday, January 18th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “Can you name a country?”. 2017. *Jimmy Kimmel Live*.
 - Akan Malici and Elizabeth Smith - Political Science Research in Practice (2012, Routledge). Chapter 1.
 - **Optional**. Paul, Richard and Linda Elder. “Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools”.
 - **Optional**. “How to read in college”.

Week 3: Social Science, Comparison, and the State

Monday, January 23rd, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Landman 2002 - Issues and methods in comparative politics - an introduction. Chapter 2. “How to Compare Countries”

Wednesday, January 25th, 2022

- *Before class*
 - William Roberts Clark and Matt Golder - Principles of Comparative Politics (2017, CQ Press) pg. 141-144.
 - Blaydes, Lisa. 2017. “State Building in the Middle East.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20(1): 487–504.

Note that the schedule is tentative and can be changed.

Week 4: Democracy

Monday, January 30th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Dahl, Robert Alan. 1973. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press. pg. 1-16.
 - “The U.S. Isn’t A Democracy”. 2022. *Al Jazeera*.

Wednesday, February 1st, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Boese, Vanessa A. 2019. “How (not) to measure democracy.” *International Area Studies Review* 22(2): 95–127.
 - “How democratic is your country?”. 2019. *The Economist*.

Week 5: Authoritarian Systems

Monday, February 6th, 2022

- *Before class*
 - William Roberts Clark and Matt Golder - *Principles of Comparative Politics* (2017, CQ Press). pg. 462-485.
 - *Optional*. Iran: Life Under Sanctions in 2020 - Documentary Optional.

Wednesday, February 8th, 2022

- *Before class*
 - Update: Saudi Arabia. *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*.
 - “The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia (full documentary)”. 2019. *Frontline*.

Week 6: Democratization

Monday, February 13th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Geddes, Barbara. 1999. “What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1): 115–144.
 - The Evolution of World Democracy - An Infographic Time-Lapse. 2017. *TDC*.

Wednesday, February 15th, 2022

- *Before class*
 - Apartheid Explained: Nelson Mandela’s Battle. 2021. *NewAfrica*.
 - South Africa’s Transition from Apartheid to Democracy. 2014. *SABC*.

Week 7: MARDI GRAS NO CLASS

Monday, February 20th, 2023

- *Reminder*
 - MARDI GRAS NO CLASS

Wednesday, February 22nd, 2023

- *Reminder*
 - MARDI GRAS NO CLASS

Week 8: Elections & Electoral Systems

Monday, February 27th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Bormann, Nils-Christian, and Matt Golder. 2013. “Democratic Electoral Systems around the world, 1946–2011.” *Electoral Studies* 32(2): 360–369.
 - “How do UK elections work? CNBC Explains”. 2019. *CNBC International*.

Wednesday, March 1st, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “Which voting system is the best? - Alex Gendler”. 2020. *TED-Ed*.
 - “One Vote”. 2016. *Radiolab*.

Week 9: More Elections and Midterm

Monday, March 6th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “How India runs the world’s biggest election”. 2019. *Vox*.
 - “Whose Vote Counts, Explained: Narrated by Leonardo DiCaprio”. 2020. *Netflix*.
- *Due*
 - Project proposal due
 - First set of Perusall annotations due
- *Distribute*
 - Midterm exam becomes available.

Wednesday, March 8th, 2023

- *Reminders*
 - MIDTERM STUDY DAY–NO CLASS

Week 10: Public Opinion

Monday, March 13th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Norris, Pippa. 2009. “The globalization of comparative public opinion research.” *Handbook of Comparative Politics*: 522–540.
 - “How Do Election Polls?”. 2012. *Take Part*.

Wednesday, March 15th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys — Pew Research Center
 - “Marriage equality: why an opinion poll may be more accurate than a voluntary postal vote”. 2017. *The Guardian*.
 - Khan, Omar. “The polls are ignoring a crucial factor in this election: minority voters”. 2019. *The Guardian*.
- *Due:*
 - Midterm due

Week 11: Sexuality and Gender

Monday, March 20th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Pico, Manuela L & Josi Tikuna. 2019. “Indigenous Sexualities: Resisting Conquest and Translation.” In *Sexuality and Translation in World Politics*. Edited by Caroline Cottet and Manuela Lavinias Picq. Chapter 9.
 - “Fighting for LGBT rights in Uganda”. 2020. *BBC World Service*.

Wednesday, March 22nd, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Biroli, Flávia. 2016. “Political violence against women in Brazil: expressions and definitions.” *Revista Direito e Práxis* 7(15): 557–589.
 - “Cracking the nut: female political participation in Lebanon”. 2016. *feMENA*

Week 12: Far Right, Populism, and Democratic Backsliding

Monday, March 27nd, 2023

- *Before class*
 - Lüdert, Jan. 2018. “An Alternative for Germany? Tracing Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis in a Right-Wing Populist Party”. In *The ‘Clash of Civilizations’ 25 Years On: A Multidisciplinary Appraisal*. Edited by David Orsi.
 - “Germany’s Far Right is Surging: Decade of Hate”. 2021. *VICE*.

Wednesday, March 29th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “How bad is the crisis in democracy?”. 2019. *The Economist*.
 - Mechkova, Valeriya, Anna Lührmann, and Staffan Lindberg. 2017. “How Much Democratic Backsliding?” *Journal of Democracy* 28(4): 162–169.

Week 13: Protest

Monday, April 3rd, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “How China crushed Hong Kong”. 2022. *The Economist*.
 - “Battle for Hong Kong (full documentary).” 2022. *Frontline*.

Wednesday, April 5th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “How Nigeria Became Extremely Corrupt”. 2021. *Bisi*.
 - “ENDSARS Protest In Nigeria : One Year After”. 2022. *Channels Television*.
 - **Optional**. “Nigerian End SARS Protests - If You Don’t Know, Now You Know”. 2021. *The Daily Show*.

Week 14: SPRING BREAK-NO CLASS

Monday, April 10th, 2023

- *Reminders*
 - **BREAK-NO CLASS**

Wednesday, April 12st, 2023

- *Reminders*
 - **BREAK-NO CLASS**

Week 15: Electoral & Civil Conflict

Monday, April 17th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “Tensions high in Guinea: Opposition leader claims victory in presidential election”. 2020. *DW News*.
 - Nieto-Matiz, Camilo. 2019. “Democracy in the countryside: The rural sources of violence against voters in Colombia.” *Journal of Peace Research*56(2): 264–278.

Wednesday, April 19th, 2023

- *Before class*
 - “Is Myanmar a failed state?”. 2021. *The Economist*.

Week 16: Beyond the State and Conclusions

Monday, April 24th, 2022

- *Before class*
 - Baylouny, A. M. 2020. “Authority outside the state: Non-state actors and new institutions in the middle east.” In *Ungoverned Spaces*, Stanford University Press, p. 136–152.

Wednesday, April 26th, 2023

- *Reminder*
 - Discuss final project
 - Conclusions

Remember: Final project due Friday, April 28th, 2023 by 11:59 P.M.

Remember: Final project Memo due Thursday, May 4th, 2023 by 11:59 P.M.