

“The 21st century has taught us that we cannot ignore the world around us. Happenings around the globe now directly impact our lives, and social studies teachers and students around the country face the challenge of interpreting complex, puzzling events. The AP Comparative course focuses on government and politics in other countries and provides a theoretical framework to compare political systems around the world.” – Ethel Wood

Course Description: This is a one year course designed to give students an analytical perspective on global politics. Students will focus on the governments of the United States as well as the diverse political structures of the **United Kingdom, Russia, China, Mexico, Nigeria, and Iran**. Comparisons will be made in terms of power structures, political institutions, citizen participation, political and economic change, and public policy. Students will be exposed to different theoretical and practical frameworks that are the foundations for a variety of political systems.

**Summer Assignment (Required):**

In your textbook, *Essentials of Comparative Politics with Cases* (O’Neil), read the first two chapters (pages 2-61). Complete the note sheets for each of the chapters and **bring a printed copy of your notes to class on the first day**. Note sheets are attached at the end of this assignment. **You will be assessed on this material the first day of class!**

**Summer Reading Opportunities (Optional):**

During the summer pay close attention to events in the **United Kingdom, Russia, China, Mexico, Nigeria, and Iran**. This pre-reading will help form a strong foundation for the upcoming school year. The articles should provide you with information about the political, economic, and/or foreign policy issues confronting each nation. Articles may come from newspapers, periodicals, magazines, and/or the Internet. Possible sources include but are not limited to:

New York Times – <http://www.nytimes.com/>

BBC – [www.news.bbc.co.uk](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk)

The Economist- <http://www.economist.com/>

Foreign Affairs Magazine <https://www.foreignaffairs.com>

The Wall Street Journal <http://www.wsj.com/>

The Guardian- <http://www.theguardian.com/international>

You may also enjoy the following titles, recommended from your Comparative Government teachers. They are all OPTIONAL.

Nigeria: *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Mexico: *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins

Iran: *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi; *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi

UK: *Say Nothing* by Patrick Radden Keefe

Russia: *Red Notice* by Bill Browder

China: *Land of Big Numbers* by Te-Ping Chen, *Red China Blues* by Jan Wong

General: *The Dictator's Learning Curve* by William Dobson  
 AP Comparative Government and Politics

Note Taking Outline: *Essentials of Comparative Politics, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*, By O'Neil

Chapter 1: Introduction

Questions/Summaries/ Connections	Key Terms/Notes:
<p><u>WHAT IS COMPARATIVE POLITICS?</u></p>	<p>Comparative Politics –</p> <p>Analytic Concepts –</p> <p>Methods –</p> <p>Ideals –</p> <p>Institutions –</p> <p>Politics –</p> <p>Power –</p>
<p>What are the difficulties of implementing inductive and deductive reasoning in the study of comparative politics?</p>	<p>Comparative Method –</p> <p>Inductive Reasoning –</p> <p>Deductive Reasoning –</p>
<p>When selecting cases to study, why is it important to focus on the cause and not the effect?</p>	<p>Correlation –</p> <p>Causal Relationship -</p>

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What is the difference between causation and correlation?

Selection Bias –

Endogeneity –

**CAN WE MAKE A SCIENCE OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS?**

What are the contributions of the individuals in the right column to the study of politics?

Aristotle –

Niccolo Machiavelli –

Thomas Hobbes –

John Locke –

Jean-Jacques Rousseau –

Baron de Montesquieu –

Karl Marx –

Max Weber –

In what ways did changes in countries during the second half of the 20th

Modernization Theory –

Century contradict the Behavioral Revolution's hypotheses? Why do you think this happened?

Behavioral Revolution –  
Qualitative approach vs. Quantitative approach –

Explain the call for more relevance in the study of comparative politics and what kind of impact might this have on the field as a whole?

Rational Choice or Game Theory –

**A GUIDING CONCEPT:**  
**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

Institutions –

How can a society's institutions shape a nation's form and legitimacy of government?

What role do institutions have in impacting change in a society?

How are institutions helpful when studying a society's politics?

**A Guiding Ideal: Reconciling**  
**Freedom and Equality**

Freedom –

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Explain the interconnected relationship of freedom and equality as it applies to politics and a society's focus on one idea over the other.

**IN SUM: LOOKING AHEAD AND THINKING CLEARLY:**

What can one learn from the Hedgehogs and Foxes study?

Equality –

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Chapter 2: STATES

<b>Questions/Summaries/ Connections</b>	<b>Key Terms/Notes:</b>
<p><b><u>DEFINING THE STATE:</u></b> Why does a state “need” to be armed?</p>	The State –
	Sovereignty –
<p>Identify some of the common responsibilities of the State.</p>	Regime –
<p>Explain how many revolutions are against the regime, but not the state.</p>	Regime Change –
<p>How is it that Governments can change frequently, but regimes and states often last for much longer times?</p>	Government –
	Country –
<p><b><u>THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION:</u></b></p>	
<p>Summarize contributions of the terms to the right in the process of creating the State.</p>	Agriculture –
	Domestication –

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	Property and Specialization -
	Political Organizations –
	Hobbes and the “social contract” –
	Rousseau and concept of “noble savages” –
<p><b><u>THE RISE OF THE MODERN STATE:</u></b> How did the decay of Europe during the Dark Ages lead to early political organizations?</p>	
<p>What three advantages did the state have over alternate forms of organization?</p>	Nationalism –
	Treaty of Westphalia (1648) –
<p>How did imperialism impact the creation of the modern state?</p>	

What are some of the problems that younger states face that most European states no longer face?

**COMPARING STATE POWER:**

**LEGITIMACY**

Legitimacy –

Traditional Legitimacy –

Charismatic Legitimacy –

Rational-legal Legitimacy –

“Cult of Personality” –

**CENTRALIZATION OR  
DECENTRALIZATION**

Explain the argument as why some claim that devolution leads to greater legitimacy.

Federalism –

Asymmetric Federalism -

Unitary States –

Devolution –

Strong States –



POWER, AUTONOMY AND  
CAPACITY

Weak States –

Failed States –

Capacity –

Autonomy –

IN SUM: STUDYING STATES

*Why Has Pakistan Slid Towards  
State Failure?*

