

“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). Ward students will take handwritten notes in their AP Comparative Government Composition Notebook and bring it on the first day of class. Note outlines are attached at the end of this assignment. ***These notes will be collected on 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:

BBC – 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/>

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

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

O'Neil Chapter Outlines - FWHS

Expectations for student notes:

- Handwritten in composition notebook
- Labeled with chapter number, name and big question (you may even cut and glue the outline in your composition notebook)
- **Completely and accurately express the learning objectives and vocabulary**
- Organizes information in a way that makes sense to the individual student
 - Visuals, color coding, etc.

Unit I: Introduction to Comparative Politics

O'Neil Chapter 1, pages 2-29 - Introduction

Big Question: WHAT IS COMPARATIVE POLITICS?

After reading you should be able to:

- ✓ Explain the methods political scientists use to understand politics around the world. (2-12)
- ✓ Discuss whether comparative politics can be more scientific and predict political outcomes. (12-19)
- ✓ Define the role and importance of institutions in political life. (19-22)
- ✓ Compare freedom and equality and consider how politics reconciles the two across countries. (22-29)

Vocabulary words you should focus on:

Comparative politics, analytical concepts, methods, ideals, institutions, politics, power, comparative method, inductive vs. deductive reasoning, correlation vs. causation, selection bias, endogeneity, modernization theory, behavioral revolution, qualitative vs quantitative approach, rational choice or game theory, formal and informal institutions, freedom and equality

Unit I: Introduction to Comparative Politics

O'Neil Chapter 2, pages 30-61 - States

Big Question: HOW DO COUNTRIES CREATE AND MAINTAIN POWER?

After reading you should be able to:

- ✓ Understand the concept of the state as a central institution in comparative politics. (30-33, 35)
- ✓ Explain the role of regimes in politics and define government and its relation to the state. (34-38)
- ✓ Describe the origins of political organization over time. (38-45)
- ✓ Compare different forms of political legitimacy. (46-50)
- ✓ Analyze how states can vary in autonomy and capacity and how this can shape their power. (50-61)

Vocabulary words you should focus on:

State, sovereignty, regime, regime change, government, country, origins of political organization, rise of the modern state, nationalism, Treaty of Westphalia (1648), legitimacy, traditional legitimacy, charismatic legitimacy, rational-legal legitimacy, "cult of personality", federalism, asymmetric federalism, unitary states, devolution, strong vs. weak states, failed or fragile states, capacity and autonomy