

Politics of Western Democracies
Political Science 361
Melissa Buice
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:05-8:55 a.m.
BGB101
Fall 2010

Contact Information

1017 McClung Tower
Department of Political Science
Email: mbuice@utk.edu
Course Website available through Online@UT

Office Hours

Monday and Wednesday 9-11 a.m.
OR BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a comparative overview of political systems in Western Democracies. While the U.S. is often held as “the” example of Western Democracies, in reality, institutions, electoral systems, political parties, and policies vary greatly across the modern industrialized nations. This course will provide you with detailed knowledge of these individual systems while making systematic comparisons for Western democracies.

Course Overview

The first part of the course is designed to acquaint us with the various systemic components of political systems in Western Democracies. In this section we will cover the major types of electoral systems, legislative systems, political party systems, and constitutions found in Western industrialized nations. In the second part of the course, we will switch to a policy-oriented view of politics and investigate these policies within a comparative framework—i.e. “comparing” policies within different nations. The purpose of this part of the course is to give an appreciation of the “output” side of politics; more than understanding the mechanics of how different systems work, we will be investigating the source of differences and similarities between nations in their development and implementation of policy.

Prerequisites for the Course—it is recommended that you have had either POL 101 (Intro to Politics of American Government) or POL 102 (Intro to Political Science) as a basic introduction to political science terms and concepts. However, there is no formal prerequisite for this course. Should you find you need additional resources, I recommend Marcus E. Ethridge and Howard Handelman. *Politics in a Changing World: a Comparative Introduction to Political Science*. 4th ed. University of Wisconsin Press. 2008. This is a practical, non-technical approach to basic political science.

Course Materials

Your only required purchase for this course is:

Jessica R. Adolino and Charles Blake. 2011. *Comparing Public Policies: Issues and Choices in Industrialized Countries*. Washington: CQ Press.

A large number of articles and book chapters, which will be made available on Online@utk.edu (Blackboard) **ARTICLES MARKED WITH *bb ON THE SYLLABUS WILL BE FOUND ON BLACKBOARD.**

******Please note that the readings listed on this syllabus are tentative only, and are subject to addition and change. It is your responsibility to remain up-to-date on the course as it progresses. Few changes will be made, but pay particular attention to places on the syllabus where I have noted “TBA” as it denotes possible additions to include recent developments in the policy area being discussed.*******

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be based on the following

In-Class Participation and Activities/Attendance:	10%
Mid-Term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Research Paper	30%

Attendance and Participation: In order to participate, you must be present; therefore attendance is expected at every class meeting. Missing more than three classes throughout the semester will lower your participation grade in the class by one point per day (after the initial three unexcused absences). Additionally, it is important that you engage yourself once in class; I expect students to contribute opinions and ask questions. The study of politics is precisely about participation, and therefore it can be very interesting, but you must take an active part in your education to make it so.

Naturally, as active participants in this class, you are expected to complete the daily readings **prior** to class and make informed contributions to the discussion each time we meet. This means that you will be prepared to respond to questions that I may pose in class about the assigned readings. I will post a list of key terms and questions about the readings on the course Blackboard site to assist you in preparations for regular class meetings and exams. Occasionally you will be asked to participate in class activities that will require you to work with other students during class or to prepare in advance of class to make a small presentation. Your performance on these in-class activities will be an important part of your participation grade.

Pop Quizzes: To ensure that you are keeping up with assigned readings and understanding the material, I will give a few pop quizzes over the course of the semester. Pop quizzes cannot be made up. Exceptions will only be made for students who notify the instructor in advance that

they will be absent from class, provide verification of their university-approved excuse, and receive an excused absence from the instructor for the date when the pop quiz is held. Students simply using one of their allowed unexcused absences may not make up the pop quiz. Pop quiz scores will be used in assigning the final score for the attendance and participation.

Exams: The mid-term exam will be Wednesday, Sept 24th in class, and will cover the first portion of the course. The final exam will be held **Wednesday December 8 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.** and will NOT be comprehensive, but will cover the material from the second portion of the course.

Research Paper: For this course, you will be expected to write a 7-10 page research paper that addresses some legal, political, or policy-related question relevant to the countries studied in this course. The topic may include any issue or policy area we discuss in the course, or it may include some area of interest that we do not cover, as long as it is relevant to two or more industrialized countries (examples could include gay rights, anti-drug policy, campaign spending—the possibilities are endless). If you choose some area that is covered in the course, you must go above and beyond information provided in the course for your paper. In addition, the paper must be comparative in nature; that is, it should address your topic in the context of more than one nation (at least two) and should uncover relevant details about each country that may contribute to the differences or similarities observed between countries. You will be required to submit a first draft for review and re-write. Further requirements for the paper will be discussed as the semester progresses.

Course Policies

Disabilities: Students with disabilities should feel welcome in this course. Students who have a disability that requires accommodation should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services (974-6087 or ods@utk.edu) to discuss their specific needs. Information is also available on the web at <http://ods.utk.edu/>. ODS will be able to provide you with the help you need and will provide you with documentation regarding the accommodations I need to make as the professor.

Tutoring: The **Writing Center** provides individual assistance to any student needing help with writing. The Writing Center is located at 212 HSS and the Hodges Library Commons They can be reached at 974-2611 or on the web at <http://web.utk.edu/~english/writing/writing.shtml> or via email at writingcenter@utk.edu

Educational Advancement Program is designed for students with demonstrated academic need who are also first-generation college students, from low income families, or who have physical or learning disabilities. Contact the Educational Advancement Program, 900 Volunteer Blvd., 974-7900.

The **Student Success Center** designs and implements programs that support undergraduate success and provides a comprehensive service for students who need a place to turn for academic

assistance. The center provides programs that focus on student success and serves as a single source of support to help students sort through the many campus resources and programs available, connecting students with those that will best meet their needs and academic goals. The Student Success Center website is available at (<http://studentsuccess.tennessee.edu>). The Student Success Center is housed in two convenient locations, 1817 Melrose Avenue and 812 Volunteer Blvd. Phone 946-HELP (4357) or 974-6641, e-mail studentsuccess@utk.edu, hours are 8 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Friday.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is a serious issue and will be treated as such. As a student in this course you agree to abide by the university honor statement:

“An essential feature of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Any violations of this honor statement will be dealt with to the fullest extent authorized under university policy.

Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the intellectual property of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else’s words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in the course and/or dismissal from the university. The University of Tennessee’s policies regarding plagiarism state:

“Students shall not plagiarize. Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else’s words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University.

Specific examples of plagiarism are:

1. Using without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval;
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).”

Grading: It is my desire that all students learn a lot and perform well in this course. As the instructor and the student, you and I each share part of the responsibility for achieving this goal. I will present relevant and helpful material both in class and in assigned readings; furthermore, exams and other assignments will be structured in such a way as to best ascertain your learning in this course. If you find any material unclear or confusing, please do not hesitate to ask in class, which will benefit your fellow students; or if you feel you need extra help, stop by my office hours so I can work with you in a more individualized way. The more you are willing to put into learning, the more you are likely to gain.

If you have any questions or concerns about a grade you receive in this course, do not hesitate to ask. However, be aware that when I re-grade, I look over the entire exam or assignment; therefore, re-grading may result in a grade that is higher OR lower than the original grade. Final grades in the course will be assigned according to the scale below.

A	95-100%
A-	90-95%
B+	87-90%
B	83-87%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-80%
C	73-77%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-70%
D	63-67%
D-	60-63%
F	Below 60%

Make-up Exam Policy: Students furnishing the professor in advance with a verifiable excuse (such as the death of a close relative or a university-sanctioned trip) for their absence from the exam will be permitted to take the make-up exam. Aside from students who have made such prior arrangements, **NO MAKEUPS WILL BE ALLOWED.**

Late Assignments: Assignments handed in late will be penalized by ten percentage points for each day (24 hours) that they are late. For instance, if a paper is due at 5 pm on Tuesday, a paper handed in by 5pm on Wednesday would be penalized by 10 percentage points; while a paper not handed in until Friday at 5 pm would be penalized 30 percentage points.

Blackboard/Online@UT: I will often use Blackboard to distribute assignments, study aids, and other communications. It is very important that you check the Online@UT site regularly, as announcements will be posted there. The course site can be accessed through the following link: <http://online.utk.edu>
Also, I will communicate with you occasionally via email. If you do not access your UT email account regularly, please be sure to set up forwarding. If you have questions about this, please contact the OIT help desk.

Cell Phones, Pagers, Laptops, Time Machines and Teleportation Devices: I have no rules regarding technological devices in our classroom beyond common courtesy. Remove necessary calls to outside the classroom. Do not use your devices to distract your classmates. **THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THESE RULES IS DURING EXAMS WHEN THEY ARE EXPECTED TO BE TURNED OFF AND STOWED. USE OF CELL PHONES, LAP TOPS, OR OTHER “AIDS” WILL RESULT IN CONFISCATION OF EXAMS AND FAILURE.**

COURSE SCHEDULE

SECTION I: MAKING SENSE OF THE STRUCTURE

Week 1

- 8/18 **Course Overview and Introduction**
- 8/20 **Political and Economic Dynamics in Industrialized Countries**
Reading: Chapter 3 in text (Adolino and Blake)

Week 2

- 8/23 **Constitutions**
Reading Gallagher, Laver and Mair, Chaper 4 pp86-111 *bb
- 8/25 **Executives**
Reading Juan Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism.” *bb
- 8/27 Christopher S. Allen, “The Case for a Multi-Party U.S. Parliament?” in In Christian Soe, ed., *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 2007-08*

Week 3

- 8/30 **Labor Day **No Class****
- 9/1 **Parliaments**
Reading Gallagher, Laver and Mair, Chapter 3 pp 57-70 *bb
- 9/3 **Parliaments Continued**
Reading Gallagher, Laver and Mair, Chapter 3 pp 70-85 *bb

Week 4

- 9/6 **Building and Maintaining a Government**
Readings Gallagher, Laver and Mair, Chapter 12 pp 381-421 *bb
- 9/8 **Electoral Systems**
Reading Gallagher, Laver and Mair Chapter 11 (pp 340-357) *bb
- 9/10 **Electoral Systems Continued**
Gallagher, Laver, and Mair Chapter 11 (pp 357-370) *bb

Week 5

- 9/13 **Political Parties**
Reading *Gallagher, Laver and Mair, Chapter 10 **bb*
- 9/15 **Party Families: The Left**
Reading *Gallagher, Laver, and Mair Chapter 8 pp 230-240 *bb*
- 9/17 **Party Families: The Right**
Reading *Gallagher, Laver, and Mair Chapter 8 pp 240-262 *bb*

Week 6

- 9/20 **Cleavages and Sources of Conflict**
Readings *Gallagher, Laver, and Mair, Chapter 9 pp. 263-285 *bb*
- 9/22 **Cleavages and Sources of Conflict**
Readings *Gallagher, Laver, and Mair Chapter 9 pp 285-306 *bb*
- 9/24 **Mid-Term Exam**

SECTION II: POLICY FORMATION IN WESTERN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES

Week 7

- 9/27 **The Policy Process**
Readings *Introduction and Chapter 1 in text (Adolino and Blake)*
- 9/29 **The Policy Making Context**
Readings *Chapter 4 Text (Adolino and Blake) pp 77-95*
- 10/1 **Immigration Policy**
Readings *Chapter 5 text (Adolino and Blake) pp 100-123*

Week 8

- 10/4 **Immigration Policy Continued**
Readings *Chapter 5 text (Adolino and Blake) pp. 123-159*
- 10/6 **Immigration Policy Terminated –In Class Discussion/Debate**
Readings *TBA*
- 10/8 **NO CLASS Fall Break**

Week 9

10/11 **Fiscal Policy**
Readings Chapter 6 (Adolino and Blake) pp. 159-174

10/13 **Fiscal Policy**
Readings Chapter 6 Text (Adolino and Blake) pp. 174-198

10/15 **Fiscal Policy**—In Class Discussion
Readings TBA

Week 10

10/18 **Taxation Policy**
Readings Chapter 7 Text (Adolino and Blake) 198-214

10/20 Taxation Policy
Readings Chapter 7 Text (Adolino and Blake) pp 214-234

10/22 Taxation Policy Terminated **First Draft of Research Paper Due In Class**
Reading TBA

Week 11

10/25 **Health Care Policy**
Readings Text Chapter 8 (Adolino and Blake) pp. 234-249

10/27 **Health Care Policy**
Readings Text Chapter 8 (Adolino and Blake) pp. 249-278

10/29 **Health Care Policy Terminated**
Readings TBA

Week 12

11/1 **Social Policy**
Readings Text Chapter 9 pp 278-296

11/3 **SOCIAL Policy Continued**
Readings Text Chapter 9 pp. 296-315

11/5 **Social Policy terminated**—In Class Discussion/Debate
Readings TBA

Week 13

11/8 **Education Policy**
Readings Chapter 10 Text 321-334

11/10 **Educational Policy**
Readings Chapter 10 Text 334-355

11/12 **Educational Policy Terminated**—In-Class Discussion
Readings Chapter 10 Text 355-364

Week 14

11/15 **Environmental Policy**
Reading Chapter 11 Text 364-379

11/17 **Environmental Policy**
Reading Chapter 11 Text 379-396

11/19 **Environmental Policy Terminated**—In-Class Discussion/Debate
Reading Chapter 11 Text 396-412

Week 15

11/22 **The Future of Western Democracies**
Reading Gosta Esping-Anderson, “Toward the Good Life, Once Again?” in Gosta-
Esping-Anderson, ed, *Why We Need a New Welfare State*, Chapter 1 **bb

11/24 **Gender Policy**
Reading Gosta Esping-Anderson, “A New Gender Contract” in Gosta Esping-
Anderson, ed. *Why We Need a New Welfare State*, Chapter 3 **bb

11/26 Thanksgiving Break**NO CLASS**

Week 16

11/29 **Last Day of Classes ***RESEARCH PAPER DUE****

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 8th, 8:00-10:00 a.m.