

## Colonnade Program Course Proposal: Explorations Category

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1. What course does the department plan to offer in Explorations? Which subcategory are you proposing for this course? (Arts and Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Natural and Physical Sciences)

PS260: Comparative Politics: Social and Behavioral Science, Subcategory B

2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives of the appropriate subcategory. Please address **all** of the learning outcomes listed for the appropriate subcategory.

Learning Objective 1: Demonstrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

This course uses theories, concepts and tools of the social and behavioral sciences to examine the relationship between the individual, society and the state. In PS260, students examine the development and operation of different forms of political systems and analyze the consequences of these systems for citizens in terms of human rights, equality, political participation and economic development. This course requires students to compare elements of democratic and authoritarian rule, and introduces students to key concepts such as state building, power and authority, nationalism, political violence and underdevelopment.

Learning Objective 2: Apply knowledge, theories, and research methods, including ethical conduct, to analyze problems pertinent to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

PS260 introduces students to a range of theories within the discipline that relate to democratization, human rights, state building, nation building, revolution and political violence, economic development and policymaking. Students examine key historical and contemporary issues and explore in-depth case studies in order to compare and contrast political systems around the globe and to develop standards with which to evaluate and measure their performance.

Learning Objective 3: Understand and demonstrate how at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences conceptualizes diversity and the ways it shapes human experience.

This course considers some of the major issues that concern the study of politics including the significance of nationalism, gender, religion, political culture and imperialism on the development and operation of political systems. Students will study the role played by institutions, interest groups and political parties in determining civil rights, civil liberties and social policy.

**Learning Objective 4:** Integrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences into issues of personal or public importance.

This course utilizes different theories, ideologies and comparative tools to address key issues of democracy, political violence and development. PS260 requires students to examine why some regimes are successful in the provision of rights, services, security and economic growth and why others are not. The analysis of the outputs and performance of different regimes provides the comparative tools with which to assess and evaluate the performance of one's own political system. "He who knows England," goes an old saying, "knows England not." Why? Surely, if we immerse ourselves in the history, politics, culture and economy of England, we will come to know it. However, without comparative study it would be impossible to know what factors were unique to England. Furthermore, how can we evaluate our own state without knowledge of alternatives?

**Learning Objective 5:** Communicate effectively using the language and terminology germane to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

This course introduces students to key concepts such as "power," "revolution," "Liberal," "Conservative," "socialist," "legitimacy" and "democracy." Students identify and examine the components and meanings of such terms so that they can utilize them in their comparison of various regimes and apply them appropriately to policies and processes within and between political systems.

3. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for course. NOTE: In multi-section courses, the same statement of learning outcomes must appear on every section's syllabus.

Students will be able to

- Describe the field of comparative politics and comparative political analysis.
- Define key institutions and processes and make comparisons across different types of political systems.
- Design basic comparative research, identifying independent and dependent variables as related to comparative politics theory and concepts.

4. Brief description of how the department will assess the course for these learning objectives.

The Department of Political Science will establish an assessment committee to evaluate the effectiveness of PS260 in meeting the stated learning objectives. Each academic year, the committee will collect a random selection of research papers and examinations with all identifying student information removed. The committee will assess these samples following the course outcomes:

4 = outstanding (far exceeds expectations)

- 3 = good (exceeds expectations)
- 2 = average (meets basic expectations)
- 1 = poor (does not meet basic expectations)

The committee's targets are:

- 70% of the work will score 2 or higher.
- 30% of the work will score 3 or higher.

5. How many sections of this course will your department offer each semester?

2-3

6. Please attach sample syllabus for the course. See below.

Political Science 260 – Introduction to Comparative Politics

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PS 260 Introduction to Comparative Politics fulfills General Education requirements for Social and Behavioral Sciences, category “C.” (an understanding of society and human behavior).

**General Education Goal(s) Met by the Course:**

- The capacity for critical and logical thinking;
- An appreciation of the complexity and variety in the world’s cultures;
- An understanding of connections between past and present;
- An understanding of society and human behavior.

This course emphasizes critical analysis of different forms of political systems, their development and their operation. Students will examine democratic and authoritarian regimes and the relationship between the individual and the state. Students will also study the role played by institutions, interest groups and political parties within various states and forms of economic operation. Students will examine the strengths and weaknesses of particular forms of democracy and analyze transitions to democracy, state building and economic development.

Overview

How and why do they do that? This course provides an introduction to the politics of selected countries around the world, from advanced industrial democracies to developing countries and authoritarian regimes. We will examine the similarities and differences between political and economic systems (for example, institutions, elections, participation and civil rights) which will provide greater insight into the world around us as well as our system of government.

Students will learn the strengths and weaknesses of democratic and non-democratic systems, of the challenges of development and of the impact of systems (for example parliamentary and presidential) on political outcomes.

Students will be able to

- Describe the field of comparative politics and comparative political analysis.
- Define key institutions and processes and make comparisons across different types of political systems.
- Design basic comparative research, identifying independent and dependent variables as related to comparative politics theory and concepts.

Students will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss each assigned topic.

Required Readings

Patrick O’Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 4th Edition, Norton 2013

Patrick O'Neil, et al, *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 4th Edition, Norton 2013  
*The Economist*. Students should go to [www.economistacademic.com](http://www.economistacademic.com) and purchase an individual subscription for \$19.95. My faculty ID number is 1175.

### Course Requirements

Students will attend class, read assigned readings and participate in class discussion. Students will complete two midterm examinations (short essay and identification questions), a final examination and write a short comparison paper. For the paper each student will apply a current issue (of a state not talked about in class) from *The Economist* to one of the five themes of the textbook.

Students will also complete several short quizzes.

First Examination 20%

Second Examination 20%

Quizzes 20%

Paper 10%

Final Examination 30%

Grading Scale: A = 90% or higher; B = 80 to 89%; C = 70 to 79%; D = 60 to 69%; F = 59% and Lower Although not a formal part of the grade, class participation is strongly encouraged as it is an essential element of the course and attendance and participation will benefit those students with a borderline grade.

Make-up examinations will only be given with the prior approval of the instructor and late papers

(without prior approval) will be penalized. Any form of academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Students found guilty of such actions will receive a zero for the work in question and also be subject to university disciplinary procedures.

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in DUC A-200 of the Student Success Center in Downing University Center.

Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

### Course Outline

March 11-15 Spring Break

**First Examination February 28**

**Second Examination March 28**

**Paper Due April 18**

**Final Examination May 7, 1:00-3:00pm**

Week 1 Introduction, the state (O'Neil 1-3)

Week 2 Democracy (O'Neil 5-6,8)

Week 3 continued

Week 4 United Kingdom (Cases 2) and parliamentary systems  
Week 5 France and presidential systems (Cases 4)  
Week 6 Germany and federalism – legacy of history (Cases 5)  
Week 7 Japan and corporatism (Cases 6)  
Week 8 Transitions to democracy and capitalism (O’Neil 9) – Central and Eastern Europe  
Week 9 Russia (Cases 7); Revolution and Protest (O’Neil 7)  
Week 10 China (Cases 8), Economic reform without political reform?  
Week 11 Development and dependency (O’Neil 10) – Nigeria (Cases 14)  
Week 12 Political Economy (O’Neill 4)  
Week 13 Iran (Cases 10)  
Week 14 India (Cases 9) – poverty, populism and religion  
Week 15 Mexico (Cases 10) – political culture