

## PSC/IR 101 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor: Bing Powell (Email: gb.powell@rochester.edu)  
MWF 10:25-11:15

Fall 2020

**Objective.** This course is an introduction to the study of political science and comparative politics. We focus on how citizens may be able to use elections to control public policies in different modern democracies. We begin, in Module 1 by briefly applying some of these ideas to the American political system. We then turn explicitly to the politics of contemporary Britain (Module 2), Russia (Module 3) and Germany (Module 4). We shall be comparing these political systems with the US, with each other, and occasionally with other countries.

**Organization.** The course meets three times a week. Mondays and Wednesdays will be devoted primarily to (on line) lectures and Fridays usually to discussion--of both lectures and reading. We hope that these discussions will be in person, with opportunity for remote participation also. You will be assigned to a specific discussion section; all discussion sections meet on Friday, most at the regular class time. The syllabus indicates the main themes of the two lectures and required readings for that week. A midterm examination on Oct. 14 covers lectures and required reading to that point, including all of US, Britain and Northern Ireland. In the period after the midterm we shall turn to Russia and Germany. There is an optional quiz after the six lectures on each of these latter countries. Details to be announced. The final examination covers all lectures and required reading; it will be scheduled by the Registrar, probably Tuesday December 15. The announced date cannot be changed.

**Grades.** Grades will be based on the midterm examination (20%), two brief **optional** quizzes (10 % each,) class discussion (10%,) and the final examination (50%). Skipping a quiz increases the midterm and final weights by 5% each. Students interested in writing an optional paper (for 25% of final course grade), about ten pages long, applying the concept of citizen control/influence through elections to another country, should schedule a Zoom meeting with Professor Powell. Only papers on this topic are acceptable. It is acceptable to use other countries in the text. Papers due last day of classes, Wednesday December 9.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information available: [www.rochester.edu/college/honesty](http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty) Be prepared to sign Honor 12 792 reW\*nBT/F-9(a)4(s)DCer o.



Week	Lecture/Discussion Themes	Assigned Reading
Aug 26	<b>Introduction</b> - Democratic Systems	Syllabus; CPT Ch.1, 6. (CPT, Ch.2, skim)
Aug 28	<b>Mod 1, Lec 1</b> --Comparing Democracies	CPT, Ch 5: 86-94; Powell, "Elections."
Aug 31	<b>Mod 1, Lec 2</b> --U.S.A. in Comparative Perspective: Culture, Constitution, Policymaking	CPT Ch 3:39-46; Ch. 18: Kousser US esp. 611-616, 607-611, 629-632.
Sept 2	<b>Mod 1, Lec 3</b> --USA: Parties, Polarization, Citizen Control	CPT Ch 18: Kousser, US, 616-638; And Blackboard: Balz, "Race in American
	Politics"	
Sept 4	Section Meetings Begin	Discuss: Congruence, Inclusiveness, Citizen Control in US
Sept 7	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY - NO LECTURE	
Sept 9	<b>Mod 1, Lec 4</b> --Globalization Backlash 2016 :Trump & Brexit	Blackboard: Clarke, "Why Britain Voted Brexit;" CPT, Ch. 1, p.14; Ch 6, p.127.
		[OPTIONAL Blackboard: Rodrik
	"Globalization/Populism"]	
Sept 11	Sections 912 0 0 1 2019	Disc: US Globalization and Populism (Trump & Brexit)
Sept 14	<b>Mod 2, Lec 1</b> --Britain as Majoritarian Democracy	CPT, Ch. 7: Rose, "Britain," 143-153, 161-164. Ch.5, 99-102.
Sept 16	<b>Mod 2, Lec 2</b> --British Political Culture	CPT, Ch. 7, esp. 133-142, 153-157 (Reread Ch.3)
Sept 18	Sections	Discuss: British political system (Compare to US)
Sept 21	<b>Mod 2, Lec 3</b> --Britain: Party Competition	CPT, Ch. 7, "Britain," 161-4,157-9; Ch 4, 73-8
Sept 23	<b>Mod 2, Lec 4</b> --Britain: Issues, Voters, Elections	Blackboard: The 2019 British Election
Sept 25	Sections	Discuss: British party competition; elections 2015-





