

**Last updated: Friday 19 August, 2016**



Faculty of Social Sciences  
School of Political Studies

HON SEM COMPARATIVE POLITICS  
POL4350A  
Emily Regan Wills  
Fall 2016

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## Course Hours

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Friday 11:30 - 14:30

Location: FSS-7003

Type: SEM 1

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## Professor

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Emily Regan Wills (emily.wills@uottawa.ca)

**Phone Number:**

**Office Hours**

Friday 09:30 - 11:25

Location: FSS 7065

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## Course Description

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Advanced synthesis and critique of the main debates and analytical approaches in the field of comparative politics. (COMP)

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## General and Specific Objectives

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- To explore in depth three major areas of focus in comparative politics: political economy, institutions, and identities.
- To study in detail monograph-length works of political science, and become familiar with the demands, requirements, and structure of such work.
- To gain a full and rounded understanding of what comparative politics is, how it intersects with other fields of political study, and what it can teach us about the world.

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## Course Learning Outcomes

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**Upon completion of the course, student will be able to :**

synthesize material from long texts with greater facility

demonstrate improved knowledge and understanding of the field of comparative politics

demonstrate improved knowledge and understanding of multiple areas in world politics

conduct research and write academic papers with greater facility

feel more confident at public speaking and presenting

## **Required Material**

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There are three required books for this course:

- Tyson, Vanessa C. (2016) *Twists of Fate: Multiracial Coalitions and Minority Representation in the US House of Representatives*. Oxford UP.
- De La O, Ana Lorena. (2015) *Crafting Policies to End Poverty in Latin America: The Quiet Transformation*. Cambridge UP.
- Wedeen, Lisa. (2008) *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*. University of Chicago Press.

All three books are available for purchase at Benjamin Books, 122 Osgoode Street. In addition, copies of Tyson and Wedeen have been put on hold at Morisset Library. De La O is available digitally through the library's website. Finally, I own hardcopies of all three books, and they may be borrowed from me for 3 hour periods when I am in my office; please contact me to make arrangements.

## **Evaluations**

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### **Participation**

**Evaluation Date:** Ongoing

**Evaluation Percentage:** 15%

Attendance at every class session is required. Students who are going to miss class should let me know in advance if possible, and we can determine what work is necessary to make up for any absence. (You don't need to bring me doctors' notes or other evidence of reason for absense; you're adults, and I trust you. But you need to make up the work, regardless of the reason for your absense.)

Participation means active engagement in the ongoing process of the class. It means coming to class having done the reading and having reflected on it enough to participate in a conversation about it. It means listening attentively when others are speaking. It means answering questions posed by others. It means posing questions and offering analysis of the topics under discussion. It means not disrupting the conversation with your behavior or your comments. The purpose of seminar-style classes is to make you be an active participant in your learning and the learning of your colleagues. If you are nervous about speaking in public, consider this a good space to practice.

### **Response Papers and Presentations**

**Evaluation Date:** Ongoing

**Evaluation Percentage:** 40%

You will write two short response papers over the course of the term. They will each be 3-5 pages long, and must move beyond summarizing the texts to make an argument about their content. They must end with three discussion questions. Papers must be circulated, via Blackboard, to the entire class by Thursday at 5pm. Then, in class, you will give a 10 minute presentation about the readings. These can lean more towards summary, but you should make it a point to introduce your argument

and your questions. To receive the best possible mark, you should not read your response paper aloud; you are also allowed to talk about things in a different order, or to bring up points you didn't have room for in your paper.

Each response paper/presentation will be worth 20% of your final grade. The grade will be balanced between the written and presented version.

## **Written assignment (e.g. essay, term paper)**

**Evaluation Date:** Final Exam Period

**Evaluation Percentage:** 45%

Research Paper: Each student will choose a topic in comparative politics (that is, the domestic politics of countries other than Canada, and/or a comparison of the domestic politics of multiple countries) and will write a term paper of 17-20 pages (exclusive of bibliography) on that topic. Term papers must defend a thesis using evidence, and must cite the scholarly literature on the topic.

The process of the research paper will involve four parts:

**Proposal:** Students must propose the topic they wish to cover, state a preliminary argument about it (you are welcome to change this based on your data), and give a preliminary bibliography of 5 scholarly sources on the topic (which must consist of peer-reviewed journal articles or books from university or other scholarly presses). These are due by midnight on October 14, by email to me, and will be returned on October 11. These will count for 5% of your final grade.

**Meeting:** You must meet with me to discuss the content of your paper and how your research is going. These meetings will be held during the week of November 11; we will sign up for times to meet during class on November 4. Your attendance and level of preparation will count for 5% of your final grade.

**Presentation:** You will present your paper to the class at the last class session, December 2.

Presentations should be no more than 10 minutes in length, with time for questions and comments from your peers after. Presentations will be worth 5% of your final grade.

**Paper:** The paper will be due on December 22, by email or in person. It will be worth 30% of your grade.

## **Instructional Approach**

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This class is a seminar. That means that the primary means of learning for all participants will be discussion. The priority will be on hearing everyone's voices, debating and interrogating the texts that we read, and trying to make connections. The principle on which we proceed is that all of us, professors and students, have valid and interesting insights to offer to the conversation, and that there should be room for all of them, but also that disagreement about the questions we discuss can be productive, as long as it is respectful.

## **Course Calendar**

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Friday 9 September, 2016	First class. Introduction of books and syllabus; discussion about the nature and problem of 'comparative politics.'
Friday 16 September, 2016	NO CLASS. Students should use the time to get the reading done.
Friday 23 September, 2016	Reading: Twists of Fate, Chapters 1-3.

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Friday 30 September, 2016	Reading: Twists of Fate, Chapters 4-6.
Friday 7 October, 2016	Reading: Crafting Policies 1-3.
Friday 14 October, 2016	Reading: Crafting Politics 4-6.
Friday 21 October, 2016	Reading: Crafting Policies 7-8
Friday 4 November, 2016	Reading: Peripheral Visions Intro, 1
Friday 11 November, 2016	Reading: Peripheral Visions 2, 3
Friday 18 November, 2016	Reading: Peripheral Visions 3, 4
Friday 25 November, 2016	Reading: Peripheral Visions 5, Conclusion
Friday 2 December, 2016	Final class: Student Presentations, discussion.

# **Plagiarism**

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## **Beware of academic fraud!**

Academic fraud is an act by a student that may result in a false evaluation (including papers, tests, examinations, etc.). It is not tolerated by the University. Any person found guilty of academic fraud will be subject to severe sanctions.

Here are some examples of academic fraud:

- Plagiarism or cheating of any kind;
- Present research data that has been falsified;
- Submit a work for which you are not the author, in whole or part;
- Submit the same piece of work for more than one course without the written consent of the professors concerned.

Please consult [this webpage](#): it contains regulations and tool to help you avoid plagiarism.

An individual who commits or attempts to commit academic fraud, or who is an accomplice, will be penalized. Here are some examples of possible sanctions:

- Receive an “F” for the work or in the course in question;
- Imposition of additional requirements (from 3 to 30 credits) to the program of study;
- Suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.

You can refer to the regulations on [this webpage](#).

## **Student Services**

## [Academic Writing Help Centre](#)

At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer.

In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- Master the written language of your choice
- Expand your critical thinking abilities
- Develop your argumentation skills
- Learn what the expectations are for academic writing

## [Career Services](#)

Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of work.

## [Counselling Service](#)

There are many reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Study skills counselling

## [Access Service](#)

The Access Service acts as intermediary between students, their faculty and other University offices to ensure that the special needs of these students are addressed and that the best possible learning conditions are being offered.

Note that the University of Ottawa is affiliated with [AERO](#) and [ACE](#) services for the adaptation of accessible academic materials for students with perceptual disabilities. If you have any questions, please contact the [Accessibility Librarian](#) or the [Access services](#) for textbooks.