CPO 6038 - Political Development

Section: 0001

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2026
Class Meeting Days: W
Class Meeting Time: 06:00PM - 08:50PM
Class Meeting Location: TCH 0257
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Name: Andrew Boutton
Office Location: HPH 302
Office Hours
Tues 1-2:30pm & Wed 4-5:30pm
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Course Description

CPO 6038 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Political Development: PR: Admission to graduate degree-seeking program, or C.I. Analyze the political determinants of economic development and the economic causes of political outcomes such as democratization. Occasional.

This course will focus on the origins and development of states, societies, and political institutions. We will try to explain what makes some countries stable, prosperous, and democratic, while others remain violent, impoverished, or authoritarian (or all three). The geographic scope of this class will be global, but slightly unbalanced. Many of the examples will be drawn from Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, although there will be plenty on Asian cases, plus historical state development in Europe and the United States. The topics covered in this class are relevant to many of the social sciences. Readings will come from multiple subfields of political science, but also from other disciplines, such as economics, history, anthropology, geography, and sociology. By the end of this class, students will have a good understanding of how states, institutions, and societies emerge and develop to curb violence and promote prosperity, as well as how institutions decay and order collapses. You will also be able to think critically about why some paths and policies lead to function and others to dysfunction.

Finally, recurring theme throughout this course will be the gap between research and policy. As you read and think about the material, it would be useful to consider 1) why academic research fails to inform policy actions in many cases; 2) how this gap manifests itself; and 3) what, if anything, can be done to construct a more symbiotic relationship between the academic and policy worlds.

Required Course Materials and Resources

None

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Requirements:

Students are expected to: 1) *physically* attend all class meetings (as this is an in-person class, there will be no ZOOM or remote accommodations); 2) read assigned material prior to the start of each meeting, and be prepared to contribute meaningfully to the discussion of the material during class; 3) submit discussion questions based on the readings the night before class; 4) complete a number of substantive and written assignments, discussed in greater detail below.

This class is worth 700 points, which you can earn by completing the assignments below. Your final grade will be based on the percentage of the 700 points that you earn.

Attendance and participation (300 points)

In-class participation

This is a seminar, not a lecture. While I will generally guide the discussion (typically alongside two students; more on this below), I will not spend time lecturing, and I want you to do most of the talking. Thus, the quality of the class is dependent upon students actively engaging the material along with the instructor and other students. Therefore, students should read the required material *closely* before each class meeting, and come to class prepared to break down each reading in excruciating detail and contribute meaningfully to the discussion.

Weekly discussion questions

As part of the participation grade, each student will submit---by 11:59 PM the night before class, via the Webcourses discussion feature---three questions drawn from that week's reading. Students should view these questions as a partial basis for their contribution to the in-class discussion that week. These could be real questions (e.g. "What did Powell mean when he said X?" "How does this theory account for case Y"?) or merely observations intended to spark discussion (e.g."I think Brooks' observation is exactly right" or "Kalyvas is dead wrong here"). While you only need to submit three questions, the more of these points you have written down before class, the more interesting and productive our discussions will be. The questions you submit will be accessible to everyone before class, and the discussion co-leaders should also use them as a partial guide when structuring the discussion.

Below is a list of things you might consider while going through the readings, preparing for in-class discussions, and writing your response papers (more on these below):

- Working through the logic of the argument and research design, identifying flaws and areas for improvement
- Is the question important? Does it contribute to our knowledge of security studies?
- What do the data look like? Does the measurement of key variables actually capture the concepts we're interested in?

- Discuss the testable implications of the theory.
- Assess the quality of main empirical finding; Can we be confident in the results based on the research design employed? Do the results support the theory?
- Connections--if any--with research we've already covered in class and with other research in the field.
- What case(s) don't fit the conclusions or theoretical assumptions, and why? How could you amend the theory to accommodate this data?
- What is the real-world importance of the research? Should those in the policy community be made aware of these findings? How could the conclusions be applied to contemporary conflicts or other security issues?
- Think about the readings as a whole: Why do they agree or disagree? What are the reasons for different findings and/or conclusions?
- What is the next step in this research agenda? Propose something: it doesn't have to be right, just plausible. If you could have any type of data, what question would you try to answer as an extension of this research?

A few things to avoid doing in discussions and response papers:

- Summarize the readings. Assume that we are all at least familiar with them, in which case too much summarizing is pointless. Ideally, summary should comprise at most 1/8 of your presentation, and should consist of little more than identifying the motivating question or argument, describing the research design, and highlighting the most important findings or conclusions.
- Rip apart the readings exclusively. Criticism certainly has its place in a seminar, but it is most productive when tempered with recognition of the contribution a piece of research makes to the overall debate.

Keep these guidelines in mind when reading for class, response papers, and during in-class discussions. As always, I encourage you to see me, or otherwise let me know, if I can answer any questions about the readings or provide guidance on any of the points above.

Short response papers (4 @ 50 points each = 200 points)

To help you think critically about the material we cover, you will prepare a number of 500-word thought papers conducting critical analyses of articles or chapters we read. These papers should help you to crystallize your thoughts on particular readings and will serve in part as a basis for your contribution to the seminar discussion that week. You must turn in 3 of these over the 15 weeks of the semester. You may choose any piece in a given week to write on, but you can do no more than one analysis per week. These reviews are due at the beginning of class the week we discuss the applicable reading, although I encourage you to turn in the reviews early when you can, as this will allow me to guide the discussion to cover points that may be of interest or that need to be emphasized. Students should be prepared to talk about their arguments in the seminar as appropriate.

These reviews should contain a commentary or critique of one of the week's readings (you may also choose to write about more than one reading if you'd like). It should not summarize them, but rather engage the material meaningfully and critically analyze it from the perspective of theory, logic, design, method, evidence, conclusions, other research, and/or its overall contribution to international relations research. This critique could take several forms. It could directly critique the arguments or methods in a stand-alone fashion, for instance by discussing why the measures or methods used do not serve to prove the author's point, how they misinterpret the evidence, or why their argument omits some important factor(s) that would call into question their conclusions.

Alternatively, your critique could compare or tie the work into other literature that we have discussed, and comment on how other literature/insights could improve the piece. You may provide some insight into other readings by showing how the central piece is connected to them, but be careful not to stray too far from a central focus on one piece. Finally, your paper could suggest questions or issues raised by the piece that must be analyzed further, for instance alternative hypotheses, alternative theoretical perspectives, or suggest comparisons to other readings that would prove valuable. This analysis should be written in the spirit of constructive criticism - you should identify a weakness or problem in the piece and then offer suggestions about how to improve it. To be successful, your paper will not just throw stones or raise complaints. The first paragraph of your response paper should make clear the central theme of your response/commentary, and you should continue to work that theme throughout the remainder of the paper.

Note that in general an academic review contains three sections: 1) a brief summary of the major theory, method(s), and evidence; 2) a critique of the work on its own terms (i.e., does it answer the question it asks, is the method used correctly, is the evidence convincing, what improvements could be made); 3) a critique of the work from a broader perspective (i.e., is the question important, is the method the right one to use, does it tie into other work, what contribution does the book make). In general, follow the discussion leader guidelines above. Because these are intended to be short reviews, I do not expect you to deal with each of these elements completely, but keep them in mind as another guide.

Final project & presentation (400 points)

TBD

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%
D-	61-63%
F	0-60%

Policies for Course Grade

Missed/Late Assignments

Assignments can be submitted late but will accrue a 15% penalty each day after the due date.

Disability Access & Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing equal access to all students with disabilities (ADHD, learning disabilities, Autism, chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, etc.). To receive consideration for reasonable disability-related course accommodations, disabled students must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and complete the steps required for SAS to review accommodation requests. More information can be found on the UCF Student Accessibility Services website under the Start Here tab or by contacting SAS directly (Ferrell Commons 185; sas@ucf.edu; Phone - 407-823-2371).

Approved accommodations are shared with course instructors via the SAS Course Accessibility Letter. Implementing certain accommodations may require discussion about specific considerations of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course challenges experienced by the student. While students with disabilities or chronic health needs are also encouraged to discuss any course concerns with professors in addition to contacting SAS, professors are not required to facilitate disability-related adjustments to the course unless the professor has received a Course Accessibility Letter from SAS that outlines approved accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

1. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assessment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree

requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

2. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.
3. Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.
4. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule*. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designated on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a

leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on access and community engagement, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – ONAC – Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced discrimination by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance via the ONAC website or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line either anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or by using the online form. UCF

cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active-duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make arrangements.

Campus Safety

At UCF's Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF Classroom has an Emergency Procedure Guide posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY**. When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.
    - **DEFEND**. When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.
- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty, and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and

text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete this activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Class Schedule

Week	Topic
1	Course intro
2	What are states and why do we have them?
3	The earliest states
4	War & state formation
5	State formation without war
6	Historical legacies, pt 1: Violence & slavery
7	Historical legacies, pt 2: Colonialism
8	Geography
9	Natural resources
10	Spring Break
11	Institutions
12	Autocracies
13	The emergence of democratic institutions
14	Is democracy in decline globally?
15	Presentations
16	Presentations