Welcome to the UGA Spring Study Abroad
Introduction to Comparative Politics
INTL 3300 (3 credits)

This is a sample syllabus intended as a general guide only and deviations may be necessary (a final syllabus will be included in the course-book or available by contacting the office)

Lead Instructor: TBA
Program Director: Dr. Michael Tarrant, Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, UGA, tarrant@uga.edu
Office Address: Discover Abroad
Building Four, Suite 102
Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
Athens, GA 30602-2152
Telephone: 706-542-9713
Website: www.discoverabroad.uga.edu
Contact Email: discoverabroad@uga.edu

Course Description

This course serves as the foundation for your study of global issues and comparative politics. Given the context within which you will be learning, the course will focus on the following three learning pillars:

1. Identifying relationships between human beings and the environment that they live in;
2. Understanding core theories, concepts and critical thinking skills related to the study of global issues;
3. Analyzing domestic political structures and international relations issues in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Because our class meetings will be relatively small, they will take on the form of a graduate seminar. This means that we will have extensive discussion and debate every time we get together. In this environment, student involvement and preparation is paramount. Of course you will be very busy during the time we are together, but I do expect that you will take the time to be ready for each of our meetings. Above and beyond your duty to master the specific materials that are assigned, your most important task is to develop a strong analytical and theoretical background that will allow you to intelligently assess a wide range of developments in the world around you. In other words, our goal is to develop a set of intellectual tools that you can use in this course, your other INTL courses, and even after you graduate from UGA.

Course Objectives

The course is organized around five themes.

PART 1: NATION, STATE, and NATION-STATES

PART 2: THINKING ABOUT DEMOCRACY

PART 3: COMPARING DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS
• Watch the Video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Uk44aykGg4

PART 4: GEOPOLITICS IN OCEANIA AND ASIA

PART 5: OCEANIA AS A FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE FOR THE UNITED STATES

Course Credit

Credit is offered for 3 semester hours at the undergraduate level (3300) in INTL (International Affairs).

Prerequisites

INTL 1100 is a prerequisite to this course, but may be waived at the instructor's discretion. Some activities will require a level of physical exertion and may span a broad climatic gradient requiring certain gear (refer to the Program Manual).

Attendance

Punctual attendance at all scheduled program–related activities is required, including group meetings, discussions, field excursions, as well as lectures and any other scheduled activities. Participation in educational field activities (such as hiking, snorkeling, swimming, etc.) is voluntary and at the discretion of the student; however, should you wish not to participate you must inform the instructor and an alternate non-field activity will be assigned. An excused absence or decision not to participate in one or any of these field activities will not affect your course grade. During the field studies, no student may leave the group without the consent of the faculty supervisor. Unless an absence is approved by one of the instructors, students will lose 10% of their final grade for each day or part-day they fail to participate. Unexcused absences or chronic late arrival to program activities may be grounds for dismissal from the program (refer to the Program Manual for further details).

Late and Missed Assignments

Because of the nature of this course and the tight schedule, assignments are not accepted late without prior approval from the instructor.

Academic Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in the University’s Culture of Honesty policy (www.uga.edu/honesty). All students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The penalties for academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) award of
a failing grade for the course, suspension, notification placed on the student’s transcript of their having been found guilty of cheating, and expulsion from the university, and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the University Academic Policy Panel.

Special Accommodations

Any student(s) who require special accommodation(s) or other requirements in this course must contact the instructor before or at the UGA on-campus orientation and register with UGA Disability Resource Center (www.drc.uga.edu). Some activities include moderate exercise, such as hiking and snorkeling.

Course-book


2. Collection of readings and course material. Download from UGA e-Learning Commons (www.elc.uga.edu) prior to departure. The files will be available approximately four weeks prior to the start of the program and you should not expect to be able to download the materials easily or cheaply once in country.

Course Requirements

Field modules (40%)

The field modules are location-based questions to be answered as individually written 250-word essays, peer-reviewed essays, group debates, site quizzes, and/or research projects (due at intervals throughout the program – see the Itinerary). Refer to the Field Modules Introduction and Overview for details on assessment expectations and submission requirements for each of the various forms of modules.

Participation (20%)

We will spend much of our time engaging in classroom discussion and debates. Your participation grade will be based on your overall contribution to the course and will be evaluated based on quality and quantity. Only students who consistently offer thoughtful comments in class will receive full credit. Each session will contain a period during which a small group of students will lead the rest of the class in discussion. A significant portion of your class participation grade will depend on your performance in these sessions. Those students not leading the presentation are expected to participate in an open discussion of the selected themes.

Final exam (20%)

The final exam will count towards 20 percent of your grade and it will contain both multiple choice and short answer questions. Exam material will be drawn from the following: lecture notes, assigned readings, class discussions, and any other supplementary materials. One piece of advice: Do the required readings, participate in class and you will be very well prepared for the final.

Writing Assignment (20%)

You will complete a 4000-word essay addressing a topic to be decided upon by student and instructor. The essay is to be 500 typed words (excluding references and any appendices) in Arial 9.5 point font (single-
spaced) and emailed as one electronic (Word or .pdf) file (titled “your last and first name graduate credit”) to the instructor within four (4) weeks (28 days) of the completion of the program in-country. (Failure to meet a pass grade for the assignment(s) and/or submit the assignment(s) by the due date may result in an incomplete grade.) Include the date, as well as your first and last name on the header of the file.

Grade Assessment

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

- A 93 – 100 percent
- A- 89.5 – 92.9 percent
- B+ 87 – 89.4 percent
- B 83 – 86.9 percent
- B- 79.5 – 82.9 percent
- C+ 77 – 79.4 percent
- C 73 – 76.9 percent
- C- 69.5 – 72.9 percent
- D 59.5 - 69.4 percent
- F below 59.4 percent

Course Itinerary

Refer to the sample itineraries available online. Final itineraries will be distributed on arrival in-country or contact the office for the most recent version.