

PS101: INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh
 Spring Semester 2009
 Class meets T/TH ~ 9:40-11:10
 North Halsey 260

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course in Comparative Politics, one of the four major sub fields in Political Science. Comparative Politics is concerned with the study of domestic politics in countries other than one's own (American Politics is its own sub field of Political Science). Across the semester we will confront a number of fundamental questions in the study of politics: What is the relationship between political and economic freedom and between those freedoms and equality? How do states emerge and endure? How do government choices produce more (or less) equitable societies? What explains (and contains or promotes) political violence? How do we get and sustain democracy in countries as diverse as Iran, South Africa, Russia, the United States, India, and the United Kingdom? We will explore the three central conceptual approaches used in Comparative Politics to research and answer these kinds of questions (the institutional approach, the structural approach and the cultural approach).

The course has three main goals: (1) to introduce you to the major conceptual approaches used in Comparative Politics and Political Science generally; (2) to systematically and critically examine political experiences in countries outside the United States using the comparative method; and (3) to provide you with analytical, critical thinking and writing skills that will contribute to your liberal arts education.

COURSE POLICIES

Readings: The following package of texts published by Norton has been ordered by the bookstore for purchase:

Text: Patrick O'Neil. 2007. *Essentials of Comparative Politics* 2nd ed.

Reader: Patrick O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski. 2006. *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2nd ed.

Case Book: Patrick O'Neil, Karl Fields, Don Share. 2006. *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 2nd ed.

**Additional materials as needed are provided on D2L*

Your Learning Environment: All readings listed in the syllabus are required readings. In addition to your personal interest in a good grade, it is in your collective interest as a class that you *complete all assigned readings before the class meeting, attend all class meetings, and participate actively*. Lectures are designed to *complement, not summarize*, the reading material. You are responsible for the information, ideas and concepts given in both the readings and lectures.

Read actively ~ There is a good deal of reading in this class and some of the reading is quite challenging. One of the important lessons of college is to learn how to read and synthesize

information quickly (and how to appropriately skim for content, ideas and evidence). Take notes on your reading, *keep a list of key terms and definitions* (particularly from the Text), and write down questions you may have while reading. In the reader, you will want to *pick out each author's individual argument*. Each reading adopts a different perspective and conceptual approach on the topic at hand. These readings represent prominent thinkers in the field and illustrate ongoing provocative debates about topics in Comparative Politics.

There will be **10 reading quizzes**. The format (multiple choice, short essay, group quiz, etc.) will vary throughout the semester. Quizzes count for 15 % of your grade and cannot be made up (unless the absence is “university approved” and documented as such). I will *drop your lowest two quiz grades of the ten*.

Come to class and participate in class discussion ~ this class covers a good deal of material and some of the readings will be challenging; *you cannot do well if you don't come to class AND do the readings*. I expect that you attend class, keep up with the readings, ask questions, *think*, and participate in your own learning. Participation is worth 10% of your final grade. If you miss *a class or two* it will not affect your overall grade. Students will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of their voluntary comments in class, on their ability and willingness to answer involuntary questions posed by the professor and fellow students, and on their performance on in-class activities. Repeated absences thus reflect poorly in your participation grade.

Please observe common sense classroom etiquette ~ Turn off and put away your cell phone and/or iPod. Do not text in class. If you use a laptop to take notes, sit where it least disrupts others (along the edge). Bring your readings and notes to class with you. Treat others with respect and be respectful of differing opinions and attitudes.

Exams: There is **one midterm exam and one final exam** representing 35% of your final grade. The midterm and the final will consist of multiple choice questions based on readings, lectures, quizzes and discussion. The final exam includes additional questions drawing across the course. I will distribute a review sheet to you one week in advance of exams so you will have an idea of what to expect.

Writing: There are three short writing assignments. These are explained and discussed at length in class. Together the papers are 30% your final grade.

Grading: Final Grades will be calculated using UWO's 93/90/87 grading scale as follows:

Participation and attendance:	10%
Geography Quiz	10%
Reading quizzes (10):	15%
Mini-papers (3):	30%
Exams (2):	35%

You may check your grades on D2L at any time; I try to have quiz, exam and assignment grades posted promptly. You may also challenge your grade, though only in writing (typed).

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty: “*Academic Honesty* is fundamental to the University, and academic misconduct is taken very seriously. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, *for the appropriate citation of sources*, and for respect of others’

academic endeavors” (UWS, 14.01, emphasis added). *Plagiarism is using someone else’s ideas, words, theories, evidence, findings, argument, etc. and passing them off as your own by not properly attributing or acknowledging the original source of those ideas.* Students may inadvertently plagiarize when they fail to provide page numbers for quotations in a paper, when they paraphrase or summarize the work of others with out acknowledging the source in the text of their paper. **Plagiarism in its many forms is wrong, unethical and dishonest.** At minimum plagiarism in this course will result in a failing grade on the assignment and may result course failure and academic expulsion. If you are unsure whether or not what you have written constitutes plagiarism, please ask.

Citations: In all of your written work for this course you need to appropriately cite your sources (even course material) *using the American Political Science Association (APSA) citation style*, including in-text citations. I have provided you with a chapter outlining the APSA format on D2L – you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the APSA citation style and using it properly – if you have questions just ask.

Excused absences, make-ups and late work: Make-up exams, quizzes, and other work must be requested and arranged with me prior to the date of the assignment; make-ups and excused absences require *documented evidence of medical necessity or an approved college-sanctioned event.* I do accept late work, but only with a *heavy penalty.* To avoid late assignments and penalties: get started early, come see me about your paper direction and ideas if your stuck, give yourself plenty of time for writing and *rewriting*, and avoid procrastinating. Late papers are penalized one third grade for each day they are late (i.e. a B would become a B-, then a C+, etc.). Note: you are always better off submitting something rather than nothing, even if it’s late!

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Thur. September 10th

Text: Chapter 1 “Introduction”

Tues. September 15th

Reader: Lichbach and Zuckerman “Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics”

Reader: Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote “Why Doesn’t the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?”

States and Nations

Thur. September 17th

Text: Chapter 2 “States”

Reader: Zakaria “A Brief History of Human Liberty”

Tues. September 22nd

Reader: Herbst “War and the State in Africa”

Reader: Rotberg “The New Nature of Nation-State Failure”

Reader: Goldstone “States, Terrorists, and the Clash of Civilizations”

Thur. September 24th

Text: Chapter 3 “Nations and Society”

Reader: Snyder and Ballentine “Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas”

Tues. September 29th

Reader: Juergensmeyer “The New Religious State”

Reader: Huntington “The Clash of Civilizations?”

Reader: Sen “Civilizational Imprisonments”

Political Economy (How social structures matter)

Thur. October 1st

Text: Chapter 4 “Political Economy”

Geography Quiz

Tues. October 6th

Reader: Lipset “Economic Development and Democracy”

Reader: Skocpol “France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions”

Political Institutions

Thur. October 8th

Text: Chapter 6 “Democracy”

Reader: Schmitter & Karl “What Democracy Is ... and Is Not”

Tues. October 13th

Reader: Lijphart “Constitutional Choices for New Democracies”

Political Culture

Thur. October 15th

Reader: Putnam “Tuning In, Tuning Out,”

Reader: Berman “Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic”

Tues. October 20th **MIDTERM**

Paper 1 due (1 page article summary)

Comparing Advanced Democracies: UK and the US Compared (How institutions matter)

Thur. October 22nd

Text: Chapter 7 “Advanced Democracies”

Case Book: Chapter 2 “United Kingdom”

Webcast: *Question Time with the PM (in-class)*

Tues. October 27th

Case Book: Chapter 3 “United States”

Thur. October 29th

D2L: “The Case for a Multi-Party U.S. Parliament?”

Reader: (REVIEW) Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote “Why Doesn’t the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?”

Non-Democracies: Iran in comparative context

Tues. November 3rd

Text: Chapter 5 “Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism”

Reader: Diamond “Thinking about Hybrid Regimes”

Thur. November 5th

Case Book: Chapter 9 “Iran”

Reader: Fish “Islam and Authoritarianism”

Overcoming (or not) communism: Russia and China Compared (How culture matters)

* Note: Monday November 9, 2009 is the 20th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. There are events all day in Reeve associated with the Berlin Wall. You may earn extra credit for attending one of these events.

Tues. November 10th

Text: Chapter 8 “Communism and Post-Communism”

Reader: Marx “Manifesto of the Communist Party”

Paper 2 Due (2 page article critique)

Thur. November 12th

Case Book: Chapter 6 “Russia”

Film (watch in class): “*Soviet disunion, ten years which shook the world*”

Tues. November 17th

Reader: Przeworski “The Fall of Communism”

Reader: Bunce: “Rethinking Recent Democratization”

Thur. November 19th

Case Book: Chapter 7 “China”

Tues. November 24th

Reader: Buruma “What Beijing Can Learn from Moscow”

Reader: Pye “Traumatized Political Culture”

Thanksgiving Recess begins after evening classes on November 24

South Africa and India Compared (Development and Divided Democracy)

Tues. December 1st

Text: Chapter 9 “Less-Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries”

Reader: Pritchett “Divergence, Big Time”

Reader: Collier & Gunning “Why Has Africa Grown Slowly?”

Reader: Galbraith “A Perfect Crime”

Thur. December 3rd

Case Book: Chapter 12 “South Africa”

Tues. December 8th

Case Book: Chapter 8 “India”

Thur. December 10th

Reader: (REVIEW) Lijphart “Constitutional Choices for New Democracies”

Week 14: Review and exam

Tues. December 15th

Case Book: Chapter 1 “Introduction”

Paper 3 Due (3-5 page persuasive essay)

Thur. December 17th ***FINAL EXAM***