

COMPARATIVE POLITICS
PSCI 3350
Fall 2010

Course Information

Course Number/Section: PSCI 3350/001
Course Title: Comparative Politics
Term: Fall 2008
Days & Times: Mon, Wed, Fri 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.
Location: SOM 2112

Contact Information

Instructor: Adam Yeeles
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Office: Green Hall 3.318
Office Hours: MW 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of comparative politics. Using the tools of social science we will examine the major questions in comparative politics and the best answers the field has to offer to those questions. For example, what is the state and where did it come from? Why are some countries democratic, while others are authoritarian? Why does the United States have a two-party political system at the federal level, while Canada has a multiparty system? Is oil wealth incompatible with democratic rule? Why have the sub-Saharan countries in Africa been unable to develop economically while the Asian “Tigers” have experienced impressive growth rates? These and similar questions are the substance of comparative politics as a subfield of political science.

As an introduction to comparative politics, this course provides an overview of the major approaches, theories, substantive issues and debates within the comparative politics subfield of political science. Traditionally, this has been a diverse subfield of political science and encompasses a wide range of topics. Although we cannot possibly consider all of the possible areas of study, the course is structured thematically in order to develop a broad perspective on the various research topics being pursued within comparative politics. We will examine country cases as they relate to broader themes and key concepts, including democratization, the state, institutions, political culture, civil society, and political economy.

Student Learning Objectives

Participants in this course will be introduced to an analytic framework for making sense of both historical and contemporary events in countries around the globe. Students will develop an understanding of:

- the major methodological and theoretical approaches to comparative politics
- the key concepts comparative politics, including democratization, the state, institutions, political culture, civil society, political economy
- the political characteristics of a select number of countries

Required Textbooks and Materials

The following books can be purchased from the University bookstore or any online source:

O' Neil, Patrick. 2009. Essentials of Comparative Politics, 3rd Edition. W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN 978-0-393-93376-5 (Essentials).

O' Neil, Patrick and Ronald Rogowski. 2009. Essential Readings in Comparative Politics, 3rd Edition. W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN 978-0-393-93401 (Readings)

Suggested Course Materials

I would also like you to regularly read newspapers and news magazines to keep abreast of current events relevant to the course. Although the course is not structured around current events, we will make use of both contemporary events and history to explore different theories and approaches. With respect to newspapers, I recommend the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Financial Times, The International Herald Tribune, and the Christian Science Monitor. Recommended news magazines include The Economist, US World and News Report, Time Magazine, etc. Although standard news programs on ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox News, CNN, and PBS are appropriate choices, foreign sources such as ABC (Australia), BBC, Sky News, CBC, frequently cover different events and perspectives. I encourage you to explore these different sources to obtain a variety of perspectives.

Grading and Course Policies

Course grades will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Final Exam	30%
Map Quizzes	15%
Attendance & Participation	25%

Grades are based on the standard grading scale: A= 100-90, B=89-80, C=79-70, etc., with pluses/minuses at the instructor's discretion.

Mid-Term Exams: Two *in-class* midterm exams will be given during the semester on *September 20* and *November 1*. The exams will cover material from both the readings and class lectures.

Final Exam: The final exam is scheduled for Friday, December 10, 2010, at 11:00 a.m. The exam will be cumulative in nature, and will cover all material from the course (lectures, discussions and readings).

Map Quizzes: The world consists of approximately 190 states, many of which we may not be familiar with. To introduce students to the basic geography of the world system, there will be 3 – 5 short map quizzes given throughout the semester.

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend all classes. Attendance will be taken randomly throughout the semester by asking students to sign an attendance sheet or complete short, *non-graded* assignments. Thus, class participation will include (a) attendance, (b) participation in class discussion, (c) and any other short assignments given throughout the semester.

Makeup Exams & Grade Appeals

Make-up exams will only be granted if prior arrangements have been agreed upon or in event of extreme emergency. In both cases, appropriate documentation must be provided. If you miss a mid-term exam for an unexcused reason, you may replace that zero with the grade from the final exam. If you miss more than one exam, you will receive a zero for the additional missed exam. If you have any questions regarding a grade on an assignment, please wait until 24 hours after receiving the assignment before discussing the grade with the instructor. If you wish to challenge a grade on any written assignment you must do so by writing a memo specifying the reason you believe the assignment should be re-graded. Grade appeals must be made within one week of receiving the graded assignment.

Readings & Assignments

Part I: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Week One (August 23 – 27): What is Comparative Politics?

Essentials - Chapter 1

Readings

- Lichbach & Zuckerman “Research Traditions and Theory in Comparative Politics: An Introduction. . .” (Chapter 1)
- King, Keohane and Verba “The Science in Social Science” (Chapter 1)

Last Day to Drop Class without “W” – September 3

Week Two (August 30 – September 3): States

Essentials – Chapter 2

Readings

- Weber. "Politics as a Vocation" (Chapter 2)
- Juergensmeyer. "The New Religious State" (Chapter 2)
- Herbst. "War and the State in Africa" (Chapter 2)
- Rotberg. "The New Nature of Nation-State Failure" (Chapter 2)

Articles

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Peter R. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191

Labor Day - No Class on Monday, September 6

Week Three (September 7 – 10): Nations and Societies

Essentials – Chapter 3

Readings – Chapter 3

- Hobsbawm, Eric. "Nationalism" (Chapter 3)
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations?" (Chapter 3)

Week Four (September 13 - 17): Political Economy

Essentials – Chapter 4

Reading – Chapter 4

- North, Douglass C. – "Institutions" (Chapter 4)
- Acemoglu, Daron – "Root Causes: A Historical Approach to Assessing the Role of Institutions in Economic Development" (Chapter 4)

Mid-Term Exam 1: Monday, September 20

Part II: Political Institutions

Week Five (September 22 -24): Democratic Regimes

Essentials – Chapter 5

Readings

- Zakaria, Fareed. "A Brief History of Human Liberty" (Chapter 5)
- Schmitter, Philippe C. and Karl Schmitter – "What Democracy Is ... and Is Not" (Chapter 5)
- Lijphart, Arend – "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies" (Chapter 5)
- Lipset. "Economic Development and Democracy" (Chapter 7)

Week Six (September 27 – October 1): Democratic Institutions

Readings

- Duverger. "The Number of Parties." (Chapter 7)

- Iversen and Soskice. "Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions" (Chapter 7)

Articles

Brian O'Neal. "Electoral Systems." May 1993. Canadian Library of Parliament, Parliamentary Information and Research Service. BP-334E. (19 pgs).

Juan Linz. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy*. 1.1: 51-69.

Week Seven (October 4 – 8): Issues in Advanced Democracies & Election Simulation

Essentials – Chapter 7

Readings

- The Economist. "Is Government Disappearing?" (Chapter 7)

Additional reading TBA.

Week Eight (October 11 – 15): Authoritarian Regimes

Essentials – Chapter 6

Readings

- Linz, Juan J. and Alfred Stepan. "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes." (Chapter 6)
- Diamond, Larry – "The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State" (Chapter 6)

Week Nine (October 18 – 22): Communism and Post-Communism

Essentials – Chapter 8

Readings

- Marx. "Manifesto of the Communist Party" (Chapter 8)

Additional reading TBA.

Week Ten (October 25 -29): Less-Developed and Developing Countries

Essentials – Chapter 9

Readings

- Easterly. "To Help the Poor" from *The Elusive Quest for Growth* (Chapter 9)
- Collier and Gunning. "Why has Africa Grown Slowly?" (Chapter 9)
- Pritchett. "Divergence, Big Time" (Chapter 9)
- Barro. "Democracy: A Recipe for Growth?" (Chapter 9)
- Przeworski et. al. "Political Regimes and Economic Growth" (Chapter 9)

Mid-Term Exam 2: Monday, November 1

Part III: Politics in Action

Week Eleven (November 3 – 5): Political Transitions and Democratization

Readings

- Bunce, Valerie. “Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Post-Communist Experience (Chapter 8)
- McFaul, Michael. “Transitions from Postcommunism” (Chapter 8)

Articles

Patrick Bond and Richard Saunders. “Labor, the State, and the Struggle for a Democratic Zimbabwe.” *Monthly Review*. 57 (7).

Week Twelve (November 8 – 12): Political Violence

Essentials – Chapter 10

Readings

- Crenshaw, Martha – “The Causes of Terrorism” (Readings – Chapter 10)
- Fearon, James and David D. Laitin – “Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War” (Chapter 3)

Week Thirteen (November 15 – 19): Non-Violent Dissent and Social Movements

Readings

- Skocpol, Theda. “France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolution (Chapter 10)
- Berman, Sheri. “Islamism, Revolution, and Civil Society” (Chapter 10)

Additional readings TBA

Week Fourteen (November 22 – 24): Political Development and Peacebuilding Simulation

Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class, November 26

Week Fifteen (November 29 – December 3): Globalization

Essentials – Chapter 11

Readings

- Krasner, Stephen D. “Sovereignty” (Chapter 2)
- Hoffman, Stanley. “Clash of Globalizations” (Chapter 11)
- Florida, Richard. “The World is Spiky: Globalization Has Changed the Economic Playing Field, but Hasn’t Leveled It” (Chapter 11)
- Bhagwati. “In Defense of Globalization” (Chapter 11)

Review for Final Exam (December 6)

Reading Days

Final Exam: 11:00 a.m., Friday, December 1

University Policies and Procedures

All University policies and procedures also apply to this course. They may be found at:
<http://provost.utdallas.edu/home/syllabus-policies-and-procedures-text>

These descriptions and timeline are subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.