



Course PSCI 3350: Comparative Politics
Professor Harold D. Clarke
Teaching Lu-Chung Dennis Weng
Assistants Yunda Eddie Feng
Term Spring 2014
Meetings M. W., 11:30 AM to 12:45 PM, JSOM 2.115

Professor

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Course Objectives:

Comparative politics is both a subject and a method for understanding politics. As a subject, comparative politics is the study of different political systems and their major components. As a method, it is a way of trying to establish and test general suppositions about certain political phenomena. In this undergraduate course, students will be introduced to historical contexts, governance arrangements, political parties, and various types of political behavior across various democratic countries.

During the semester, we will introduce some fundamental political themes, such as political systems, political participation, and major variations among nations as well as explanations for the differences. We will attempt to answer questions such as, why are some nations democratic, while others are authoritarian? Why are some governmental agencies more powerful than others? Why do citizens in certain countries participate in politics more than in other countries? At the end of the course, students should be able to analyze political events, drawing on the theoretical explanations provided in the class.

Required Textbook:

Whiteley, Paul, Harold D. Clarke, David Sanders and Marianne C. Stewart. 2013. *Affluence, Austerity and Electoral Change in Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Note: available as a Kindle book on Amazon.

Recommended Readings:

Dalton, Russell. 2014. *Citizen Politics* (6th Edition). Washington, D.C.: C.Q. Press.

Clarke, Harold D., Kornberg, Allan and Scotto, Thomas J. 2009. *Making Political Choices: Canada and The United States*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Additional readings and other course materials will be assigned and placed on eLearning for students to download.

Grading:

Three Tests (multiple-choice)

30% each, 90% combined of Total Grade

The tests will cover lectures, readings, and current events. Students need to bring their own Scantron Forms 882-E on test days. All the tests will be closed book, closed note, and in-class.

There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical emergency.

Attendance/Class Participation

Attendance will be taken daily. You may miss up to **three** class sessions without penalty to your grade. You are responsible for all of the materials discussed in class and all of the assigned readings.

10% of Total Grade, with deductions for more than three absences

-2% for 4-5 absences

-4% for 6-7 absences

-6% for 8-9 absences

-8% for 10-11 absences

-10% for 12 or more absences

Grade Scale:

A+: 97-100; A: 93-96%; A-: 90-92; B+: 84-89%; B: 78-83%; B-: 72-77%; C+: 67-71%;

C: 64-66%; C-: 60-63%; D+: 57-59%; D: 54-56%; D-: 50-53%; F: Below 50%

Course Schedule

Part I: What is Comparative Politics?

01/13 Monday: Introduction to the Course

01/15 Wednesday: Political Systems in Comparative Perspective

Reading: Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, chs. 1, 2.

Part II: North America

01/20 Monday: Martin Luther King Day (No Class)

01/22 Wednesday: U.S. Elections & Political Parties

Reading: "Political Choices in Hard Times: Voting in the 2010 U.S. House Elections"
(On eLearning)
"Between Barack and a Hard Place: The 2012 U.S. Presidential Election"
(On eLearning)

01/27 Monday: U.S. Elections & Political Parties

Reading: Clarke, Kornberg and Scotto, *Making Political Choices: Canada and the United States* chs. 5, 8
(On eLearning)

01/29 Wednesday: In-class screening of *Recount* (Jay Roach, 2008)

02/03 Monday: Finish in-class screening of *Recount*, Class Discussion

02/05 Wednesday: Politics in Canada: Introduction

Reading: *Making Political Choices*, "Two Democratic Polities," Appendix to ch. 1
"Winners and Losers: Voters in the 2011 Federal Election"
(On eLearning)

02/10 Monday: Politics in Canada

Reading: *Making Political Choices: Canada and the United States* ch. 2
(On eLearning)

02/12 Wednesday: Canada—Citizens and Community: Regime and Community Support

Reading: Clarke, Kornberg and Wearing, *A Polity on the Edge*, ch. 4
(On eLearning)

02/17 Monday: Review for Test #1

02/19 Wednesday: Test #1

Part III: Europe

02/24 Monday: Politics in Britain: Introduction

In-class screening of *The Deal* (Stephen Frears, 2003)

02/26 Wednesday: Politics in Britain: Finish screening *The Deal* and class discussion
Parties and Voting

03/03 Monday: Politics in Britain

Reading: *Affluence, Austerity*, chs. 2, 3

03/05 Wednesday: In-class screening of *The Special Relationship* (Richard Loncraine, 2010)

03/10 Monday: Spring Break

03/12 Wednesday: Spring Break

03/17 Monday: The 2010 British General Election

Reading: *Affluence & Austerity*, chs. 4, 5

03/19 Wednesday: Finish in-class screening of *The Special Relationship*; class discussion

03/24 Monday: The 2011 Referendum on the Alternative Vote

Reading: *Affluence & Austerity*, ch. 7

03/26 Wednesday: The Politics of Austerity—The Coalition in Power

Reading: *Affluence & Austerity*, chs. 6, 9

03/31 Monday: Review for Test #2

04/02 Wednesday: Test #2

04/07 Monday: Politics in France

Reading: TBA

04/09 Wednesday: Politics in Germany

Reading: Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, ch. 5

04/14 The Politics of Happiness

Reading: *Affluence & Austerity*, ch. 8

Clarke, "Modeling Life Satisfaction in Global Perspective"

(on eLearning)

04/16 Monday: Politics in Taiwan

Reading: Yun-han Chu and Jih-wen Lin, 2001. "Political Development in 20th-Century Taiwan: State-Building, Regime Transformation and the Construction of National Identity." *The China Quarterly*, No. 165, Taiwan in the 20th Century, pp. 102-129. (On eLearning)

04/21 Wednesday: Comparing Taiwan and Western Countries.

Reading: Gunter Schubert, 2004. "Taiwan's Political Parties and National Identity: The Rise of an Overarching Consensus". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 44, pp. 534-554.

(On eLearning)

Ho et al., 2013, "Valence Politics and Electoral Choice in a New Democracy: The Case of Taiwan, *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 32, pp. 476-81."

(On eLearning)

04/23 Wednesday: In-class screening of *Please Vote for Me* (Chen Weijun, 2007)

04/28 Monday: Review for Test #3

04/30 Wednesday: Test #3

NOTE: In addition to the above, students are expected to:

- (a) know that this syllabus, including the calendar, is subject to change at the discretion of the professor;
- (b) access and read related policy material at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>