Political Science 120, Comparative Political Regimes

Spring 2001

SYLLABUS

Professor Norm Vig
Phone: x-4120
Office Hours: 2:00-4:00 p.m. T, Th

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to political science by studying the basic nature of political regimes. What is the difference between democratic and authoritarian systems of government? What variations are there within each category? How do political systems change or "develop" over time? What are the problems in making transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes? What social, economic or cultural conditions are necessary for stable democracy? The course will examine the following topics in detail: differences between European and American systems of constitutionalism and representative democracy; European integration; the development and breakdown of communist regimes; and the search for democracy in Russia and Nigeria.

Readings and Requirements

The following texts are available for purchase in the bookstore and should also be on closed reserve in the library:

- Achebe, A MAN OF THE PEOPLE
- Caporaso, THE EUROPEAN UNION
- Kesselman, et al., INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS, 2 ed.
- Soe, COMPARATIVE POLITICS 2000/01
- Solzhenitsyn, ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVICH

Other assigned readings are also on closed reserve or handed out in class. The following are on reserve:

- Eckstein & Apter, COMPARATIVE POLITICS: A READER
- Vig & Stiefbold, POLITICS IN ADVANCED NATIONS

Students are expected to read assignments before class and may be called upon for discussion. There will be two short papers, a mid-term exam, and a two-hour final exam. The papers will count 30%, the mid-term 30%, the final exam 30%, and class participation 10% of the grade.

Assignments

1. INTRODUCTION: STUDYING COMPARATIVE POLITICS

A. Studying Comparative Politics

- M Mar 26 Introductory meeting
- W Mar 28 Approaches to comparative politics - Kesselman, pp. 3-25
- F Mar 30 Democracy as a Concept - Soe, 114-120, 225-231

B. Development of Political Regimes

- M Apr 2 America v. Europe -Vig & Stiefbold , 147-78
- W Apr 4 Modernization and authoritarian regimes - Vig & Stiefbold, 203-32

https://acad.carleton.edu/curricular/POSC/classes/Posc120/S01/index.html
II. POLITICS IN POSTINDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES

A. Great Britain

M Apr 16 British political development - Kesselman, 28-50

W Apr 18 No class

F Apr 20 British constitutional system - Kesselman, 50-70; Soe, 23-28, 40-41

*first paper due in class*

M Apr 23 The Blair revolution - Kesselman, 70-77; Soe, 18-22, 29-36

B. France

W Apr 25 The French state and political economy - Kesselman, 80-104

F Apr 27 The Fifth Republic - Kesselman, 104-132, Soe, 51-62

M Apr 30 Mid-term break - No class

C. Germany

M May 2 German political regimes - Kesselman, 134-70

W May 4 Current German politics - Kesselman, 170-86; Soe, 42-50

M May 7 * Mid-term exam * - all of above

III. THE END OF NATIONALISM? THE EUROPEAN UNION

W May 9 The problem of social integration - Caporaso, 1-41, Soe, 141-48

F May 11 The democratic deficit - Caporaso, 42-113; Soe, 149-54

IV. TRANSITIONS FROM COMMUNISM TO DEMOCRACY: RUSSIA TO THE SOVIET UNION AND BACK

M May 14 Russian and Soviet political development - Kesselman, 426-436

W May 16 The Soviet breakdown - Kesselman, 436-51

F May 18 The new Russian regime - Kesselman, 452-72

M May 21 The current crisis - Kesselman, 472-83; Soe, 166-73

*second paper due in class*

V. COLONIALISM, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA
W May 23 Nigerian state building - Kessleman, 545-574

F May 25 Nigerian political culture - Achebe, *Man of the People* (entire)

M May 28 From the First to the Fourth Republics - Kesselman, 574-605

**VI. GLOBALIZATION, CAPITALISM, AND DEMOCRACY**

W May 30 Globalization and cultures - Soe, 214-222, 236-40

Final exam (covers Parts III-VI of the course)