

Spring 2007 - POSC 120 Comparative Political Regimes

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Class Loc: Willis Hall 211
Class Hours: MW 8:30-9:40, F 8:30-9:30
Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:00, and by appt.



Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the study of comparative politics. Comparative politics is one of four primary subfields within the discipline of political science (the others are American politics, international relations, and political theory/philosophy). Practitioners of comparative politics typically focus on comparing political regimes of countries other than the U.S. (often comparing them to the U.S. and others). While the comparative method is obviously a central tenet of comparative politics, it can be and is used as an analytical tool in other subfields as well. In this course we will examine different regime structures and their effect on both political process and outcome, both domestically and internationally.

Expectations and Evaluation:

Your grade will be weighted as follows:

Participation: 15%

For all of us to get the most out of this course, your attendance and participation are vital. Therefore contribution to class discussions is required and, in conjunction with attendance, makes up part of your final grade. Reading assigned materials before class sessions will help you understand class discussions better, and you will be responsible for knowing the material covered in the readings in addition to what is discussed in class.

Quizzes/Short Exams: 40%

There will be three quizzes/short exams covering the readings and in-class activities – they will be a mixture of identification/definition, multiple choice, and short essays. The first two are each worth 12.5% of the course grade and will take less than a full class period, the third is worth 15% of the course grade and will take the entire last class session.

Papers: 30%

You will write two five-page papers on specific assigned topics -- one will be a comparative analysis of a particular issue, and the other will be an in-depth analysis of a journal article. You will receive a handout with more about these during the second week of class.

Group Project: 15%

You will participate in a group research project and presentation in the latter half of the term. You will write up a 3-4 page summary of your role. You will receive a handout with more about the project and presentation expectations during the third week of class.

Accommodation of Special Needs:

If you have a documented physical or learning disability that will affect your ability to complete the assignments in this class in a timely manner, I will make accommodations for you. If you need extra time or assistance in completing assignments, you must tell me during the first week of class.

Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

While incorporating the thoughts of others into your work is allowed (and required when you write your papers!), you must be sure to give credit where it is due. Any quotations must be clearly marked and correctly cited, and ideas or concepts you have gotten from the work of others must also be cited. If you are unsure how to properly cite sources in your work see me, and I will be glad to help you. Presenting the work of others as your own (without citation) is plagiarism – that is, cheating, and will result in a failing grade for the course.

In addition, anyone found cheating on a quiz or exam will also fail the course. If you need help, ask me. Do not engage in academic dishonesty of any type – if in doubt, don't do it (or ask me for clarification).

Readings:

The texts listed below will be the primary readings for the course. There are also readings on the syllabus that are on e-reserve. You are required to obtain and read those as well as the readings from the purchased texts. There will be other readings during the semester – these will largely be topical in nature (often from *The Economist*, an excellent magazine if you are interested in international affairs), and will provide a springboard from which we can discuss the theories we are studying in the context of current events. I may also occasionally provide supplementary readings if I feel they are necessary. These readings may be made available via e-reserve, and may also be distributed in class or on Collab.

Required purchase texts:

Doing Comparative Politics. Lim, Timothy C. (2006). Lynne Reinner Publishers. ISBN: 1588263452 pbk (referred to as **DCP** in the course outline).

Readings in Comparative Politics. Kesselman, Mark, and Joel Krieger (2006). Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0618426256 pbk (referred to as **Readings** in the course outline).

Course Outline:

CLASS DATE	READING ASSIGNMENT	TOPIC / NOTES
Mon, Mar 26	Syllabus Overview Course Introduction	What do we mean by politics? By comparative politics?
Wed, Mar 26	DCP Chapter 1: Introduction Readings preface and Chapter 1 introduction	Doing comparative politics
Fri, Mar 30	DCP Chapter 2: Comparing to learn	Methods and logic of comparison
Mon, Apr 2	DCP Chapter 3: Thinking Theoretically	Theory's role
Wed, Apr 4	Fukuyama, Readings 1.1 Huntington, Readings 1.2 Barber, Readings 1.3	Theory's role
Fri, Apr 6	Dahl, Readings 4.1 Schmitter & Karl, Readings 4.2 Sen, Readings 4.3	Comparative democracy
Mon, Apr 9	DCP Chapter 6: What makes a democracy?	Comparative democracy
Wed, Apr 11	Bunce, Readings 4.5 O'Donnell, Readings 4.6 Carothers, Readings 4.7	Comparative democracy
Fri, Apr 13	Gourevitch, Readings 3.1 Sen, Readings 3.2 Coates, Readings 3.3	Development and governing the economy QUIZ ONE
Mon, Apr 16	DCP Chapter 4: Why are poor countries poor?	Development and governing the economy
Wed, Apr 18	DCP Chapter 5: Why is East Asia rich?	Development and governing the economy
Fri, Apr 20	DeSoto readings (four short, one longer), e-reserve	Development and governing the economy
Mon, Apr 23	Treisman, Readings 3.4 Ross & Chan, Readings 3.5 Stiglitz, Readings 3.6	Development and governing the economy
Wed, Apr 25	DCP Chapter 7: What makes a terrorist?	Terrorism; motives and responses ANALYSIS PAPER DUE
Fri, Apr 27	Tilly, Readings 2.1 Marx, Readings 2.2 Levitsky & Way, Readings 2.3	Terrorism; motives and responses

CLASS DATE	READING ASSIGNMENT	TOPIC / NOTES
Mon, Apr 30	MID-TERM BREAK	MID-TERM BREAK
Wed, May 2	Creveld, Readings 2.4 Rotberg, Readings 2.5	Terrorism; motives and responses
Fri, May 4	Civil Liberties; For Whom the Liberty Bell Tolls; Response Threat to Democracy, e-reserve	Terrorism; motives and responses
Mon, May 7	DCP Chapter 8: What makes a social movement?	Social Movements & Identity QUIZ TWO
Wed, May 9	Norris & Inglehart, Readings 5.1 Benhabib, Readings 5.2 Winant, Readings 5.3	Social Movements & Identity
Fri, May 11	Wilensky, Readings 5.4 Conner, Readings 5.5 Nasr, Readings 5.6	Social Movements & Identity
Mon, May 14	GROUP PRESENTATIONS	GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Wed, May 16	GROUP PRESENTATIONS	GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Fri, May 18	Katzenstein, Readings 6.4 Sanderson, Readings 6.5 Weldon, Readings 6.6	Institutions and Public policy
Mon, May 21	Stepan & Skach, Readings 6.1 Mansfield & Snyder, Readings 6.2 Reilly, Readings 6.3	Institutions and Public policy POSITION PAPER DUE
Wed, May 23	DCP Chapter 9: Globalization and the study of comparative politics. Sassen, Readings 2.6	Globalization and Comparative politics
Fri, May 25	Howard, Readings 7.1 Przeworski & Wallerstein, Readings 7.2 Tarrow, Readings 7.3	Challenges and Changing Agendas
Mon, May 28	Putnam, Readings 7.4 Zakaria, Readings 7.5 McKibben, Readings 7.6	Challenges and Changing Agendas
Wed, May 30		QUIZ THREE