

Syllabus

INTL 3300

Introduction to Comparative Politics

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University of Georgia
School of Public and International Affairs

Department of International Affairs

MayMester 2007

Daily May 15 - June 4
2:00-4:45
SLC 147

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Course Web Pages:
Web CT
<http://csallen.myweb.uga.edu/3300.htm>

Office Hours:
Daily: 1:00 - 2:00
And By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Comparative political themes in political science. The transition from feudalism to capitalism, state building, democracy, and interaction between political institutions and cultures in various politics. Examples will be drawn from developed, communist/post-communist and developing political systems.

PREREQUISITE: POLS 1101 or INTL 1100

1. RATIONALE

INTL 3300 is the University of Georgia's introduction to comparative politics. The course will try to accomplish three things.

First, you will begin learning about other countries and their politics. We will divide them into three groups of countries:

- Developed countries: Sweden, other European countries and Japan;
- Former Communist countries (Russia) and still? Communist Countries (China); and
- Developing countries such as Chile and other Latin American countries.

Second, you will work with comparative methodologies and approaches and see that by examining two or more countries in the light of various political theories – and by comparing two or more themes and/or functions across countries – one learns far more than by studying these countries or themes separately.

Finally, you will also be clarifying your own values. Anytime you learn about other countries and their policies you all but inevitably call your own expectations and preferences into question. By continually using the U.S. as a frame of reference and dealing with controversial issues and ideas, we hope to spark lively and enjoyable arguments about the ideological questions that are at the heart of politics.

There is no orthodoxy to comparative politics. Often courses such as these lack a clear focus and merely describe the day-to-day workings of different governments, a kind of "nuts and bolts" approach. To avoid that problem, we will build this course around democracy – what it is, what it is not – and how our countries have taken very different approaches in trying to achieve it.

2. ORGANIZATION

The course has three parts. In the introduction, we will start with the most basic question – what is comparative politics? Particularly important is how the international political and economic systems increasingly impinge on the domestic politics of all countries, including our own. We will then examine different conceptions of democracy, and suggest that each of the three groups of countries we will examine later may define – and claim to practice – democracy in very different ways.

In the second part of the course, the bulk of the MayMester, we will examine closely each of the three groups of countries. Some countries will be addressed via the lectures and readings together, while other countries will only be addressed in the readings. In other words, your ability to draw themes and examples from your independent research will prove essential to do well in the course. In this middle section of the course, you will learn something of the "nuts and bolts" of the politics of each country, but you will do so in the context of the concept of democracy. To what extent have these countries practiced different forms of democracy, and how does an understanding of the principles of democracy help you to understand political change?

The third part will use the final days to pull the course together. This will not be a review in the conventional sense. Rather it will offer you an opportunity to re-examine your own conceptions of democracy in the context of the course material. Moreover, this approach will also attempt to help you to see the links between comparative politics, American politics, international relations and political theory. Too often in courses such as this, divisions among the other parts of the discipline of political science are accentuated. A major goal of the course will be to break down these sometimes too rigid barriers and show how comparative approaches help in understanding other portions of the discipline of political science.

This is not a course that requires you to supply the "correct" answers in your written assignments or in classroom discussions. Rather, a basic principle of the course is that learning must be a challenge and that you must pull material together on your own, and you must use your own values, imagination and other material you have learned to draw conclusions. In that sense, your writing must develop hypotheses, state clearly what you are trying to explain, develop a clear line of inquiry for your essays, and analyze as well as defend your argument.

We will meet for lectures for 150 minutes per day. At least every other day, we will have one of our *Vox Populi*

sessions, a debate/discussion period in which class members will put forth a contentious position and attempt to defend it. In these discussions, a small group of students will be selected in advance to prepare their presentation; and then to lead the rest of the class in discussion. A significant portion of your class participation grade will depend on your performance in these sessions. Those students not leading the presentation are expected to participate in an open discussion of these selected themes.

On 3 occasions there will be films shown during class. These will be feature films or documentaries in which Americans often are seen engaging the politics of various countries or issues of comparative significance. All films highlight important aspects of the politics in each country. *Vox Populi* discussion sessions will follow each film.

Last but not least, the readings are designed to supplement and not repeat what is covered in lecture. Some of the readings appear more directly related to the lectures than are others, yet you will be responsible for all of them. Responsibility, however, does not mean memorization of facts. You will do much better if you can understand the broad themes and the spirit of the readings and then be able to use them in your discussions and papers. It should be obvious that your written work should draw on lectures, discussions, and the readings.

3. REQUIRED READINGS:

(Available in Bookstore and on Reserve)

Christian Soe, ed. Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 25th ed., (Dushkin, 2007). ISBN: 0-07-351602-3

Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger, William Joseph, et al., Introduction to Comparative Politics, 4th ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 2007) ISBN: 0-61-860447-2

Robert Dahl, On Democracy (Yale University Press, 2000) ISBN 0-300-08455-2

Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, A Nation of Enemies (Norton, 1993) ISBN 0-393-30985-1

4. RESERVE READINGS: (Reserve Password is: allen3300)

Jonas Pontusson, "Sweden 1-5", in Kesselman, Krieger, et al. European Politics in Transition, 2nd Ed. (D.C. Heath: Lexington, MA, 1992). Exceptionally useful for the period before 1990.

Bo Rothstein. (2001). "Social Capital in the Social Democratic Welfare State." *Politics and Society* 29(2):207-241.

Arter, David. (2003). "Scandinavia: What's Left is the Social Democratic Welfare Consensus." *Parliamentary Affairs* 56(1):75-98.

Bergqvist, Christina. (2004). "Gender (In)equality, European Integration and the Transition of Swedish Corporatism." *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 25(1):125-146.

Nef, Jorge, (2003) "The Chilean Model: Fact and Fiction." *Latin American Perspectives* 30(5):16-40

Joel Krieger, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* 2nd. Ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Biddle and Holland, *Writers' Guide: Political Science*.

COPIES OF ALL REQUIRED READINGS ARE ALSO ON RESERVE IN THE LIBRARY

5. SUGGESTED READINGS

(These are works that you might find helpful in preparing your written assignments. Pick and choose among

those that you think might be most helpful.)

Wangnerud, Lena. (2000). "Testing the Politics of Presence: Women's Representation in the Swedish Riksdag [Parliament]." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 23(1):67-91.

Timothy Tilton, (1987) "Why Don't the Swedish Social Democrats Nationalize Industry?" *Scandinavian Studies* 52(2):142-166.

Rianne Mahon, (2000) "Swedish Social Democracy: Death of a Model?" *Studies in Political Economy*, 63: 27-60.

Jonas Pontusson, "Sweden: After the Golden Age," in Perry Anderson and Patrick Camillier, eds., *Mapping the European Left* (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 23-54.

Nicholas Aylott, *Swedish Social Democracy and European Integration* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999). [HC 241.25 .S8 A95 1999]

Bo Rothstein, *The Social Democratic State* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996)

Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Democracy on Trial* (New York: Basic, 1995).

Gosta Esping-Andersen, *Welfare States in Transition* (London: Sage, 1996).

Arturo Valenzuela, "Judging the General: Pinochet's Past and Chile's Future." *Current History* (March 1999), pp. 99-104.

J. Samuel Valenzuela and Timothy R. Scully, "Electoral Choices and the Party System in Chile." *Comparative Politics* (July 1997), pp. 511-527.

John K. Galbraith, *The Good Society* (Houghton Mifflin, 1996).

Harvey Cox, "The Market as God." *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1999.

Robert Kuttner, "Globalism Bites Back." *American Prospect*, March 1998.

Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History*. A readable, short history of the economic and political changes affecting the nations of all three worlds from the late 19th to the mid 20th centuries.

Gosta Esping-Andersen, *Politics Against Markets*. (Princeton, 1985). A book that analyzes democracy vs capitalism in Northern Europe.

Robert Dahl, *A Preface to Economic Democracy* (California, 1985). Short, theoretical work on democratizing the economy.

Simon Kuper, *Football Against the Enemy*. Not about American gridiron football but about the sport known as football in the rest of the world: soccer. The book is a provocative treatment of the intersection of sports and politics.

C.B. Macpherson, *The Real World of Democracy*. A short book which raises the provocative issue that democracy can be defined differently in different countries.

Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge*. Critical view of 20th century Russian and Soviet history.

Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. A short, classic work examining democratic theory and practice.

James Petras, "Authoritarianism, Democracy and the Transition to Socialism." *The Socialist Register* (1985/86), pp. 268-294.

John Reed, [Ten Days that Shook the World](#). Famous diary of the 1917 Russian Revolution by an American journalist who was there – and participated.

Hedrick Smith, [The Russians](#). 20th century overview of Russian people by former NY Times reporter.

United States Senate, [Covert Action in Chile - 1963-1973](#). Senate investigation into US-supported coup in Chile.

Arturo Valenzuela, [The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile](#) A short overview of the breakdown of Chilean democracy in 1973.

J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela, eds., [Military Rule in Chile](#) A collection of articles assessing the performance of the former military government in Chile.

6. PERIODICAL READINGS:

There are powerful and fast-moving changes underway in all countries. The European Union's expansion has had a powerful impact on sovereign European nation states. Changes in Russia have occurred at a dizzying pace. And the massive political changes in Latin American countries such as Chile, Venezuela and Mexico have been profound. Consequently, relying on just the texts will not be sufficient. You are also required to keep up with contemporary political developments in the three groups of countries.

Perhaps the most important single periodical source is the [New York Times](#). Anything relevant to the course that shows up in the [Times](#), will be fair game. You may get a daily (weekday) subscription for a very reasonable fee for the entire semester. I have a subscription form for those who want to subscribe to a hardcopy. For those who don't, your best bet will be to check the paper's [website](#) daily.

Among the additional periodicals that can help you follow contemporary developments are: [The Wall Street Journal](#), [The Christian Science Monitor](#), [Business Week](#), [The Economist](#), [In These Times](#), [The Nation](#), [The American Prospect](#), and [The New Republic](#).

Please consult the course web pages listed above – particularly the *WWW Research Links* section for links to the websites of periodicals, research institutions and other useful resources. **New links are added frequently.**

7. COURSE MECHANICS

Each student will complete the following assignments:

A brief (no more than one page) memo on what characteristics or conditions must exist for a nation's political system to be considered democratic. (due in class RIGHT NOW). BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I WOULD PREFER THAT YOU NOT CONSULT ANY COURSE MATERIAL BEFORE WRITING THIS PAPER.

Take "The Political Compass" Quiz (see weblinks page) but keep the results to yourself.

A mid term paper

(5-7 pages) due on May 24th. The topic will be posted on the assignments webpage by Thursday evening, the 17th. The topic will principally involve issues concerning Sweden, but you will be required to draw comparative evidence from at least two additional developed countries (Britain, France, Germany) other than the United States.

A final take home paper

(7-9 pages). The specific question will be given out by May 29th. (It will be due on June 4th, the last day of class). This will be a comprehensive final paper, in which you will need to draw on material from at least 2 countries from each of the three sections of the course.

Just before writing your final paper, take "The Political Compass" Quiz again.

In other words, for both papers you will need to do extensive reading on your own from ALL course texts and integrate selected themes and points into your essays.

You will be graded as follows:

Take home mid-term paper 30%

Take home end-term paper 50%

Discussion/Participation 20%

8. GROUND RULES

- This is a course will be more time-consuming than most ones that you will take. To do well, students must put in a great deal of effort. Please be certain that you are prepared to work hard! If not, another course might be more appropriate for you.
- Late papers are not acceptable. They are a burden for me and are unfair to your colleagues who do their work on time. Therefore, I will deduct a FULL letter grade for each day a paper is late. Extensions may be given but only if they are requested well in advance of the deadline, and if there is a compelling reason.
- It is not my practice to give incompletes. If work is not handed in on time, the student will lose credit for each day it is late. However, if there is suitable reason – subject to my approval and supported with appropriate written documentation – an exception to the "no incompletes" rule may be possible. With respect to these first three ground rules, if you have problems in completing assigned work, please let me know about it.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student turning in a written assignment that is not your own work will receive a failing grade for the course. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. For more information, see: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>
- Except on the first paper, the use of sources is essential. On the midterm paper and on the final paper, you must make reference to the sources from which you drew your information. The accepted format is: (Constable and Valenzuela, p. 35), (Soe, Chap. 4); or (Class Notes, May 20).
- Participation is 20% of your grade. Therefore you must be actually be in class – and verbally participate – in order to be eligible to receive full credit for this portion of the course's requirement. Participation also includes contributing to the discussion forum on the course WebCT Bulletin Board.
- I do not expect that the views and perceptions of comparative politics by me or by all of you to be identical, either now or at the completion of the course. Our introduction to comparative politics course is a place for the free and perhaps even heated exchange of ideas. Thus I expect you to challenge viewpoints that differ from your own, but I also expect you to substantiate your arguments from the readings, lectures and discussions. In other words, you will be penalized if you simply agree with my lectures or the readings for no apparent reason other than the fact that I am your professor.
- Please turn off all cell phones, pagers or other electronic devices that will disturb either your classmates – or your professor – during class. We are only in class for 3 hours a day, so being off the "infogrid" for that short amount of time won't really be a problem, will it? Notebook computers and PDAs – for taking notes – are quite acceptable however.
- If you need to use outside reference works, please consult Joel Krieger, et. al., *Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, Oxford University Press, 2001 as a place to start for political terms or concepts. For outside research sources, please use Galileo. Please do NOT use the notoriously unreliable Wikipedia until or unless this source emphasizes accuracy as much as it does volume and speed. Basically, citing this source on your papers is the equivalent of admitting intellectual defeat.
- The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the professor may be necessary.

9. SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

Section I

COMPARATIVE POLITICS & POLITICAL ECONOMY:

How do we define politics? In what way do our definitions reflect our values as Americans? What are the main ways of looking at other political systems? How do international economic and political constraints limit what individual nation-states can do?

REQUIRED READING: May 15

Kesselman, Krieger, Joseph, Introduction to Comparative Politics Part I;

Soe, Annual Editions: Comparative Politics, Unit 1 - Pluralist Democracies: Country Studies.

DEMOCRACY AND AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM.

How does democracy differ in each of the three worlds? Why do they have different images of democracy? How can democracy best be achieved? What forces threaten democracy? Why is American democracy different from other democracies?

REQUIRED READING: May 16

Soe, AE:CP, Unit 2 - Pluralist Democracies: Factors in the Political Process.

Dahl, On Democracy (begin).

Section II

1. DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Why is Sweden considered the prototypical European social democratic state. How do parliamentary systems differ from ours and why is that important? How does it differ from other Western European States? What are the current policy problems which democracies in other advanced developed countries face and how are they similar to those in the United States? How are they different?

REQUIRED READING: May 17-23

Pontusson, "Sweden 1-5" (reserve)

Bo Rothstein. (2001). "Social Capital in the Social Democratic Welfare State." *Politics and Society* 29(2):207-241. (reserve)

Arter, David. (2003). "Scandinavia: What's Left is the Social Democratic Welfare Consensus." *Parliamentary Affairs* 56(1):75-98. (reserve)

Bergqvist, Christina. (2004). "Gender (In)equality, European Integration and the Transition of Swedish Corporatism." *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 25(1):125-146. (reserve)

Kesselman, Krieger, Joseph, ICP, "Democracies" (2 countries of your choice).

Soe, Unit 3. Europe in Transition — West, Center, and East, Parts A & B.

2. FORMER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES: RUSSIA & CHINA

How can these systems even be thought of as democratic? What are the main institutions and why do they have (or not have) power? How do Russian (and former Soviet) institutions and practices reflect Russian history? What does democracy in China mean?

REQUIRED READING: May 24-28

Soe, Unit 3. Europe—West, Center, and East: Part B "Russia"; Unit 4 Political Diversity in the Developing World: Part C: China

DeBardeleben, "Russia," in Kesselman and Krieger, Joseph, et. al.

Joseph, "China" in Kesselman, Krieger, Joseph, et al.

3. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

What special constraints do Third World nations such as Chile and Mexico face in pursuit of democracy. Why was the "parliamentary road to socialism" under Allende in Chile so difficult? Why did democracy not return after the 1973 coup? Why does the military play such a prominent role in Developing Countries? How have the Chilean and Mexican experiences affected other Third World countries?

REQUIRED READING: May 29 - 31

Constable & Valenzuela (entire);

Nef, Jorge, (2003) "The Chilean Model: Fact and Fiction." *Latin American Perspectives* 30(5):16-40

Soe, Unit 4. Political Diversity in the Developing World: Parts A (Latin America), B (Africa), D (India), and E (The Muslim World).

Grindle, "Mexico," in Kesselman, Krieger, Joseph, et al..

Kesselman, Krieger, Joseph, et al. "Developing Countries" (2 countries of your choice).

Suggested Reading:

Valenzuela, "Judging the General..."

J.S. Valenzuela and Scully, "Electoral Choices..."

Section III

CONCLUSION

How is the struggle for democracy connected to such themes as: economic justice, human rights, industrial relations, international politics, and political development? How has globalization affected democratic theory and practice? How has your view of democracy changed since the first paper?

REQUIRED READING: June 1

Soe, Unit 5. Comparative Politics: Some Major Trends, Issues, and Prospects.

Dahl (complete)