

INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics Fall 2008

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Office: Candler Hall B02

Office hours: Tues. 3:45-5:00,

Wed. 11:00-12:00, & by appointment

Section 57-837

TR 2:00-3:15

Journalism 401

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of comparative politics. As such, it is intended to provide students (particularly international affairs majors) with the necessary foundation for pursuing further study within this field. As its name suggests, comparative politics involves the comparison of political systems using social scientific methods. In the modern era, this essentially means comparing the politics of different countries or nation-states. Our primary objective will be to explain and understand the differences and similarities which we observe among national political systems.

Throughout the course of the semester, students will be exposed to a variety of theoretical concepts and perspectives which have been and continue to be used to explain and understand politics cross-nationally. The validity of these theories and concepts are to be tested against the concrete historical experiences of a wide array of countries and regions, including those of the advanced industrialized democracies (i.e., North America, Western Europe, Japan), communist and post-communist societies (i.e., China, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics), and the developing world (i.e., Latin America, Africa, and Asia).

We will also explore a number of important themes and topics, including, but by no means limited to: the origins and nature of the modern state; the politics of ethnic identity; nationalism; political attitudes and ideologies; the effects of cultural and institutional variation; the processes of democratization and development; comparative political economy; and the consequences of globalization.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not mandatory, but represents an essential ingredient for performing well in this course. You are therefore strongly encouraged to attend every single class session. If you need additional incentive to attend class, you

should know that much of the material that will be presented in class *will not be found in the readings*. What is more, since you will be graded for your in-class participation, it is essential that you attend every class session. You cannot participate if you are not in class. Finally, *anything* which takes place in class, including material from videos or class discussions, is fair game for quizzes and exams. Lest there be any confusion regarding this point, let me emphasize it once more: **Attending class is indispensable if you wish to succeed in this course.**

While attendance is not mandatory, I will be keeping an attendance record. I have two reasons for this. First, taking attendance each class session will help me to learn students' names. Second, I will use attendance records as an informal measure of a student's performance in determining border-line grades at the end of the semester. For example, if you end up with a 79 for the course at the end of the semester, but only showed up to class half of the time, the likelihood that I would bump your grade up to a B- will be significantly lower than if you had perfect attendance.

PARTICIPATION

I encourage and expect each of you to participate and contribute to class discussions. While I realize that some students are naturally shy or uncomfortable speaking in front of their peers, public speaking is an essential skill to learn if you hope to be successful in life. I will occasionally call on quiet students to answer questions to ensure that everyone is participating. Those students who are uncomfortable participating in class are encouraged to initiate or participate in discussions on WebCT.

Your participation grade, which constitutes 10% of your final course grade, will be determined in the following manner: First, you will be expected to participate in a handful of in-class simulations. This will comprise half of your participation grade, or 5% of your overall course grade. If you are not in class for this exercise, you forfeit this part of your grade. Second, your overall in-class participation for the entire semester will be *subjectively* judged in terms of both the *quality* and the *quantity* of your contributions to class discussions. This will represent the remaining half of your participation grade. Only those students who frequently and consistently offer thoughtful comments in class will receive full credit. Students who make only a handful of contributions during the semester can expect to receive a participation grade in the C or D range, while those students who never say a word will not be awarded any credit. This same criteria applies to contributions to the WebCT discussion board.

CLASS TIME & READINGS

I will employ a variety of pedagogical methods, including traditional lecturing, Socratic discussions, and simulations. The material presented in class is intended to complement and reinforce the material found in the assigned readings. You will be expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to the class in which they are scheduled to be discussed. **This will be a relatively reading intensive course.** You will get more out of each class period if you have done the assigned reading before coming to class. You should set aside time each week to do the readings. For some readings, I may provide you with a set of study questions beforehand to consider while doing the reading. This is intended to help you to discern what is important in each reading, to separate the wheat from the chaff so to speak, and to prepare for class discussions. You will be required to purchase the following books:

Patrick H. O'Neil. 2007. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition. W. W. Norton & Company.

Seymour Martin Lipset & Gary Marks. 2000. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Charles E. Lindblom. 2001. *The Market System: What It Is, How It Works, and What to Make of It*. Yale University Press.

Pamela Constable & Arturo Valenzuela. 1991. *A Nation of Enemies: Chile Under Pinochet*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Robert A. Dahl. 2006. *On Political Equality*. Yale University Press.

Additional readings can be found in either of two sources, a course packet which can be purchased from Bel-Jean Copy/Print Center (denoted as BJP in the schedule below) located downtown or as PDF files posted on WebCT. I reserve the right to add additional readings to the schedule during the course of the semester.

COUNTRY REPORT

During the course of the semester, you will be expected to become an expert on the politics of a single country. This will of course require you to do a significant amount of research, becoming not only familiar with your country's politics, but also its history, geography, culture, economics, sociology, and foreign relations. The ultimate goal of this research will be to write a research paper. I will provide you with a precise set of guidelines for the style and content of this paper at a

later date. *Late submissions of paper assignments will be penalized one half of a grade each day that the assignment is late.*

You are free to select any country to research. However, country assignments will be determined on a first-come, first-serve basis, meaning once someone has picked a particular country, that country is then removed from the population of possible countries from which those students which have not yet selected a country can choose. Thus, everyone will be responsible for a different country. This assignment should provide everyone with an opportunity to participate and contribute to class discussions, since I will periodically call on different students to share their expertise on their respective country during the course of the semester.

QUIZZES

There will be at least five unannounced quizzes. These quizzes will function as a device for encouraging attendance, checking to see whether you are keeping up with assigned readings, and giving you an additional indicator of your performance in the course. Collectively, quizzes will constitute 10% of your final course grade. Individually, your four highest quiz grades will each constitute 2.5% of your final course grade (I will drop your lowest quiz grade).

Please do not ask me when any of the quizzes are to be administered. Quizzes can be given at any time, including back-to-back class sessions. If you miss a quiz because of an absence, then that will be your dropped quiz. There are no exceptions to this rule.

EXAMS

A total of three exams will be administered during the semester – two midterms and a final. Each exam is worth 25% of your overall course grade. While the format of exams may vary, they will largely consist of objective-type questions (e.g., multiple choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blank) as well as short-answer-type questions. They may also include one or two short essay questions. All exams will be cumulative, though each successive one will be more heavily weighted toward new material covered since the previous exam. Students who perform well on the second exam may elect not to take the final exam, and instead have their second exam count as 50% of the overall course grade. You will only have two hours (out of the three allotted) to complete the final exam.

ABSENCES & MAKE-UP EXAMS

No make-up exams will be administered except under the gravest circumstances and only with proper documentation (i.e., proof). Only the following types of situations will be deemed as warranting a make-up exam:

- A *serious* illness (as documented by a visit to a physician; common colds, allergies, etc. don't count)
- The hospitalization of a member of your immediate family (i.e., your mom, dad, brother, or sister)
- A death in the family (as documented by a copy of the obituary and a note from your parent).

Documentation of your excuse must be provided the very next class period following the class period in which the absence occurred. However, you should try and make an effort to contact me beforehand if you know that you will miss a scheduled exam. Make-up exams will be administered during the last hour of the three hour time period allotted for the final exam.

GRADE APPEALS

If you feel that one of your exams, quizzes, or any other assignment was graded incorrectly you must submit a type-written explanation of the problem. I will then re-evaluate your work and determine whether the original grade should be changed. Note, this re-evaluation could result in a higher or lower grade than the one which you originally received. I am always willing to meet with you to discuss how your work was evaluated and how you can improve your performance in the course but I *will not* change any grade without a written request and explanation. The only exception to this policy is for simple errors in the calculation of points. Grade appeals will only be accepted for 10 days after an assignment, exam, or quiz has been returned.

FINAL GRADE

Your final grade for the entire course will be determined according to the following distribution:

Participation	5 %
Country report	10 %
Quizzes	10 %
First exam	25 %
Second exam	25 % (or 50% if you choose not to take the final exam)
Final exam (optional)	25 %

The precise letter grade you receive for the course will be determined according to the following grading scale:

A	93 - 100	C+	77 - 79.5
A-	90 - 92.5	C	73 - 76.5
B+	87 - 89.5	C-	70 - 72.5
B	83 - 86.5	D	60 - 69.5
B-	80 - 82.5	F	≤ 59.5

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the University's academic honesty policy. This policy, titled "A Culture of Honesty," can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/ah.pdf>. Any and all instances of suspected cheating, plagiarism, lying, or other forms of academically objectionable behavior will be referred to the appropriate University authorities for immediate disciplinary action.

COMMUNICATION

I encourage all of you to come see me during my office hours, especially if you are having any difficulty grasping the material. If you have a course-related question or need to contact me in order to set up an appointment, I am most easily reached by e-mail. I will also likely send out numerous e-mails to the entire class during the course of the semester, so please make sure that I have your preferred e-mail address or that your UGA account is not full. These e-mails may clarify or elaborate upon points raised in class, suggest additional readings, or concern other important course-related matters.

KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT EVENTS

Students should also make a concerted effort to stay abreast of the news since we will be applying what we learn to current events. I recommend subscribing to daily e-mails from prominent national newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Christian Science Monitor*. From time to time, I may also show television news clips or segments in class which will set the stage for in-class discussions of current events.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, & EXAMS

8/19 INTRODUCTIONS / COURSE OVERVIEW

8/21 WHAT IS COMPARATIVE POLITICS?

- O'Neil, chapter 1, pgs. 1-13, 16-19

8/26 STRUCTURE

- Diamond, "Yali's Question" (handout)
- Video: *Guns, Germs, & Steel*, episode 1: "Out of Eden"

8/28 AGENCY & RATIONALITY

- Bianco, Introduction to *American Politics: Strategy & Choice* (handout)
- Monroe, Barton, & Klingermann, "Altruism and the Theory of Rational Action" (BJP)

9/2 INSTITUTIONS

- O'Neil, chapter 1, pgs. 14-16
- North, "An Introduction to Institutions and Institutional Change" (BJP)
- de Soto, "The Five Mysteries of Capital" (BJP)
- March & Olsen, "Rules and the Institutionalization of Action" (BJP)
- Lipset & Marks, chapters 1 & 2

9/4 THE STATE

- O'Neil, chapter 2
- Herbst, "War and the State in Africa" (WebCT)

9/9 NATION & SOCIETY: COMPETING IDENTITIES

- O'Neil, chapter 3, pgs. 44-56
- Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" (WebCT)
- Lipset & Marks, chapters 3 & 4

9/11 ATTITUDES & IDEOLOGIES

- O'Neil, chapter 3, pgs. 56-70
- Lipset & Marks, chapters 5 & 6
- ❖ Website: <http://www.politicalcompass.org/>

9/16 ATTITUDES & IDEOLOGIES (CONTINUED)

- Video: *The Commanding Heights*, episode 1: “The Battle of Ideas”

9/18 ATTITUDES & IDEOLOGIES (CONTINUED)

- Video: *The Commanding Heights* (continued)

9/23 CULTURE

- Lipset & Marks, chapters 7 & 8

9/25 FIRST EXAM

9/30 POLITICAL ECONOMY

- O’Neil, chapter 4
- Lindblom, “The Market as Prison” (WebCT)
- Lindblom, chapters 1-3

10/2 POLITICAL ECONOMY (CONTINUED)

- Lindblom, chapters 4-7
- Video: *Sick Around the World*

10/7 POLITICAL ECONOMY (CONTINUED)

- Alesina, Glaeser, & Sacerdote, “Why Doesn’t the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?” (BJP)
- Lindblom, chapters 8-12

10/9 POLITICAL ECONOMY (CONTINUED)

- Lindblom, chapters 13-19
- ✓ **Midterm withdrawal deadline**

10/14 AUTHORITARIANISM & TOTALITARIANISM

- O’Neil, chapter 5
- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 1-4
- Video: *Burma: State of Fear*

10/16 AUTHORITARIANISM & TOTALITARIANISM (CONTINUED)

- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 5-8

10/21 AUTHORITARIANISM & TOTALITARIANISM (CONTINUED)

- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 9-12

10/23 DEMOCRACY

- O'Neil, chapter 6
- Zakaria, "A Brief History of Human Liberty" (BJP)
- Dahl, chapter 1

10/28 DEMOCRACY (CONTINUED)

- Dahl, chapters 2-4

10/30 DEMOCRACY (CONTINUED)

- Dahl, chapters 5-7

11/4 ADVANCED CAPITALIST DEMOCRACIES

- O'Neil, chapter 7

11/6 COMMUNISM & POSTCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

- O'Neil, chapter 8
- Video: *Cold War*, episode 23: "The Wall Comes Down"

11/11 COMMUNISM & POSTCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

- Video: *China Rising*

11/13 THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

- O'Neil, chapter 9
- Lewellen, "Modernization and Dependency" (BJP)

11/18 MODELS OF DEVELOPMENT

- Oatley, chapters 6-7 (BJP)

11/20 DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Country report due

11/25 SECOND EXAM

12/2 GLOBALIZATION

- O'Neil, chapter 10

12/4 POLITICAL VIOLENCE

- O'Neil, chapter 11

12/11 FINAL EXAM, 3:30-6:30