

INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics Fall 2009

Nathan W. Freeman

nathanf@uga.edu

Office: Candler Hall 000

Office hours: Mon & Wed 3:40-5:00,

& by appointment

Section 53-025

MWF 10:10-11:00

SLC 245

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 theories, 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 of the modern state; the politics of ethnic identity; political attitudes and ideologies; the role of culture and institutions in determining political outcomes; the processes of democratization and development; comparative political economy; and the consequences of globalization.

Some of the questions we will address include: Why is the United States the only country in the world that has never had a significant socialist, social democratic, or labor party? Similarly, why does the United States have such a limited welfare state compared to other advanced industrialized democracies? In addition, why have some countries become relatively wealthy and prosperous

while others continue to languish in extreme poverty? In other words, why are some countries “developed”? And finally, why have some countries succeeded in establishing durable democratic institutions while others continue to be governed by autocratic regimes, and why have democratic institutions, in some instances, collapsed?

RULES & REGULATIONS

- I expect every student to be in class on-time, to come prepared, and to treat both me and their fellow classmates with respect.
- Please turn off or silence cell phones and other electronic devices that might cause disruptions.
- Students with disabilities who require individualized testing or other accommodations should discuss this with me within as soon as possible.
- Students who will need to miss a quiz, exam, or class meeting to observe a religious holiday at some point during the semester should make arrangements with me within the first two weeks of the semester.
- If you withdraw from the course before the midterm withdrawal deadline, you will receive a WP. If you withdraw after this date, then you will receive a WF.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance 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. Simply put, 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.**

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 online discussions posted on WebCT.

Your participation grade constitutes 10% of your final course grade and will be determined in the following manner: 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. 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. Clarification questions, while encouraged, do not count towards your participation grade. These same criteria apply 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.

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

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

RESEARCH PAPER

Each student will be expected to write an original research paper on a topic approved by the instructor. This paper will constitute 20% of your overall course grade. 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.*

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. The first exam is worth 15% of your overall course grade, while the second is worth 20% and the final is worth 25%. 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 a short essay question. None of the exams are cumulative.

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 5 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	10 %
Quizzes	10 %
Research paper	20 %
First exam	15 %
Second exam	20 %
Final exam	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
A-	90 - 92	C	73 - 76
B+	87 - 89	C-	70 - 72
B	83 - 86	D	60 - 69
B-	80 - 82	F	≤ 59

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 such as changes in the schedule.

WEBSITE

Important course-related material can be accessed through WebCT. Everyone who enrolled in the course prior to the first day of class should already have access to the course website. However, if you do not have access, please let me know, and I will add you. The website serves two basic functions. First, I will post certain course-related material such as the syllabus, readings, and assignment instructions under the "course content" module. Second, I would encourage everyone to make use of the discussion board. Our fifty minute class sessions will often leave us with insufficient time to fully discuss certain issues. Therefore, the WebCT discussion board offers a convenient tool for continuing discussion outside of the classroom. Finally, please note that I will not be posting grades on WebCT.

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* and *The Washington Post*. Other useful periodicals include *The American*

Prospect, *Business Week*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. As far as television news is concerned, nothing beats *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer* which airs weeknights on PBS from 6:00 to 7:00.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, & EXAMS

Note: This schedule is a general plan for the course. Deviations may be necessary. Any adjustments will be announced in class by the instructor.

Aug 17: Introduction / Course Overview

I. THE GRAMMAR OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Aug 19: What Is Comparative Politics?

- O'Neil, chapter 1
- Lipset & Marks, preface & chapter 1

Aug 21: Structural Explanations

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

Aug 24: Structural Explanations (continued)

Aug 26: Rationalist Explanations

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

Aug 28: Institutions

- O'Neil, chapter 1, pgs. 14-16 (re-read)
- Wachter, "Why Tip?"
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/12/magazine/12tipping-t.html>
- North, "Institutions" (WebCT)
- Lipset & Marks, chapter 2

Aug 31: The State

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

Sept 2: Identities

- O'Neil, chapter 3, pgs. 44-56
- Lipset & Marks, chapter 3-4

Sept 4: Attitudes & Ideologies

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

Sept 7: Labor Day Holiday (no class)**Sept 9: Ideologies**

- Lipset & Marks, chapter 6
- Video: *The Commanding Heights*, episode 1: "The Battle of Ideas"

Sept 11: Ideologies (continued)

- Lipset & Marks, chapter 7
- Video: *The Commanding Heights*, episode 1: "The Battle of Ideas" (continued)

Sept 14: Culture

- O'Neil, chapter 3, pgs. 70-76
- Lipset & Marks, chapter 8
- Frank, "What's the Matter with America?" (BJP)
- Chang, "Lazy Japanese and Thieving Germans: Are Some Cultures Incapable of Economic Development?" (BJP)

Sept 16: Review**Sept 17: Review Session (time & place to be announced)****Sept 18: FIRST EXAM****II. POLITICAL ECONOMY****Sept 21: Employment vs. Inflation**

- O'Neil, chapter 4, pgs. 77-89

Sept 23: The Market: Fundamentalism vs. Skepticism

- Cox, "The Market as God" (<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/99mar/marketgod.htm>)
- Lindblom, "The Market as Prison" (WebCT)

Sept 25: Varieties of Capitalism

- O'Neil, chapter 4, pgs. 89-109

Sept 28: Varieties of Capitalism (continued)

Sept 30: The Welfare State

- Alesina, Glaeser, & Sacerdote, "Why Doesn't the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?" (BJP)

Oct 2: The Welfare State (continued)

- Video: *Frontline: Sick Around the World*

III. AUTOCRACY

Oct 5: Authoritarianism & Totalitarianism

- O'Neil, chapter 5, pgs. 110-113
- Constable & Valenzuela, preface & chapter 1
- Video: *Frontline World: Burma: State of Fear*

Oct 7: Sources of Autocratic Rule

- O'Neil, chapter 5, pgs. 113-118
- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 2-3

Oct 9: The Means of Autocratic Control

- O'Neil, chapter 5, pgs. 118-124
- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 4-5

Oct 12: Comparing Autocratic Forms

- O'Neil, chapter 5, pgs. 124-133
- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 6-7

Oct 14: Chile & Venezuela

- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 8-9
- Video: *Frontline: The Hugo Chavez Show*

Oct 16: Chile & Venezuela (continued)

- Constable & Valenzuela, chapters 10-12
- Video: *Frontline: The Hugo Chavez Show (continued)*

Oct 18: Review Session (time & place to be announced)

Oct 19: SECOND EXAM

IV. DEMOCRACY

Oct 21: Democracy vs. Liberty

- O'Neil, chapter 6, pgs. 134-142

Oct 22: Midterm Withdrawal Deadline

Oct 23: Varieties of Democracy

- O'Neil, chapter 6, pgs. 142-160

Oct 26: Varieties of Democracy (continued)

Oct 28: Paradoxes of Democracy

- Diamond, "Three Paradoxes of Democracy" (WebCT)

Oct 30: Fall Break (no class)

Nov 2: Advanced Democracies

- O'Neil, chapter 7

V. COMMUNIST & POSTCOMMUNIST REGIMES

Nov 4: Marxism

- O'Neil, chapter 8, pgs. 189-194

Nov 6: Communism in Practice

- O'Neil, chapter 8, pgs. 194-201

Nov 9: The Collapse of Communism

- O'Neil, chapter 8, pgs. 201-205
- Video: *Cold War*, episode 23: "The Wall Comes Down"

Nov 11: Postcommunist Transitions

- O'Neil, chapter 8, pgs. 205-218
- Stiglitz, "Who Lost Russia?" (BJP)

Nov 13: Postcommunist Transitions

- Video: *The Commanding Heights*, episode 2: "The Agony of Reform"

VI. DEVELOPMENT

Nov 16: The Legacy of Colonialism

- O'Neil, chapter 9, pgs. 219-238

Nov 17: Movie Night

- *White King, Red Rubber, Black Death* (time & place to announced)

Nov 18: Theories of Development

- O'Neil, chapter 9, pgs. 238-249
- Chang, "Mozambique's Economic Miracle" (BJP)
- Lewellen, "Modernization and Dependency" (BJP)

Nov 20: Theories of Development (continued)

Nov 23-27: Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)

Nov 30: Models of Development

- Oatley, chapter 6 (BJP)
- PAPERS DUE

Dec 2: Models of Development (continued)

- Oatley, chapter 7 (BJP)

Dec 4: Models of Development (continued)

- Chang, "My Six-Year-Old Son Should Get a Job" (BJP)

VII. CONCLUSION

Dec 7: Globalization

- O'Neil, chapter 10
- Rodrik, "Has Globalization Gone Too Far?" (BJP)

Dec 8: Political Violence

- O'Neil, chapter 11

Dec 16: FINAL EXAM, 8:00-11:00