

INTL 3300: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Instructor:
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Office Hours:
M & W 10:00 - 11:00
Baldwin Hall 101C

Objectives:

The primary purpose of this course is to enhance your understanding of the foundational principles of comparative politics. The lectures and assignments are designed to introduce you to: 1) the core concepts of and approaches to the study of comparative politics, 2) the various types and formulations of governmental-economic systems, and 3) the ways in which these systems (and their institutions) influence and are influenced by other political phenomena.

Reading Material:

- *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition.
- Excerpts from assigned journal articles and book chapters – available on WebCT.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on the following components:

- Exams: Three Exams at 20 % Each.....60%
- Group Paper and Presentation.....25 %
- Class Participation.....15%

Assignments may be penalized for lateness (5 points per day) as well as for poor writing (up to one letter grade). If you have questions regarding graded material, you should contact me by e-mail no less than one week after the assignment has been handed back. If the initial e-mail appeal is not resolved, you will need to meet with me by appointment.

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation:

- Attendance - While there is no formal attendance requirement for this class, keep in mind that a considerable portion of your grade for the course will come from your class participation. Fair warning: noticeably low class attendance levels may result in pop quizzes.
- Participation - Please be prepared to keep up with the assigned readings. Bear in mind, your performance will be evaluated on the quality, as well as the quantity, of your comments.

Exams: There will be three exams. If you are unable to be present for a test due to illness or family emergency (documentation is required for the approval of a make-up exam), please be sure to contact me beforehand.

Assignments:

- Group Project: Comparative Country Study
 - o Group Paper - Your group will conduct a comparative study of an assigned selection of nation-states (16-20 pages). The draft of your group's paper will be due on your

assigned presentation day. The final revised copy will be due at the end of the semester. The paper should address the following:

- Regime Type / Classification: How are your assigned countries similar to or different from each other in terms of regime type? How does each country exemplify the characteristics of its particular political-economic system?
 - Current Events: During the course of the past year, how and why have your assigned countries “made the news?” Are media reports on your individual countries generally positive or negative? Why do you think that this is the case? Does there appear to be any sort of association between regime type and positive/negative country trends?
 - Theoretical Explanation: Which of the major theories of comparative politics do you think best explains your answers to the above sets of questions (from the Current Events section)? How and why? Justify your position.
- Group Presentation – You will discuss your group’s findings in a brief 10-15 minute class presentation. Be creative, and try to engage your classmates in the discussion. Groups with unique and interesting class presentations will be more likely to receive a high grade than those groups that simply recite a summary of their findings.
- WebCT Homework: During the course of the semester, I will occasionally require you to post brief (one page or less) reaction papers on WebCT. While these will not be formal assignments, I will expect you to adhere to relevant due dates, and to read and respond to your classmates’ postings. You will not receive numerical grades for your WebCT assignments, but they will serve as a component of your class participation score.

Other:

- Withdrawals: Withdrawals from the course after Drop / Add but before any assignments have been turned in will result in a grade of “W.” Withdrawals after assignments have been turned in but before the mid-point will result in either a “W” or “WF”, depending on the class grades received until that point. Withdrawals after the mid-point will result in a grade of “WF”, regardless of class grades received until that point.
- Conduct: I try to maintain an open and casual class atmosphere. However, I will expect that you conduct yourself in a classroom-appropriate manner and that you treat your classmates with courtesy and respect.
- **Academic Honesty: All academic work must adhere to UGA’s “A Culture of Honesty,” which can be found at http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/culture_honesty.htm. Cases of academic dishonesty will result in administrative action.**

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule may be altered as needed during the course of the semester. Be sure to pay attention to class announcements / e-mails regarding such changes.

I. Core Concepts and Approaches

Mon, Aug. 18	Intro and Administrative Details	No Readings
Wed, Aug. 20	Defining “Comparative Politics”	Text: Ch 1

Fri, Aug. 22	Key Concepts and Approaches	Text: Ch 1
Mon, Aug. 25	Theories of CP	WebCT articles
Wed, Aug. 27	Theories of CP	WebCT articles
Fri, Aug. 29	Theories of CP	WebCT articles
Mon, Sep. 1	NO CLASS - LABOR DAY	No Readings
Wed, Sep. 3	“The State” - Definition and Origins	Text: Ch 2
Fri, Sep. 5	The Modern State and its Power	Text: Ch 2
Mon, Sep. 8	State vs. “Nation” (States and Societies)	Text: Ch 3
Wed, Sep. 10	Nationality and Identity	Text: Ch 3
Fri, Sep. 12	Nationality and Ideology	Text: Ch. 3
Mon, Sep. 15	Political Economy - Key Concepts	Text: Ch 4
Wed, Sep. 17	Political-Economic System Types	Text: Ch 4
Fri, Sep. 19	Exam Review Day	WebCT articles
Mon, Sep. 22	<i>Exam One</i>	No Readings

II. Types and Formulations of Governmental-Economic Systems

Wed, Sep. 24	Democracy	Text: Ch. 6
Fri, Sep. 26	Democracy	Text: Ch. 6
Mon, Sep. 29	Democracy	Text: Ch. 6
Wed, Oct. 1	Authoritarianism	Text: Ch. 5
Fri, Oct. 3	Authoritarianism	Text: Ch. 5
Mon, Oct. 6	Authoritarianism	Text: Ch. 5
Wed, Oct. 8	Communism	Text: Ch. 8 excerpts
Fri, Oct. 10	Communism	Text: Ch. 8 excerpts

Mon, Oct. 13	Comparing Systems in Transition	Text: Ch 7, 8, 9 excerpts
Wed, Oct. 15	Comparing Systems: Advanced Industrialized States, Post-Communist States, and Less Developed States	Text: Ch 7, 8, 9 excerpts
Fri, Oct. 17	Comparing Systems: Advanced Industrialized States, Post-Communist States, and Less Developed States	Text: Ch 7, 8, 9 excerpts
Mon, Oct. 20	Comparing Systems: Advanced Industrialized States, Post-Communist States, and Less Developed States	Text: Ch 7, 8, 9 excerpts
Wed, Oct. 22	Comparing Systems: Advanced Industrialized States, Post-Communist States, and Less Developed States	Text: Ch 7, 8, 9 excerpts
Fri, Oct. 24	Exam Review Day	WebCT articles
Mon, Oct. 27	<i>Exam Two</i>	No Readings
Wed, Oct. 29	Research Project Discussion Day	TBA
Fri, Oct. 31	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK	No Readings

**III. Post-Cold War Comparative Politics:
The Decline of the State and its Institutions?**

Mon, Nov. 3	The State in the Post-Cold War Era	WebCT articles
Wed, Nov. 5	Post Cold War Threats and Opportunities	WebCT articles
Fri, Nov. 7	Project Presentations	No Readings
Mon, Nov. 10	Globalization: Pros and Cons	Text: Ch 10
Wed, Nov. 12	Globalization: Pros and Cons	Text: Ch 10
Fri, Nov. 14	Project Presentations	No Readings
Mon, Nov. 17	Political Violence?	Text: Ch 11
Wed, Nov. 19	Political Violence?	Text: Ch 11

Fri, Nov. 21	Project Presentations	No Readings
Mon, Nov. 24	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING	No Readings
Wed, Nov. 26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING	No Readings
Fri, Nov. 28	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING	No Readings
Mon, Dec. 1	Democracy and Development?	WebCT articles
Wed, Dec. 3	Democracy and Development?	WebCT articles
Fri, Dec. 5	<i>Research Project Due</i>	No Readings
Mon, Dec. 8	Exam Review Day	WebCT articles
Tue, Dec. 9 (Fri. schedule)	Exam Review Day	WebCT articles
Fri, Dec 12 (12:00 – 3:00)	<i>Exam Three / Final Exam</i>	No Readings