

RHODES COLLEGE
Department of International Studies
INTS 200 01: Introduction to Comparative Politics -18161
Fall 2008
MWF 11:00—11:50, Buckman 103

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Office Hours:
Tue 11:00-12:00
Wed 12:00-1:00
Thu 2:00-3:00

"Thinking without comparison is unthinkable. And, in the absence of comparison, so is all scientific thought and scientific research." -- Guy Swanson

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Comparative politics is both a sub-field of political science and a method of political study whose focus is comparing and contrasting different political systems. It seeks to enhance our understanding of politics by comparing the political systems, political institutions, and political processes of different countries around the world. In doing so, comparative politics seeks to address questions as to how different societies organize themselves politically; why some societies are democratic and others non-democratic; why many go through peaceful social change as others experience violent social revolutions; whether there is a link between type of regime and economic performance; as well as the consequences of type of regime for policy outcomes and citizen participation in politics. In seeking to address these issues among others, this course is premised on the concept of democracy. We will assume that democracy is a continuum and is predicated upon the manner in which political institutions and processes are structured in a given polity.

Following a methodological introduction and an examination of institutional approaches, we will proceed to examine the different ways in which political institutions are structured around the world and their implications for governance, participation, and political outcomes. We will then focus on country-case studies divided into three sets on a democratic continuum. First we will focus on established democracies, including Britain and India; and then transitional democracies including Mexico and South Africa, and finally non-democracies including Iran and China. It is expected that at the end of the course, students would have gained skills for comparative political analysis; and enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the different ways in which politics is conducted around the world; as well as grasped the consequences and implications for these differences.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Kopstein & Lichbach, 2009. *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Todd Landman 2003. *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, New York: Routledge.
3. Christian Soe, ed. 2009. *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 2008/2009*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

4. Other readings will be assigned from time to time as indicated in the course outline below.

COURSE POLICIES

1. Class attendance is mandatory and any unexcused absence will be penalized. Students are expected to come to class early and sign the attendance sheet. It is the responsibility of those with valid reasons for being absent to provide documented proof so that changes can be made on their attendance record.
2. Students are required to switch off beepers, pagers, and cell phones while class is in session.
3. Students are expected to read the assigned material for each class meeting before coming to class so as to be active participants in class discussions. In addition to the textbooks, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with current issues in international politics as reported both by the print and electronic media, particularly focusing on reports and articles about themes/issues/countries/regions related to those covered in the course.
4. In addition to two midterm exams and three pop quizzes, students are required to write two analytical papers of between 7 and 10 double-spaced pages on countries of their choice. The country chosen must be outside of North America and not included in this syllabus as one of the case studies to be discussed in class. Details about the papers will be provided in class. Country choices are due the third week of class.
5. All country analytical papers are to be presented in class with each student allocated five minutes. They must be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date in hard copy, typed double space using a 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Under no circumstances will electronic submission of assignments be allowed.
6. Make-up exams will only be given for documented medical or official reasons such as participation in scheduled away sports games, call-up for military duty, etc. No make-up exams will be given for early vacation plans, over-sleeping, etc. Other than in the case of emergencies such as hospitalization, accident, and severe illness, for documented, official reasons, permission must be received in advance of the exam.
7. To do well in this course, you need to read the assigned materials carefully and critically; attend class regularly; participate in class discussions; complete assignments on time; and take advantage of my office hours to consult with me on class issues you do not understand.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

❖ Participation	10%	Class attendance and active participation
❖ Midterm 1	20%	September 19
❖ Country Paper 1	20%	October 22
❖ Midterm 2	20%	November 5
❖ Country Paper 2	20%	December 8
❖ Three pop quizzes	10%	Impromptu, based on readings

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

95-100: A; 90-94: A-; 87-89: B+; 84-86: B; 80-83: B-; 77-79: C+; 74-76: C; 70-73: C-; 60-69: D; 0-59: F

THE HONOR CODE

An essential feature of scholarship is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. Accordingly, it is expected that students will abide by the college's honor code in all their scholarly activities and conduct.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

I. Institutional Approaches

DATE	TOPIC	READING
Aug 27	Introduction to the Course	No Reading
Aug 29	Methods and Significance of Comparative Political Analysis	Landman Chap 1; K&L, 1-37
Sep 1	Labor Day Holiday	None
Sep 3 & 5	Economic Development and the Essentials of Democracy	Landman Chap 4; Soe 5&6
Sep 8 & 10	The Politics of Social Movements	Landman Chap 6; Soe 7&8
Sep 12&15	The Politics of Violence and Revolution	Landman Chap 5; Soe 3&4
Sep 17	Video Show: The Challenge of Diversity	Landman Chap 8; Soe 15, 45
Sep 19	Midterm Exam 1	Revise Notes & Readings

II. The Politics of Established Democracies

	U.K: Roots of Parliamentary Democracy	
Sept 22	Modern State Formation	K&L, pp. 41-68
Sept 24	Governance and Policymaking	K&L, pp. 68-85
Sept 26	Political Economy and Development	TBA
Sept 29	Current Politics and Topical Issues	Soe, 9, 10, & 11
	India: World's Most Populous Democracy	
Oct 01	Modern State Formation	K&L, pp. 367-388
Oct 03	Governance and Policy making	K&L, pp. 383-402
Oct 06	Political Economy and Development	K&L, pp. 388-417
Oct 08	Current Trends and Topical Issues	Soe, 37 & 38
Oct 10	Paper 1 Presentation	Prepare presentation
Oct 13	Paper 1 Presentation	Prepare presentation

III. The Politics of Transitional Democracies

Date	Mexico: From Caudillos to Zapatistas	Readings
Oct 15	Modern state formation	K&L, pp. 319-336
Oct 17	Governance and Policymaking	K&L, pp. 336-364
Oct 20	Fall Recess	None
Oct 22	Political Economy and development	TBA
Oct 24	Current Trends an Topical Issues	Soe, 34
	South Africa: The Legacy of Apartheid	
Oct 27	Modern state formation	K&L, pp. 461-472, TBA
Oct 29	Governance and Policymaking	K&L, pp. 472-494
Oct 31	Political Economy and Development	TBA
Nov 03	Current Trends and Topical Issues	TBA
Nov 05	Midterm 2	Revise Notes and Readings

IV. The Politics of Non-Democracies

	Iran: The Politics of a Theocracy	
Nov 07	Modern State Formation	K&L, pp. 419-441
Nov 10	Governance and Policymaking	K&L, pp. 429-458
Nov 12	Political Economy and Development	TBA
Nov 14	Current Trends and Topical Issues	Soe, 39, 40
	China: Politics of the Middle Kingdom	
Nov 17	Modern State Formation	K&L, pp. 271-287
Nov 19	Governance and Policymaking	K&L, pp. 287-315
Nov 21	Political Economy and Development	TBA
Nov 24	Current Trends and Topical Issues	Soe, 31, 32, 33
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Recess	None
Nov 28	Thanksgiving Recess	None
Dec 01	Paper 2 Presentation	Prepare Presentation
Dec 08	Paper 2 Presentation	Prepare Presentation
Dec 10	Recap and Conclusion	Soe, 1, 2, 20 & 21