

Introduction to Comparative Politics
PS 100
Winter 2007
Monday/Wednesday 8:30 - 10:18am

Instructor: Elizabeth Kloss
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Office Hours: 3044 Derby Hall
Mondays and Wednesdays
10:30 - 11:30am or by appointment

OVERVIEW

This course will offer you many opportunities to learn more about political and governmental systems around the world and, more importantly, how politics can and does affect all of us. In order to increase your understanding of the politics and processes of modern governing, the first goal of this course is to introduce you to the methodology and logic of comparative studies. Secondly, you will have the opportunity to familiarize yourself with the broad concepts which serve to underpin the governments of nations around the world. Lastly, in this course, you will become familiar with the contemporary political situations of various countries. Success in this course will enable you to make better informed choices and judgements about your own government and will give you insights into political systems of nations around the globe.

GOALS/RATIONALE

This class, like all courses in social science, helps students understand human behavior and cognition and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions. As a International Issues course, this class was designed to help students become more educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world. Thus, this course will not only expand your knowledge of political structures and political culture but also will help you understand the role political science can play in understanding the conflicts and dilemmas in the world today. It is my hope that this course increases your interest in politics and will help empower you to make thoughtful and informed political and personal choices.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students exhibit an understanding of political, economic, cultural, physical, and social differences among the nations of the world, including a specific examination of non-Western culture.
2. Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
3. Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.

4. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making. around the world.

REQUIREMENTS

Students should purchase Frank L. Wilson's (2002) *Concepts and Issues in Comparative Politics*, which is available at SBX. This text will serve to cover the theoretical core of comparative politics. In addition, students are required to read both the "front page" and the "international" sections of the PRINT EDITION of *The New York Times* on a daily (Monday - Friday) basis. This will provide information regarding contemporary politics around the world. Students can subscribe to the *Times* or, alternatively, the *Times* is available at the University Library and via the internet at www.nytimes.com.

Lastly, at the end of the quarter, there will be readings from Gregory S. Mahler's (2003) *Comparative Politics: An Institutional and Cross-National Approach, 4th ed.* on four (Mexico, Japan, France, and Russia) nations. You can either purchase this book at SBX or assess these chapters via electronic reserve. Students are expected keep up with class and reading assignments and to attend class ready to actively participate in the learning process.

EVALUATION

There are 100 points available in this course. Students are required to complete three exams and a four-to-seven page essays. Each of these tasks will be worth 25 points. In addition, there will be several unannounced, "pop" quizzes, based on the assigned readings, throughout the quarter. Each of these quizzes will be worth 1 point of EXTRA CREDIT. No make-up quizzes will be offered. Class attendance and participation will also be taken into account at the margins when determining final grades. Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A =	94.00% or higher
A- =	90.00 - 93.99%
B+ =	88.00 - 89.99%
B =	82.00 - 87.99%
B- =	80.00 - 81.99%
C+ =	78.00 - 79.99%
C =	72.00 - 77.99%
C- =	70.00 - 71.99%
D+ =	68.00 - 69.99%
D =	62.00 - 67.99%
D- =	60.00 - 61.99%

EXAMS

Each exam will be a mixture of multiple choice (on scan-tron forms) and short answer and essay questions. Political science is a cumulative discipline so therefore you will be expected to build on knowledge throughout the quarter. However, each exam will focus on the material present most recently.

PAPER

Students will have considerable freedom regarding the topic for their paper. Students should select a current event (from their reading of the *New York Times*) and **research** how it is related to a concept from comparative politics covered in the course. The purpose of these papers is to allow you to think critically about the material from the text and to combine a theoretical concept from class with real world events as described by the *New York Times*. In other words, your papers should illustrate how comparative politics and political science can help clarify contemporary politics in nations around the world. This is a challenging assignment and I strongly encourage you to discuss your paper ideas with me in advance.

PLEASE NOTE: All written assignments are expected to be typed, doubled spaced with one inch margins and in a 10 or 12 point font. Acceptable fonts are CG Times or Times New Roman. Please number your pages and be sure that your paper is stapled before you turn it in. The clarity of your writing will affect the strength of your analyses and therefore students should proof-read and spell-check their work carefully.

Remember, you **must** cite any information and/or ideas that you take from someone else's work. Also note, you should limit your use of direct quotations (someone else's words surrounded by "") to the **rare** occasion when the original author has stated your point perfectly and it can not be improved. Otherwise, you are generally better off stylistically using your own words and citing the ideas and facts provided by other authors.

For citations, I prefer that students use the Scientific Style outlined in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. However, any citation method is acceptable as long as it is used correctly and consistently. For help with citations, I recommend you refer to this helpful web site:
http://newark.osu.edu/library/Citation%20Style%20Guides/LIBapa_citation_guide.htm

Written assignments and exams are expected to be completed on time, according to the class schedule, unless arrangements have been made with the instructor in advance or the student provides the instructor with a documented medical excuse. Hard copies of all papers should be turned in directly to the instructor. No electronic copies of any assignment will be accepted.

I am happy to help students with this writing assignment by discussing ideas and brainstorming. I will also schedule appointments with students to look over drafts until 48 hours prior to the scheduled due date. Students can also get help with writing assignments from The Writing Center at CSTW, which is located in 475 Mendenhall Laboratory at 125 South Oval Mall. You can contact them at (614) 688-4291 or make an appointment by e-mailing them at: wcenter@osu.edu

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and

guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- * The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html)
- * Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html)
- * Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity (www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html)

The above statement concerning academic integrity was taken verbatim from the web site of the Office of Academic Affairs on July 8, 2004, located at:

<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/faq.html#academicmisconductstatement>

ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities that will make it difficult to carry out the work as outlined in this syllabus, or will require extra time for quizzes and exams, must notify me as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. You must also contact the University's Office of Disability Services (292-3307) to receive appropriate documentation. All information and documentation of disability are confidential. For further information, consult the ODS website at <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/ods/students/handbook/>.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The following is a outline of the questions and topics we will address during this course, the reading assignments for each class and the schedule of exams and other important dates.

WEEK 1 - January 1 - 5

What is Comparative Politics?

Wednesday: Course Introduction
Wilson, preface and chap. 1, pp. xiii - 16.

WEEK 2 - January 8 -12

How does geography affect politics within and between countries?
What kinds of cleavages exist in modern societies? How do they influence politics?
Think about the relationship between political and economic systems.

Monday: Wilson, chap. 2, pp. 17 - 29
Wednesday: Wilson, chap. 3, pp. 30 - 54

WEEK 3 - January 15 - 19

How do elections work?

Monday: MLK Day - University is closed, no class or office hours
Wednesday: Wilson, chap. 4, pp. 55 - 77.

WEEK 4 - January 22 - 26

Monday: Electoral Simulation - be sure to have read and thought about chap. 4.
Wednesday: Simulation Discussion & Review

WEEK 5 - January 29 - February 2

Why are political parties so important? How do interest groups differ from parties and why do these differences matter?

Monday: 1st EXAM
Wednesday: Wilson, chaps. 5 - 6, pp. 78 - 122

WEEK 6: February 5 - 9

Why are some people more powerful than others?

Monday: Wilson, chap. 7, pp. 123 - 137
Wednesday: Wilson, chap 8, pp. 138 - 152

WEEK 7: February 12 - 16

What is “good government”? How do the political rules shape political outcomes and how do governments really govern?

Monday: Wilson, chaps. 9 - 10, pp. 153 - 182

PAPER DUE

Wednesday: Catch-up and Review

WEEK 8: February 19 - 23

Political Performance and Change

Monday: 2nd EXAM

Wednesday: Wilson, chaps.11-12 , pp. 183 - 220

WEEK 9: February 16 - March 2

Government and politics in Japan and France.

Monday: France: On Reserve - Mahler, chap.10, pp. 214 - 243

Wednesday: Japan: On Reserve - Mahler, chap.12, pp. 267 - 292

WEEK 10: March 5 - 9

Government and politics in Russia and Mexico.

Monday: Russia: On Reserve - Mahler, chap.16, pp. 364 - 386

Wednesday: Mexico: On Reserve - Mahler, chap.14, pp. 317 - 341

MONDAY, MARCH 12 - 3rd EXAM
7:30 - 9:30am
(scheduled by the University, NOT me)