

Political Science 100 – Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2006

TR 3:30 – 5:18 PM

3094 Smith Lab (SM)

Michael Litzinger

Phone: 614-292-9496 (office)

2001 Derby Hall

E-mail: litzinger.24@osu.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30 – 1:30, Thursday 1:30 – 3 or by appointment

Course Goals:

We will be exploring a wide variety of countries viewed through the lens of comparative political theory and comparing them across different issues. You should gain an appreciation of the unique characteristics of each country while, at the same time, developing the tools necessary to be able to link lessons from diverse countries through thematic understanding. This is an opportunity for you, the student, to engage your creativity in a global sense.

There are a number of lines of comparison employed in comparative politics, occasionally overlapping and often sources of contention. Among the more prominent examples are:

- 1.) regime type (Democracy? Authoritarian? Other?)
- 2.) level of national income (Rich? Middle? Poor?)
- 3.) patterns of social organization and political contestation (How do people, groups and parties within the state relate to each other? Who gets what, when and how?)

This is only a sampling and does not address the issue of whether classification alone leads to better understanding of the countries we observe in the real world. At a more practical level, it is my hope that you will become familiar with the historical background and current issues facing the countries we study. Even if this is your only formal coursework in political science, this knowledge should enhance your ability to intelligently engage in the political process and critique political outcomes that can affect lives in local, national and global communities.

Required Text (available at campus-area bookstores and from online retail sites):

Hauss, Charles (2006). *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*. 5th ed. Thomson/Wadsworth. (ISBN # 0534590535)

In addition, the companion website for the book is located at:

<http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com/hauss05>

We will be using this site for some additional material and no registration is needed to gain access to the features covered in this course.

While the textbook used for this course is very recently updated, **students are still expected to follow current events through careful reading of daily newspapers or reputable electronic sources**. Those events, especially, that affect the countries examined in the course will be fair game for discussion in class and will help enhance the quality and timeliness of the material we are exploring.

Electronic Reserves:

Some additional readings will be posted to the library's electronic reserves. *Please notify me immediately if there are any problems accessing these resources*. A handout explaining how to use the e-reserves will be distributed on the first day of class.

Grading:

Participation	10%
Discussion Paper/Presentation	20%
First Midterm	20%
Second Midterm	20%
Final Exam	30%

Scale: 93-100 (A), 90-93 (A-), 87-90 (B+), 83-87 (B), 80-83 (B-), 77-80 (C+), 73-77 (C), 70-73 (C-), 65-70 (D+), 55-65 (D), below 55 (E).

Course Format:

The course will primarily be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students will be expected to contribute to classroom discussions and bring their knowledge and experience to the table. Most importantly, students should not be shy about asking questions. Whether it is a question of comprehension or of critique, it is almost certainly relevant to the presentation. We will be covering a great deal of material in a short time and good ideas should not be put aside for another day.

Discussion Paper/Presentation:

There will be one assignment for the quarter that will focus on a set of readings on topics in comparative politics. You will be able to choose a topic that interests you from a list to be handed out early in the quarter. This is **NOT** intended to be a separate research paper, but, rather, a chance for you to go beyond the general course materials and critically explore more specific subject matter. Students have two options from which to choose in doing this assignment. They may either:

- 1.) Write an 8-10 page paper that summarizes the readings and addresses key questions and debates that arise.
- OR**
- 2.) Participate in a roundtable discussion of the topic with other students. This will involve group presentation of the topic and, hopefully, some debate on the interpretation of key issues. Participating students must present two pages (by e-mail) to the instructor by the day before the roundtable that summarizes their position on the issues raised by the readings.

More will be said about this assignment in the near future and topic choices will be presented by the third week of the quarter.

Exams:

There will be a two midterms and a final exam based upon course readings and lecture materials presented during the quarter. These exams will be a mixture of multiple choice questions, short-answer and essay.

Course Schedule:

- Week 1** Tues, Mar 28 – Introductions and Overview
 Thurs, Mar 30 – The State in Comparative Context
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 1.
- Week 2** Tues, Apr 4 – Measures of State Success: Legitimacy and Wealth
 Reading: Shively, Chapters 3 and 6 (**available on e-reserve**).
 Thurs, Apr 6 – The Democratic Debate and Its Origins
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 2.
 Sen, Amartya. “The Importance of Democracy.” In Mark Kesselman and Joel Krieger (eds.) *Readings in Comparative Politics* (2006). Houghton Mifflin (**available on e-reserve**).
 Zakaria, Fareed. “The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad.” In Mark Kesselman and Joel Krieger (eds.) *Readings in Comparative Politics* (2006). Houghton Mifflin (**available on e-reserve**).
- Week 3** Tues, Apr 11 – **The United States:** American Exceptionalism?
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 3.
 Thurs, Apr 13 – **Britain**
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 4.
- Week 4** Tues, Apr 18 – Developed World Case Study 3 (By popular vote)
 Reading: TBA.
 Thurs, Apr 20 – **FIRST MIDTERM EXAM**

- Week 5** Tues, Apr 25 – The Communist and Post-Communist Challenges
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 8.
 Thurs, Apr 27 – **Russia**
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 9.
- Week 6** Tues, May 2 – Rethinking the Global South
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 11.
 Thurs, May 4 – **China**
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 10.
- Week 7** Tues, May 9 – Developing World Case Study 2 (By popular vote)
 Reading: TBA.
 Thurs, May 11 – **SECOND MIDTERM EXAM**
- Week 8** Tues, May 16 – **South Africa**
 Reading: Supplemental SA Chapter available at Hauss website.
 <http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com/hauss05>
 Thurs, May 18 – **Roundtable Discussions 1 and 2**
 Reading and Topics: TBA.
- Week 9** Tues, May 23 – **Iraq**
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 14.
 Thurs, May 25 – **Roundtable Discussions 3 and 4**
 Reading and Topics: TBA.
- Week 10** Tues, May 30 – Crafting Democratic Solutions in the 21st Century
 Reading: Handelman, Howard. “The Politics of Cultural Pluralism and
 Ethnic Conflict.” Chapter 4 in *The Challenge of Third World
 Development*. 4th ed. (2005). Pearson/Prentice Hall
 (available on e-reserve).
 Thurs, June 1 - Wrap-Up and Review
 Reading: Hauss, Chapter 17.
- Week 11** Tues, June 6 – **FINAL EXAM** (from 3:30 to 5:18 PM in SM 3094)

Student Bill of Rights:

- 1) Students shall have the right to ask questions, share viewpoints and participate in class and be heard and considered in a respectful manner by their instructor and peers. No personal attacks or discrimination of any kind will be tolerated.
- 2) Students shall have the right to expect the instructor to exercise due diligence in meeting concerns regarding the course. These include, but are not limited to, the right to feedback on exams and papers within a reasonable amount of time, the right to notification in the event of changes from the syllabus, and the right to be graded fairly and impartially.
- 3) Having chosen of their own freewill to be enrolled in this course, students shall be given a fair opportunity to demonstrate knowledge gained and expect their efforts to translate into an increased ability to synthesize and present conceptual and case-specific ideas. Accommodations for any disabilities will be provided through the OSU Office for Disability Services.

Instructor's Bill of Rights:

- 1) The instructor shall have the right to read original content in all student work presented. Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will be dealt with according to the OSU Procedures and Rules for Academic Misconduct.
- 2) The instructor shall have the right to expect to be notified in a timely manner of any student concerns that may affect performance in the course and to expect that students will make an effort to balance their workload over the quarter so as to avoid difficult situations. No make-up exams will be given except in cases of a documented emergency.
- 3) The instructor retains the right to direct lectures and class discussion without unreasonable distraction or inattentiveness on the part of students. Turn off the cell phones and MP3 players, please.
- 4) Given the nature and breadth of material covered, the instructor shall have the right to expect students to come prepared by having done the assigned readings and to use this material to further enhance the quality of the classroom instruction.

GEC Goals and Objectives:**5. Diversity: International Issues****Goals/ Rationale:**

“Diversity: International Issues courses help students become educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world. “

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. “

7. Social Science**Goals/Rationale:**

“Courses in social science help students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions.”

Learning Objectives:

1. “Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. “
2. “Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.”
3. “Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making. “