

Syllabus
Political Science 100
Introduction to Comparative Politics.
Spring 2006

Instructor: Katja Michalak, M.A.
Class: M and W: 05:30 PM to 7:18 PM, MQ 161
Office Hours: T and R: 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, Hall, RM 3078. (or by appointment)
Contact: 292- 3197, email: michalak_polisci@yahoo.com

Course Description

‘Many forms of government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.’

Winston Churchill, 1947

The purpose of this comparative politics course is to familiarize students with some of the basic democratic concepts and theories in comparative politics. The objectives of this course are: (1) to introduce the beginning student to the forms of government and politics of the selected countries of the world; (2) to examine some countries comparatively, that is, how is country related to another one, and what can we infer from studying one country to another one. (3) Furthermore, to apply the gained knowledge to the current political development.

The case selection is divided into three different categories: a) established democracies: France and Germany; b) developing democracies: Russia and the Visegrad States (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia – as one geographical unit) and, c) non-democracies: China.

By including a wide range of case examples, students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry. Furthermore, students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated upon the following:

Midterm Examination I	20%	(April 26 th)
Midterm Examination II	20%	(May 24 th)
Participation, Class Attendance and Individual Study	10%	
Final Paper	30%	(June 7 th , Via Email)
Bibliography	10%	(May 22 nd)
Unannounced Quizzes 2 x (5% each)	10%	

Students are responsible for all the required readings and the material required in the course. Class will combine lecture with as much discussion as possible. You will be graded on the basis of your performance on the two midterm examinations, the final paper, and class participation. The two midterm examinations (each worth 20% of final grade) will cover all the material discussed up to that point. The final paper assignment is a two-step process. First, students will submit a 2 to 3 page comprehensive bibliography that should include both books and journal articles related to their topic of choice as well as along with one paragraph outline of their final paper. This will be worth 10% of the final grade. Second, students will submit a final paper (6-8 pages, excluding bibliography) applying what they have learned to their selected concept and/or country. The final paper will be worth 30% of the final grade. In addition, there will be three unannounced quizzes, on which the student can drop one. Finally, participation is essential for fruitful class progress. Combined, in-class participation, attendance and the individual study exercise are worth 10% of the final grade. And most importantly, I value class attendance as a main point in both participation and as the “engine” for a fun class.

Required Readings

The following two books are required for this class and are available for purchase at campus bookstores: (i.e. SBX)

1. Kesselman, Mark et al. 2004. *Introduction to Comparative Politics*. 3rd edition. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
2. Soe, Christian (ed). *Comparative Politics. 04/05*. Twenty-Second Edition. Dubuque: McGraw-Hill/Dushkins

Additional required readings are at the closed reserve in the Main library.

Grading

Grading Curve:

A (90-100), **A-** (87-89.99), **B+** (84-86.99) **B** (80-83.99), **B-** (77-79.99), **C+** (74-76.99), **C** (70-73.99), **C-** (67-69.99), **D+** (64-66.99), **D** (60-63.99), and **E** (59.99 and below).

Academic Honesty:

All of the work done in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the University Committee on Academic Misconduct and handled according to university policy. Penalties can include: failing this class and/or expulsion from the university. If you have any doubts in regards to what is considered cheating and/or plagiarism, please do not hesitate in contacting me for clarification purposes.

Students with Disability:

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in the first week of the quarter. Course materials are available in alternative formats upon request. For such materials, please contact Mr. Wayne DeYoung, 2150 Derby Hall, 154 N. Oval Mall, 292-2880.

Make up quizzes:

If you miss a class session, please arrange to get notes from your class mate. I will not provide you with lecture notes you have missed. Furthermore, no incomplete grades or make-up exams will be only in the case the following requirements are met by the student: (1) the student has a legitimate excuse for his/her absence, like illness, family matters, mandatory presence at certain university events etc. (2) the student notifies the instructor about the absence and the reasons for this absence through Email prior to the relevant class session, or in emergency situations, as soon as possible afterwards.

Schedule:

Monday, March 27:

Organizational meeting

Wednesday, March 29th:

Introducing Comparative Politics

KKJ, pp. 3-15 "Introduction"

"States, Nations and Nation -States"

(Guest lecture: Konstantin Voessing)

Monday, April 3rd:

What is a Democracy? What is a dictatorship?

Theories of democratic and non-democratic regimes.

Soe, C. pp.90-97.

Classifying Political Systems

KKJ, pp. 16-23 and 210-215.

Wednesday, April 5th:

Introduction to the diversity of political regimes and political ideologies

Linz, Juan and Alfred Stepan. (1996) *Types of political regimes and respect for human rights*. (at Closed Reserve/ Main library)

Monday, April 10th:

ESTABLISHED DEMOCRACIES – France and Germany

State formation in France and Germany

KKJ, pp. 83-95 (French State)

KKJ, pp. 137-148 (German State)

Introduction to Political Institutions and case studies

KKJ, pp. 105-115 (France)

KKJ, pp. 159-173 (Germany)

Soe, C. pp. 33-43 and 47-50.

Monday, April 12:

Introduction to Political Parties

Kitschelt, Herbert *Left-Libertarian Parties*. In: *World Politics*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 194-234

Political Parties II – and case studies

KKJ, pp. 117-122 (France)

KKJ, pp. 173- 179 (Germany)

Monday, April 17th:

Political Culture and Political Behavior

KKJ, pp. 120-126 (France)

KKJ, pp. 180- 184 (Germany)

Wednesday, April 19th:

Political Economy and Development

KKJ, pp. 95-104 (France)

KKJ, pp. 149-159 (Germany)

Monday, April 24:

Individual Study

Wednesday, April 26th:

Midterm Examination I

DEVELOPING DEMOCRACIES – RUSSIA

- Monday, May 1st: **Theories of Transition and Consolidation**
KKJ, pp. 396-398 (Russia)
Soe, pp. 128-131
- Wednesday, May 3rd: **State Building Process - Russia**
KKJ, pp. 347-360
Soe, C. pp. 131-143.
- Monday, May 8th: **Political Institutions and Political Parties - Russia**
KKJ, pp. 371-383
KKJ, pp. 386 – 394
- Political Economy and Transition Democracies**
Documentary.
- Wednesday, May 10th: **The Visegrad States**
Poland and Hungary:
(reading materials at closed reserve/ Main library)
- Monday, May 15th: **The Czech Republic and Slovakia:**
(reading materials at closed reserve/ Main library)
- Wednesday, May 17th: **NON-DEMOCRACIES - China**
- Non-democratic regimes – case study: China**
KKJ, pp. 621-632
KKJ, pp. 664-668
Soe, pp. 175-180 (The Quiet Revolution)
- China: Political Institutions and Political Parties**
KKJ, pp. 643-662.
- Monday, May 22nd: **Bibliography due**
- China: Political Economy**
KKJ, pp. 633-642
Soe, pp. 184-187 (In March Toward Capitalism)
- Wednesday, May 24th: **Midterm Examination II**

Monday, May 29: No class – Memorial Day

Wednesday, May 31st: **Class summary/ Documentation and Preparation for Final Paper**

Wednesday, June 7th: **Final Paper due (4 pm)** - Via Email.