

Introduction to Comparative Politics
PS 100
Winter 2002 \$ MW 5:30 - 7:18pm

Instructor: Elizabeth Kloss
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Office Hours: 2168 Derby Hall
TR 11:30 - 12:30 or by appointment

OVERVIEW

This course will offer you many opportunities to learn more about governments around the world and how politics can affect you as a citizen. In order to empower you to understand 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 about our own government and will give you insights into political systems around the world.

REQUIREMENTS

Students should purchase 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 the international section 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* for a reduced rate. Alternatively, the *Times* is available at the University Library and over the Internet at www.nytimes.com. Lastly, at the end of the quarter, there will be readings on four (France, Mexico, Russian and China) nations. Details regarding these reading will be provided in class.

Students are expected keep up with class and reading assignments and to attend class ready to actively participate in the learning process.

EVALUATION

Students are required to complete three exams and two three-to-five page thought essays. Each of these tasks will be worth 20 points. In addition, there will be three unannounced, Apop@ quizzes throughout the quarter. Each of these quizzes (based on the material covered by the *New York Times*, will be worth 2 points of EXTRA CREDIT. No make-up quizzes will be offered.

Students will have considerable freedom regarding the topics for each paper. Students may elect to address the questions on the syllabus for the weeks prior to the due date or to discuss current events as they relate to the topics 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*. Papers are expected to be typed, doubled spaced with one inch margins and in a 10 or 12 point font. The clarity of your writing will affect the strength of your analyses and therefore students should proof-read and spell-check their work carefully before turning it in.

PLEASE NOTE: All assignments must be handed to the instructor. No electronic copies will be accepted.

Lastly, to help stimulate class discussion, students will have the opportunity to earn up to 5 additional points of extra credit by leading a 5-10 minute classroom discussion linking a current event to the topics discussed in the text or in lecture. Presentations are to be scheduled in advance and up to three students may lead the discussion per class session. Students assigned to present on the same day should coordinate with each other to make sure that they are each offering something new to the classroom discussion. Each presentation will be graded on a 5-point scale and students may offer to lead a discussion once during the course of the quarter. Extra credit presentations will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis and students are strongly encouraged to participate in this extra credit opportunity early in the quarter.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All of the work that students do in this course is expected to be their own. Cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas, including material from web sites, without proper citation) will not be tolerated. Any case of possible academic misconduct in the form of cheating or plagiarism will be reported automatically to the University Committee on Academic Misconduct and handled according to University policy.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner. It is best to do this during the first week of the course. Course materials can be made available in alternative formats upon request.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The following pages contain a topical outline for the course, the reading assignments for each topic and the schedule of assignments and due dates.

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1- January 7 - 11

What is Comparative Politics?

M: Course Introduction

W: Wilson, preface and chap. 1, pp. xiii - 16.

WEEK 2 - January 14 - 18

How does geography affect politics within and between countries?

What kinds of cleavages exist in modern societies. How do they influence politics?

M: Wilson, chap. 2, pp. 16 - 29.

W: Wilson, chap. 3, pp. 30 - 54.

WEEK 3 - January 21 -25

How do the Rules of the game of politics affect who participates?

M: MLK DAY - NO CLASS

W: Wilson, chap. 4, pp. 55 - 76.

WEEK 4 - January 28 - February 1

How do political parties matter?

M: Electoral Simulation - be sure to have read chap. 4

W: 1st EXAM

WEEK 5: February 4 - 8

What roles do groups and parties play in politics? Are they the same?

M: Wilson, chap. 5, pp. 78 - 104.

W: Wilson, chap. 6, pp. 105 - 121.

WEEK 6: February 11 - 15

Why are some people more powerful than others?
What is a good government?@

M: Wilson, chap. 7, pp. 123 - 137.
1st PAPER DUE
W: Wilson, chap. 8, pp. 138 - 151.

WEEK 7: February 18 - 22

How do the political rules shape political outcomes and how governments really govern?
How do you evaluate politics?

M: Wilson, chaps. 9 - 10, pp. 154 - 182.
W: Wilson, chap. 11, pp. 183 - 201.

WEEK 8: February 25 - March 1

Reform or Revolution? Which is more effective?

M: Wilson, chap.12, pp. 202 - 220.
REVIEW
W: 2nd EXAM.

WEEK 9: March 4 - 8

Government and politics in France and Mexico

M:M: France: reading TBA.
W: Mexico: reading TBA.

WEEK 10: March 11 - 15

Government and politics in Russia and China

M:M: Russia: reading TBA.
W:W: China: reading TBA.

2nd PAPER DUE AT NOON ON FRIDAY, MARCH 15

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM:

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2002
5:30 - 7:30PM