

# Political Science 100

## Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2006  
Boyd Laboratory 0205  
Tuesday and Thursday, 11.30 am – 1.18 pm

Office Hours: Tuesday, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm, and by appointment

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### Course description

This course will introduce students to the comparative analysis of politics. We will be investigating differences and similarities in government and politics across a variety of countries around the world. To that end, Comparative Politics deals both with themes that can be observed, in one way or another, for a broad range of political systems and an analysis of these themes in specific countries. In this course, we will combine a thematic approach to comparative politics with a more in-depth study of some individual countries.

By completing this course, you will acquire a variety of skills: *First*, you will learn about the most important themes in political analysis (ranging from the formation of states, the diversity of political regimes and political institutions to the nature of political parties, citizens' attitudes toward politics and voting behavior). *Second*, you will achieve a broader knowledge about how politics works in a variety of countries. *Third*, you will be exposed to ideas about how differences in the conduct of politics in between one country and another can be explained (i.e., you will learn to respond to questions like "why is it that Great Britain is democratic, but China is not?"). *Fourth*, you will learn how to do comparative political analysis yourself by applying your general knowledge about political themes and phenomena to a specific country or set of countries. Acquiring these skills will make you a more insightful and knowledgeable observer of politics in foreign countries and the US as well as preparing you for participation in more advanced courses in the Social Sciences or International Studies.

The course is divided into five parts. In *Part I*, we will familiarize ourselves with the basics of comparative politics. We will introduce the major themes in comparative analysis, and set the stage for the following weeks by defining the most important concepts that we will be dealing with in this course and by outlining how these themes connect with one another. In *Part II*, we will start by discussing the state as the most important entity for the exercise of political authority. Why are states so important for the conduct of politics? How and why have different states as we know them today emerged throughout history?

In *Part III*, we will explore the diversity of states in terms of their political regimes and their political institutions. What are the differences between democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes? Why is it that some states are democratic, while others are not? How and why do some states become democratic, while others remain non-democratic or have become non-democratic in the past? In *Part IV*, we will compare two important political actors that contribute to the conduct of politics in different countries – political parties and ordinary citizens. How can we distinguish different types or families of political parties? How have different party systems emerged in different countries? How do ordinary citizens vary in their attitudes towards politics across countries? Why do citizens in different countries vote as they do?

In each of these sessions, we will use many examples to clarify the issues and general concepts that we are dealing with. In the last section of this course (*Part V*), we will combine all these examples and investigate the political themes that we have covered in parts I to IV on a country by country basis, focusing on the cases of Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and China.

The entire course is based on student readings and lectures with in-class discussion. Regular attendance and reading the assigned materials before class is crucial. You should come to class prepared and ready to ask questions or comment on the themes covered in a particular session. I suggest you take notes while you are reading, including outlines of the material's content and/ or your own questions, ideas and comments in order to be well prepared. You are encouraged to contact me, whenever you have a question or concern about the course, the readings, assignments etc. If this is the case, you are always welcome to see me during office hours, contact me through Email or arrange an appointment, if you are not available during my office hours.

## Readings

The majority of the readings for this course are from the following textbook that is available at OSU Bookstores: *Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger and William A. Joseph (eds.). Introduction to Comparative Politics (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston: Houghton Mifflin [Abbreviated KKJ].*

A small coursepack with additional readings is available from the Electronic Reserves at the OSU libraries website. You can access, download or print the included articles both on campus and from any off-campus computer that has Internet access: (1) Go to the OSU Libraries website ([www.lib.ohio-state.edu](http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu)). If you are on campus, no sign in is required; if you are accessing from off campus, you must first sign in through the link at the top of the page. (2) Click on OSU library catalog to go to OSCAR (3) On the OSCAR screen, select "Find reserves by: Course or Prof/ TA. Click on Prof/ TA and enter the instructor's name. Click on course and enter the name of the course. (4) Find the electronic reserve listing for the course and click on the listing. (5) You can print an article by right-clicking on it and selecting "Print target"; you can load the article on your computer by left-clicking on it.

## Assignments and Grading

### Three quizzes (30 % of final grade)

Throughout the quarter, there will be three quizzes. Each of these quizzes will count for 10 % toward your final grade. The quizzes are not cumulative; they will contain short essay questions about the major issues, concepts and examples covered in the relevant course sessions and readings. They are geared at testing your factual knowledge about the according section of the course. Quizzes will take place on April 13, April 27, and May 16.

### Final Exam (40 % of final grade)

The final exam will be cumulative, but much less specific than the quizzes. You will be asked to integrate and apply the knowledge you have acquired throughout the course. It will contain essay questions and ask you to outline an argument based on one or few of the major themes covered in the course, while using evidence from countries treated in this course to support your explanations. A study guide will be distributed prior to the exam on May 30, and a review session will be held on June 1.

### **Term Paper (30 % of final grade)**

You are expected to complete a short term paper, based on any one of the options listed at the end of this syllabus. Your paper is supposed to be about 5 to 8 pages long (12 point font, double spacing). In one of the class sessions during the first half of the quarter, I will provide you with an overview about how you should go about writing the paper, how it should be structured etc. Moreover, throughout the process of preparing and writing, you are encouraged to contact me for feedback, advice, or comments on draft versions of the paper etc. The paper is due in class as a hard copy on June 1.

### **Following current events**

Regularly following news coverage of current events from quality sources is crucial in helping you understand the issues covered in this course. Some quality sources that I would suggest to consider are the *Economist* ([www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)), the *New York Times* ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)) and the English edition of *Der Spiegel* (<http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international/>).

### **Grading Scale**

A (100-90)	A- (89-85)	B+ (84-80)	B (79-75)	B- (74-70)	
C+ (69-65)	C (64-60)	C- (59-55)	D+ (54-50)	D (49-40)	E (<40)

## **Additional Course Policies**

### **Accommodations for Students with disabilities**

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities and/ or special needs. If this concerns you, please bring it to the attention of the instructor during the first week of the course. Moreover, students with documented disabilities should contact and register with the Office of Disability services.

### **Make up exams**

Students, who miss a class session during which a quiz is given are eligible for a make up quiz *only* in 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.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own; cheating and plagiarizing will not be tolerated. Any case of academic dishonesty will be handled according to University policies. Details of the University academic honesty policy and procedures provided for in case of violations can be obtained from the OSU website.

## Course Schedule and Required Readings

### Part I – Introduction to the comparative analysis of politics

1. **Introductory session (03-28)**
2. **Comparative Politics, the comparative method and the logic of comparison (03-30)**

KKJ, pp. 2-35 (“Introduction”)

Lijphart, Arend (1971) Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. In: The American Political Science Review; Vol. 65, No. 3, pp. 682-693

### Part II – States and State formation

3. **States, nations, nation-states, and nationalism (04-04)**

Shively, W. Phillips (2002). “The setting of power: The state”. In: Shively “Comparative Governance”, pp. 14-27

Bendix, Reinhard (1978). “Introduction”. In: Bendix “Kings or People. Power and the mandate to rule”, pp. 3-18

4. **State formation in Britain, France and Germany (04-06)**

KKJ, pp. 39-51 (“The making of the modern British state”)

KKJ, pp. 93-108 (“The making of the modern French state”)

KKJ, pp. 149-160 (“The making of the modern German state”)

5. **The European Union – a case of ‘supranational’ state formation? (04-11)**

Eder, Klaus and Bernhard Giesen (2001). “Citizenship and the making of a European Society”. In: Eder and Giesen “European Citizenship”, pp. 245-270 (ch. 11)

Thatcher, Margaret (1979). “A Family of Nations”. In: Nelsen and Stubb (1998) “The European Union”, pp. 49-54 (ch. 8)

\*\*\* 04-13: Quiz 1 \*\*\*

### Part III – The diversity of states: Political Regimes and Institutions

6. **Introduction to the diversity of Political Regimes (04-13)**

Linz, Juan (1992) “Types of political regimes and respect for human rights”. In: “Human Rights in Perspective”; pp.177-221 (ch. 8)

7. **The nature of non-democratic regimes (04-18)**

KKJ, pp. 355-368 (former Soviet Union/ Russia: “The making of the modern Russian state”.

KKJ, pp. 651-674 (China: “Governance and policy-making” and “Representation and Participation”)

## **8. Diversity of Political Institutions in democratic regimes (04-20)**

- Lijphart, Arend (1984). "Parliamentary vs. presidential government". In "Democracies", pp. 68-77 (ch. 5)
- Blais, André and Louis Mascotte (2002). "Electoral Systems". In: LeDuc et al. "Comparing democracies 2", pp. 40-69 (ch. 2)
- Lijphart, Arend (1984) "The Westminster Model of Democracy" and "The Consensus Model of Democracy". In: "Democracies", pp. 1-36 (chs. 1 and 2)
- KKJ, pp. 61-73 (Britain); pp. 117-131 (France) ; pp. 325-336 (United States); pp. 171-184 (Germany)

## **9. Regime Change (04-25)**

- Diamond, Larry (2002). "Consolidating Democracies". In: LeDuc et al. "Comparing democracies 2", pp. 210-227 (ch. 10)

\*\*\* 04-27: Quiz 2 \*\*\*

## **Part IV – Political Actors**

### **10. Political Parties I – Overview (04-27)**

- Kitschelt, Herbert (1988) "Left-Libertarian Parties: Explaining Innovation in Competitive Party Systems". In: World Politics, Vol. 40, No.2, pp. 194-234
- KKJ, pp. 184-188 (Germany: "Political Parties and the Party System")
- KKJ, pp. 336-338 (United States: "Political Parties and the Party System")

### **11. Political Parties II – Party types and families (05-02)**

- Gunther, Richard and Larry Diamond (2003). "Species of Political Parties". In: Party Politics, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 167-199
- KKJ, pp. 73-74 (Britain: "Political Parties and the Party System")

### **12. Political Parties III – Variety of Party Systems (05-04)**

- KKJ, pp. 131-132 (France: "Political Parties and the Party System")
- KKJ, pp. 235-236 (Japan: "Political Parties and the Party System")
- Mair, Peter (2002) "Comparing Party Systems". In: LeDuc et al. "Comparing democracies 2", pp. 88-107 (ch. 4)

### **13. The citizen in politics I – Political Culture (05-09)**

- Almond, Gabriel et al. (2002). "Political Culture and Socialization". In Almond et al. "Comparative Politics: A world view", pp. 46-61 (ch. 3)
- KKJ, pp. 338-345 (United States: "Elections", "Political Culture, citizenship and identity", "Interests, social movements and protests")
- KKJ, pp. 188-194 (Germany: "Elections", "Political Culture, Citizenship and Identity", "Interests, social movements and protest")
- KKJ, pp. 665-674 (China: "Elections", "Political Culture, Citizenship and Identity", "Interests, social movements and protests")

#### **14. The citizen in politics II – Political Behavior (05-11)**

Lijphart, Arend (1997). "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma". In: American Political Science Review, Vol. 91, No. 1, pp. 1-14  
Norris, Pippa (1998). "Introduction" to "Elections and Voting Behavior", pp. xiii-xxv  
KKJ, pp. 74-81 (Britain: "Elections", "Political Culture, Citizenship and Identity", "Interests, social movements and protests")  
KKJ, pp. 399-404 (Russia: "Elections", "Political Culture, Citizenship and Identity", "Interests, social movements and protests")  
KKJ, pp. 132-138 (France: "Elections", "Political Culture, Citizenship and Identity", "Interests, social movements and protests")

*\*\*\* 05-16: Quiz 3 \*\*\**

### **Part V – Case studies and current issues**

#### **15. Great Britain (05-16)**

KKJ, pp. 37-90 (You already read most of this chapter. Skim and refresh the sections that you already know and focus on the ones that you have not yet read)

#### **16. France (05-18)**

KKJ, pp. 91-146 (You already read most of this chapter. Skim and refresh the sections that you already know and focus on the ones that you have not yet read)

#### **17. Germany (05-23)**

KKJ, pp. 147-200 (You already read most of this chapter. Skim and refresh the sections that you already know and focus on the ones that you have not yet read)

#### **18. Russia (05-25)**

KKJ, pp. 353-414 (You already read some sections of this chapter. Skim and refresh the sections that you already know and focus on the ones that you have not yet read)

#### **19. China (05-30)**

KKJ, pp. 625-682 (You already read some sections of this chapter. Skim and refresh the sections that you already know and focus on the ones that you have not yet read)

*\*\*\* 05-30: Study guide for final exam will be distributed in class today \*\*\**

#### **20. Review Session for Final Exam (06-01)**

*\*\*\* 06-01: Term Paper due in class today \*\*\**

#### **21. Final Exam (06-06)**

## Topics for Term Paper

In order to gather information to write your term paper, you should use the material covered in class sessions as well as the appropriate assigned readings. Moreover, you might want to consider doing some additional readings and researching further resources. To that end, the references, bibliographies and websites listed at the end of the relevant textbook sections provide an excellent collection of resources. If you want to write your paper on a country that is not covered in the lectures or the readings, please come to see me for advice as to which other resources are available. For your term paper, you need to select *one* of the following topics.

- (1) A group of OSU students is going to participate in a UN model conference in Switzerland. Each student represents one 'real' country in a model session of the UN General Assembly. Being a good friend of one of these students, you want to help him prepare for this event by providing him with a concise briefing about how 'his' country differs from the United States. Pick any country that you like and write a paper that introduces your friend to some of the most important political differences between the US and 'his' country.

How can you characterize the political regime of this country and how is it different from the one present in the US? Which are the most important political institutions of this country and how do they differ from those of the US? Which political parties are active in this country, and how are these parties and the party system different from the United States? Which were the most important events in the history of this country? Have the US had similar historical events? What is the single most interesting thing that strikes you as being completely different in this country when compared to the US? (You can focus on a selection of these issues, discuss all of them more briefly or deal with other important issues not mentioned in this list).

- (2) After having received your OSU degree, you want to apply for a job as a political consultant. The company you apply to wants to find out more about your analytical skills and asks you to send them a case study analyzing an important political event. Pick any major political event in a country of your choice that has occurred in the past two years (an important election, a regime change, a war, the formation of a new party, a coup etc. etc.) and explain the reasons for why it has occurred.

Some guiding questions that might help you in designing your paper: Which historical developments have influenced this event? Which political actors (parties, interest groups, political leaders, the citizenry etc.) were involved in it and how did they make it happen? Why did the event happen in one country but not in other similar countries?

- (3) It is the year 2018. You are on the advisory board of the constitution drafting committee of a country that recently got rid of its non-democratic regime and now wants to establish a democratic form of governance. You are asked to write a briefing to your colleagues about the possible choices that can be made for the democratic institutions to be established in this country. Pick any country that currently is still non-democratic and write a paper about the available institutional choices and a recommendation as to which ones you think are preferable for this country.

A suggestion for how to structure your argument. (1) Outline the available options that this country has in terms of electoral systems, in terms of being presidential or parliamentary, federal or centralized, majoritarian or consensual etc. (2) Then, outline some of the relevant characteristics of your country or one that you think is most relevant for the design of its institutions (social cleavages, economic development, character of political leaders, political culture of its citizens etc. etc.) (3) Based on the available options and the characteristics of your country, which recommendations do you make to your colleagues as to which institutional choices your country should make?