

# Introduction to Comparative Politics

## Political Science 130

**Instructor: Roberto Rincon**

Summer 2013

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:45am-1:15pm

Room: 1115

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BSB

Office: BSB 1149

Office Hours: TR 1:15pm-2:15pm

### Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of comparative politics as a way to understand a wide variety of concerns and issues that affect all countries: economic and political development, democracy, revolution, social movements, social and political change, nationalism, political culture and identity among others. We will learn basic concepts and theories and apply them in our analysis of specific country cases. These tools allow us to look at very different peoples and places within a common framework, and to use that framework to better understand political systems in general. We will look at different types of governments, as well as some of the many ways that governments interact with those they govern.

In general, one to two chapters of the course text are assigned for each class. In addition, there will be several articles for each major course topic. These articles will explore the concepts from the textbook in more detail, often applying them to real-world cases. You will be expected to apply these concepts to the country you choose for your country report, described below. All of the articles will be available on Blackboard. In addition, we will also do in-class case studies of a selection of countries. The readings for the cases will also be made available on Blackboard. Lastly, it is recommended that you make an effort to keep up with all of the reading so that you will be able to contribute to class discussions, since participation is a significant portion of your final grade.

### Required Textbooks:

O'Neil, Patrick H. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Norton, 2009. (ISBN 978-0-393-93376-5)

### Course Requirements

Performance in this course will be based on the following:

1. Examinations: There will be *one* short quiz for this class, as well as a final exam. Each will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions; the final will also include a short essay. They will cover material from the textbook, the assigned articles, and lecture. The final exam will be comprehensive. The quiz will account for 15% of your final grade, and the final will account for 30%. The dates for all of the tests are in the schedule below.

2. Homework assignment: There will be one homework assignment, distributed in lecture and due the following week. Distribution and due dates are in the schedule below. The homework assignment will require you to think creatively and apply the concepts you are learning in class to problems of law and government. The assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

3. Country Report: Each student will write a 5-7 page report about a country of their choice. The report should summarize the structures of government and important aspects of politics and society of that country. Students are expected to use some of the concepts, theories or issues discussed in the course to describe and explain the current political situation in that country. The report can be on any country other than the US or the other cases addressed in class. This assignment constitutes 25% of your final grade, and will be due on August 6th.

4. Participation: Participation constitutes 10% of your final grade. Attendance will be taken daily in lecture; and much of your participation grade will be based on your attendance. More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your final grade.

### **Plagiarism**

All of your work in this class—and in every class—must be your own. At a *minimum*, any plagiarized work will automatically receive a grade of zero for the assignment in question, and may also result in a failing grade for the course or disciplinary action by the University. It is possible to be expelled for plagiarism. Do not do it. If you have questions about how to use and cite sources appropriately, *ask*. As a rule of thumb, it is better to cite too much rather than not enough, so when in doubt, include a citation.

### **Grade Summary**

Quiz #1: 15%  
Homework: 20%  
Final Exam: 30%  
Country Report: 25%  
Participation: 10%

### **Grading Scale**

A: 90-100  
B: 80-89  
C: 70-79  
D: 60-69  
F: 59 or below

### **Lecture Schedule and Readings**

**T June 18:** Introduction to Course and each other, review of syllabus.

**Th June 20:** ch 1 and ch 2

**T June 25:** Fukuyama, “The Imperative of State Building” and **ch 3**.

**Th June 27:** Stepan, Linz, and Yadav, “The Rise of ‘State-Nations’” and Case Study: Nigeria

**T July 2: ch 4.** Lewis, “Growth without Prosperity in Africa”, Diamond, “What Makes Countries Rich or Poor?” **Homework Distributed**

**Th July 4: No Class**

**T July 9: ch. 5** and Huntington’s, “Democracy’s Third Wave”. **Homework Due**

**Th July 11: ch. 6** and Diamond’s, “Thinking about Hybrid Regimes”

**T July 16: ch. 7** and Case Study: Greece and the EU.

**Th July 18: ch. 8** and Film

**T July 23:** Case Study: Russia. **Quiz # 1**

**Th July 25: ch. 9** and Case Study: South Africa or Mexico

**T July 30: ch 10** and Anderson, “Death of the Tiger”

**Th Aug 1: ch 11** and Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld”

**T Aug 6:** Review. **Country Reports Due**

**Th Aug 8: Final Exam**

\*The schedule might change due to unforeseen circumstances.

