

University of Illinois at Chicago
Introduction to Comparative Politics
Political Science 130
Fall 2007

Instructor:	Dr. Edward Kasule	Class Location:	209 Burnham Hall
Phone:	312-413-3279	Class Meets:	M & W; 2 – 2:50 pm
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Office Hours:	12-1 pm		

Course Description

This course introduces students to the basic theories, methods, and concepts in comparative politics. The underlying purpose of the course is to provide some basic analytical frameworks that the student can use to identify and explain differences in political systems and political life across a set of diverse states and regions of the world. When examining the differences and similarities between countries, we discuss the influence of history, culture, economics, international politics, and several other factors. We will also attempt to answer some of the most fundamental questions about politics: Why are some countries democratic and others not? Why does conflict within a society turn violent in some cases and not others? And, how politics and economics are related? By the end of the course, students should be able to analyze political events around the world drawing on the theoretical explanations provided in class.

Course Objectives

There are three broad objectives for this course. First, this is an introductory course with the aim of familiarizing students with the basic concepts of comparative politics. After taking this course, students should be able to define and utilize the concepts of comparative politics to explain political events. Second, this course is intended to help students recognize, understand and explain differences in political institutions, participation, and outcomes. Third objective of this course is to familiarize students with the comparative method of studying politics. The third objective will help students learn the appropriate methods for comparing different political systems and to be mindful of problems that might arise.

Classroom Policies

- Attendance at both lecture and class discussion is mandatory. Students should arrive promptly and expect to meet for the full class period. Random attendance may be taken at lecture and your TA will track the number of times you missed class discussion. Both will be taken into consideration when calculating your final grade.
- In-class discussion is an important component of this course, particularly in the discussion sections, and this largely depends on each student doing the assigned readings before the class period. The instructor or TA may administer unannounced quizzes to check whether students are doing the readings.
- Students should be tolerant and respectful of one another during class discussion.
- Cell phones or pagers must be turned off before class.

Make-up Policy

If there is an extreme emergency or any other unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from taking an exam at the scheduled time, be present for a scheduled classroom activity, or turn in a homework, you must contact me or the TA before the scheduled activity and leave a message. Otherwise no arrangements will be made to make-up any graded work.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Cheating on exams is not allowed. Students caught cheating will be dealt with in accordance with University regulations.

When writing a class report or paper you must identify the nature and extent of your intellectual indebtedness to the authors who have read or to anyone else from whom you borrowed ideas. Failure to disclose your reliance on the research or thinking of others is PLAGIARISM, which is considered to be the most serious academic offense and will be treated as such.

Assignments

1. Examinations – Three exams are scheduled for this course. Questions for the exams will consist of material covered both in the readings and in class discussions. The exam will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Each exam will constitute 20% of your final grade.
2. 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 highlight and explain at least one phenomenon critical to understanding the politics of that country. The report can be on any country other than the US or the issue/country examples used in the textbooks. The TA will give more information about this assignment. This assignment constitutes 20% of your final grade.
3. Participation – The grade for participation will largely be based on activities in your discussion section. The TA will provide you with the details when you meet. Participation constitutes 20% of your final grade.

Grade Summary

Examinations	60%	A	=	90-100
(three exams)		B	=	80-89
Country Report	20%	C	=	70-79
Participation	20%	D	=	60-69
Total	100%	F	=	0-59

Required Textbooks

Hague, Rod and Martin Harrop. 2007. Political Science: A Comparative Introduction. 5th Edition. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillian.

Soe, Christian (Ed.). 2007. Annual Editions: Comparative Politics. 25th Edition. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill Contemporary Learning Series.

Course Outline

- Aug 27th Introduction and discussion of syllabus; discussion of Politics and government.
- Aug 29th The State
- Aug 31st Discussion Group – Review of week 1
- Sept 3rd Labor Day Holiday **NO CLASS**
- Sept 5th Democracy
- Sept 7th ‘*What Political Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?*’ By Robert Dahl, and ‘*What Democracy Is ... and Is Not*’ by Schmitter and Karl.
- Sept 10th Democracy and Authoritarian rule
- Sept 12th The Comparative Approach
- Sept 14th ‘*Nigeria: Chronicle of a Dying State*’ by Ike Okonta, and ‘*Russia’s Ersatz Democracy*’ by Lilia Shevtsova
- Sept 17th Political Culture
- Sept 19th Exam # 1
- Sept 21st ‘*The True Clash of Civilizations*’ by Inglehart and Norris, and ‘*Jihad vs. McWorld*’ by Benjamin Barber
- Sept 24th Political Communication
- Sept 26th Political Economy
- Sept 28th ‘*Cultural Explanations: The Man in the Baghdad Café*’, Economist; and ‘*Globalization Is About Blending, Not Homogenizing*’, by Joseph Nye
- Oct 1st ‘*Capitalism and Democracy*’ by Gabriel Almond
- Oct 3rd Political Participation
- Oct 5th ‘*Electoral Politics in the United Kingdom*’ by Donley Studlar
- Oct 8th Election and Voters
- Oct 10th Importance of elections in a democracy
- Oct 12th ‘*Mexico’s Disputed Election*’ by Rabio and Davidow, and ‘*Latin America’s Left Turn*’ by Jorge Casteneda
- Oct 15th Interest Groups

Oct 17 th	Exam # 2
Oct 19 th	' <i>Interest Groups: Ex Uni, Plures</i> ', Economist
Oct 22 nd	Political Parties
Oct 24 th	Political Parties, Party systems; cont'd
Oct 26 th	' <i>Political Parties: Empty Vessels?</i> ' In the Economist
Oct 29 th	Constitutions and the Legal Framework
Oct 31 st	Constitutions...cont'd
Nov 2 nd	' <i>A Revised British Constitution: Tony Blair's Lasting Legacy?</i> ' By Donley Studlar
Nov 5 th	Multi-level Governance
Nov 7 th	Multi-level Governance...cont'd
Nov 9 th	' <i>A Too Perfect Union? Why Europe Said 'No'</i> ', by Andrew Moravcski
Nov 12 th	Legislatures
Nov 14 th	Legislatures...cont'd
Nov 16 th	' <i>Women in National Parliaments</i> ', in Inter-Parliamentary Union. COUNTRY REPORTS ARE DUE.
Nov 19 th	Political executive
Nov 21 st	Political Executive...cont'd
Nov 23 rd	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS
Nov 26 th	Public Management and Administration
Nov 28 th	Public Administration...cont'd
Nov 30 th	' <i>France's Murky Mix of School and Scandal</i> ', by Katrin Bennhold
Dec 3 rd	Public Policy
Dec 5 th	Public Policy...cont'd
Dec 7 th	Course Summary and Reflections

FINAL EXAM (date to be announced)