

GVPT 280: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Summer 2005

INSTRUCTOR: Carter Johnson, cjohnson@gvpt.umd.edu, Office phone: 301.405.7019

OFFICE HOURS:

Office hours are one hour before and after each class, or by appointment.
Symons Hall, Room 3112

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents an introduction to the study of comparative politics. The course will survey some of the central topics in this political science sub-discipline, it will cover theoretical and empirical debates, and will introduce and strengthen students' knowledge of different methodological approaches to research.

Upon completion of this course, students should (i) have developed their own intellectual skills, particularly critical thinking skills; (ii) have a general understanding of the fundamental concepts and intellectual trends in comparative politics; and (iii) have broadened their knowledge of certain countries around the world.

This course is structured around three themes: (i) central concepts in comparative politics; (ii) institutions and ideas; (iii) democracy and transitions. Other themes will be introduced throughout the course, including dependency and development, and nationalism.

READINGS:

Required Text: Sodaro, Michael (2004) *Comparative Politics – A Global Introduction* (USA: McGraw Hill College)

Other Readings: All journal articles are available online through the library's *Research Port*. Book chapters are available through electronic reserve. You are responsible for accessing these; if you do not know how to work *Research Port* or electronic reserve, come talk to me and I will show you how, or ask a librarian.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Each student must attend each class and come to class with readings complete.
2. 15 Minute quiz at start of each Thursday class; half of these will include map quizzes. These quizzes will be straightforward and let me know if you've done the reading or not. Students may drop two quizzes either due to absence or poor grades.
 - Worth 20%
3. Brief summaries of non-textbook readings will be due each Tuesday at the start of class. We will go over the content of these summaries in class.

- Worth 20%
4. One mid-term exam
 - Worth 25%
 5. One final exam
 - Worth 35%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit:
<http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>

ACCOMMODATING STUDENT NEEDS

The University has a legal obligation to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. *Students with disabilities should inform the instructor of their needs at the beginning of the semester.* The instructor will then consult with the department chair and Dr. William Scales at Disability Support Service (314-7682). Dr. Scales will help to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations.

Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs and will be given the opportunity to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. *It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance.* Notice should be provided as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period.

THE COURSE BY CLASS:

Introduction & Concepts:

Tuesday, July 18

1. Introduction: What is political science, where does comparative politics fit, what are the central themes being studied in comparative politics
 - Readings: first class, no readings
 - Film: *The Party's Over*

Thursday, July 20

2. First Half: Hypothesis Testing; Second Half: Power & the State
 - Readings: Sodoro, Chapters 3, 5-6

Tuesday, July 25

3. Political Economy

- Readings:
 - Soadaro, Chapter 14, “Political Economy”
 - Wallerstein, Immanuel (2004) *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (USA: Duke University Press)
 - Ross, Michael Lewin 1961- “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* - Volume 53, Number 3, April 2001, pp. 325-361
 - Sodaro, Chapter 23: Mexico and Brazil
 - Film: Brazil’s Economy

Ideas in Politics

Thursday, July 27

4. Nation-States and Nationalism

- Readings:
 - Sodaro, Chapter 7, “Nation-States, Nationalism and Supranationalism”
 - Gellner (1983) *Nations and Nationalism* (USA: Cornell University Press); pp.1-62
 - Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?”
 - Film: Ignatieff *Blood and Belonging* series: “The Nation Returns” (Germany 1945-1990)

Tuesday, August 1

5. Ideologies

- Readings:
 - Sodaro, Chapter 13, “Ideology”
 - Marx - “Ruling Class and Ruling Ideas/Base and Superstructure” (191-192; 193)
 - Gramsci - “Hegemony, Intellectuals, and the State” (210-216)
 - Althusser - “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (153-164)
 - Barthes – Myth Today
 - Foucault – Power as Knowledge (Excerpt from Lemert, *Social Theory*)
 - Debra Merskin - “The Construction of Arabs as Enemies: Post-9/11 Discourse of George W. Bush” in Bring ‘Em On: Media and Politics in the Iraq War
 - Sodaro, Chapter 18: Japan

Thursday, August 3

6. Mid-Term Exam

- Film: Leni Riefenstahl’s *Triumph of the Will*

Regime Types

Tuesday, August 8

7. Authoritarianism/Autocracy

- Readings:
 - Diamond, Larry (2002) “Thinking About Hybrid Regimes” *Journal of Democracy* 13(2)
 - Costopoulos, Philip (2004) “The Persistence of Arab Authoritarianism” *Journal of Democracy* 15:4
 - Lakoff, Stanford (2004) “The Reality of Muslim Exceptionalism”
 - Stepan, Alfred and Robertson, Graeme (2004) “Arab, not Muslim, Exceptionalism”

Thursday, August 10

8. Democracy I

- Readings
 - Sodaro, Chapter 8: Democracy: What is it?
 - Dahrendorf, Ralf (2003) “A Definition of Democracy” *Journal of Democracy* 14(4), page 103 *only*.
 - Rueschmeyer, Dietrich, “Addressing Inequality” *Journal of Democracy* 15(4)
 - Sodaro, Chapter 1: UK

Tuesday, August 15

9. Democracy II

- Readings
 - Lijphart (1999) *Patterns of Democracy* (USA: Yale University Press) chapters 1-4
 - Sodaro, Chapter 9: Democracy: How does it work?
 - Sodaro, Chapter 24: Nigeria and South Africa

Regime Change

Thursday, August 17

10. Democratization and Transitions

- Readings:
 - Sodaro, Chapter 10: Conditions for Democracy and Democratization.
 - Carothers, Thomas (2002) “The End of the Transition Paradigm” *Journal of Democracy* 13(1)
 - Schedler, Andreas (1998) “What Is Democratic Consolidation?” *Journal of Democracy* 9(2)
 - **[Maybe cut]:** Linz, Juan and Stepan, Alfred (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), Chapters 1-5 (pp. 3-86).

Tuesday, August 22

11. Civil Society

- Readings:
 - Varshney, Ashutosh, “Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society” *World Politics* 52(3)

- Howard, Marc Morje, “The Weakness of Post-Communist civil Society” *Journal of Democracy* 13(1)

Thursday, August 24

12. Last Class: Final Exam