

POSC 40: Comparative Politics
Dr. Giaimo

Spring 2008

Course time and location:
MWF 10:00-10:50 AM
Engineering 202

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MWF 11:00-12:00 PM
and by appointment

This course covers the basic problems and principles and the major themes, theories, and concepts of political science in the subfield of comparative politics. Some of the major questions we will explore include: What are the components of democracy? What are the prerequisites for and obstacles to democratization? What are the prospects for democracy in developing countries? Are capitalism and democracy inextricably related? How does democracy compare with other kinds of political systems?

This course will introduce students to the major theories and approaches of comparative politics and will use selected countries as illustrative cases. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to understand the central concepts, theories, and analytical tools of comparative politics.

As part of the University's Core of Common Studies, this course will follow three learning objectives associated with the knowledge area of Individual and Social Behavior. According to the University, "At the completion of core studies, the student will be able to: Understand central concepts, theories, and methods used to explain individual and social behavior in one of the social and cultural disciplines. 2. Use knowledge of social scientific methods to analyze examples of individual and social behavior. 3. Evaluate the applicability of social scientific knowledge for understanding individual and social behavior in particular contexts."

Course Requirements

Your grade will be based on the completion of the following written assignments and on class participation and attendance. The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

1. Two in-class, multiple choice quizzes: 10% of your grade (5% each).
2. First in-class exam: 25% of your grade.
3. Second in-class exam: 25% of your grade.
4. A comprehensive, in-class final exam: 30% of your grade.
5. Class participation and attendance: 10% of your grade.

This course has a substantial writing component in the in-class exams. I grade written exams primarily on the content and clarity of your argument, but will also consider writing style (grammar rules, punctuation, spelling, etc.). Therefore, I encourage students who wish to improve their writing skills to consult the Writing Center during the course of the semester. The Writing Center is located in Raynor Library R240; tel. 288-5542. (You need to call them to make an appointment.)

Attendance at all classes is a requirement of this course. I will take attendance for each class and will follow College of Arts and Sciences policies on attendance. If you have seven (7) or more unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered accordingly. Excessive absences may result in a grade of WA. Class participation means more than merely attending class meetings; it also entails that you do the readings and contribute insightful comments and questions to class discussions.

Students are expected to read all assigned readings from required books, articles on reserve, and class handouts. It is not sufficient for you to rely only on the textbook or on a few of the assigned readings. If you do, it will be apparent in your written work and class participation and will be reflected accordingly in your course grade.

Students should complete the readings in advance of class so that they are able to participate in a meaningful way in class discussions. Class meetings will not simply recapitulate the readings but will often bring in additional material, so it is in your interest to attend class regularly and take notes in class. Exams and quizzes assignments will draw on all class materials and assigned readings.

I do not permit late assignments unless there is a legitimate medical or family emergency, or unless it is the result of an officially sanctioned, scheduled university activity. Students who miss an exam or assignment because of a university-sanctioned activity must arrange a make-up exam or quiz with me in advance of their absence. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are experiencing a medical or family crisis so that we have time to make arrangements for you to complete the coursework for this class.

I do not tolerate academic dishonesty by students. I will follow all University policies on plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Readings

There are two required books available for purchase at BookMarq or Sweeney's:

Charles Hauss, *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, 5th edition, Thomson/Wadsworth, 2006.

Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, New York: Penguin Books, 2005.

In addition, required reserve readings will be either on D2L or on electronic reserve at Raynor Library. These readings are noted in the syllabus with an asterisk (*). In some instances, I will announce and distribute additional required readings in class. I will note on D2L the location of all reserve readings, so PLEASE CHECK D2L REGULARLY for any updates of assignments and their location.

Additional sources

I encourage you to read a daily newspaper with coverage of comparative and international politics, such as *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, or the *financial Times*. These are in the library or available online. You can also get a student-discounted rate for subscriptions. If you want to know how to obtain a student-discounted subscription, please talk to me.

If you are interested in getting perspectives on comparative politics and international affairs other than those of American media, you may want to tune to some TV news programs on PBS, channel 36: "The Journal," which is broadcast by the German *Deutsche Welle*, and "BBC World News," which is a British production. "The Journal" airs at 5:30 pm weekdays and "BBC World News" airs at 6 pm weekdays. Other PBS programs dealing with world affairs that may be of interest to you, such as "Wide Angle." These programs air on channels 10 and 36. In addition, National Public Radio stations (stations 89.7 and 90.7) broadcast news programs on comparative politics and international affairs. I suggest "BBC World Service" (broadcast daily) and "The World" (broadcast Friday afternoons and other times during the week).

Class Schedule and Assignments

I. INTRODUCTION

A. What is comparative politics? What are we comparing?

Jan. 14: Course introduction. No reading assignment.

Jan. 16: Hauss, chap. 1.

B. Political authority, the state and civil society

Jan. 18: *Max Weber, "What Is a State?" in Bernard E. Brown, ed., *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 9th ed., Belmont, CA, Thomson/Wadsworth, 2000 (hereafter referred to as Brown, 2000).

*Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In", in Brown, 2000.

Jan. 21: No class. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Jan. 23: *Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone" in Brown, 2000.

*Michael W. Foley and Bob Edwards, "The Paradox of Civil Society", in Brown, 2000.

Jan. 25: No class. Instructor out of town

II. COMPARING PARTICIPATION, INSTITUTIONS, AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES IN ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

A. Parties and electoral systems in Western Europe

Jan. 28: Hauss, chap. 2.

B. Great Britain's evolutionary parliamentary development; the rise and fall of the postwar consensus

Jan. 30, Feb. 1: Hauss, chap. 4, pp. 68-95 up to "Public Policy"

Feb. 4: Hauss, chap. 4, p. 95 ("Public Policy") to end of chapter.

Contemporary politics and policies in Britain

Feb. 6: *Nicholas Timmins, "Spending power: how Labour has taken Britain's welfare state to a new plateau," *Financial Times*, April 20, 2005, p. 11.

*Philip Stephens, "Unfinished business," *Financial Times*, April 30/May 1, 2005, pp. W1-2.

Feb.8: *”The great performer leaves the stage,” *The Economist*, May 12, 2007.
*James Blitz, “Britain’s political enigma,” *Financial Times*, Sept. 8, 2006.

Feb. 11: 1st QUIZ

C. Germany: learning from a troubled past; unification and its discontents

Feb. 11: The failure of democracy and the rise of fascism

*David P. Conradt, *The German Polity*, 8th ed., New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005, chap. 1 ("The Historical Setting").

In class: Film, *The Nazis: A Warning from History* (BBC).

Feb. 13, 15: The postwar Federal Republic of Germany

Haus, chap. 6 (pp. 151-175 only).

*Piero Ignazi, "The Rise of New Political Parties," in Brown, 2000.

Feb. 18, 20: The German Democratic Republic and its demise; German unification

*Conradt, chap. 2 ("Putting Germany Back Together Again").

In class: excerpts from film, *The Cold War*.

Feb. 22: Contemporary challenges in unified Germany

*Bertrand Benoit, "Growing apart: 15 years after the Wall's fall" and Hugh Williamson, "Subtle divisions," in *Financial Times*, Sept. 23, 2004.

*Excerpts from “Waiting for a Wunder: A Survey of Germany,” *The Economist*, Feb. 11, 2006. Read all but “Land of cliques” and “Reincarnation valley.”

Feb. 25: 1st IN-CLASS EXAM

III. COMMUNIST AND POST-COMMUNIST REGIMES

A. What was communism?

Feb. 27: Haus, chap. 8.

B. The Soviet Union and its collapse

Feb. 29: Haus, chap. 9 (pp. 226-242).

In class: excerpts from film, *The Cold War*

C. Post-communist Russia

March 3: Haus, chap. 9 (pp. 243-263).

March 5:

*Neil Buckley, "Worries about concentration of power," *Financial Times*, Survey on Russia, April 5, 2005.

**Financial Times* series on Russia (all on D2L):

1. N. Buckley and Arkady Ostrovsky, "Back in business—how Putin's allies are turning Russia into a corporate state," June 19, 2006.
2. N. Buckley, "The pull of power: how nothing is left to chance in Putin's 'managed democracy,'" June 27, 2006.
3. N. Buckley, "A newly assertive Russia reimagines its role in the world," July 5, 2006.
4. TBA: reading on Dec. 2007 parliamentary elections.

March 7: 2ND QUIZ

IV. DEVELOPING NATIONS: DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Challenges for developing nations

March 7: Hauss, chap. 11, pp. 302-319 (up to "Public Policy")

March 10: Hauss, chap. 11, p. 319 ("Public Policy") to end of chapter.

*Fiona Harvey, "An inhuman race? How the lure of the city is rapidly swelling the world's slums," *Financial Times*, Aug. 7, 2006, p. 8.

*George Packer, "The Megacity," *The New Yorker*, Nov. 13, 2006, pp. 62-75.

B. Strategies for ending poverty and promoting democratic development

March 12: Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty*, Introduction, chaps. 1, 3, and maps in center of the book.

March 14-24: No class. Spring break

March 26: Sachs, pp. 210-213, and chaps. 4, 10, 12.

March 28, 30: Sachs, chaps. 13, 14, 16.

*"The hidden wealth of the poor," *The Hidden Wealth of the Poor: A Survey of Microfinance*, *The Economist*, Nov. 5, 2005

April 2: 2nd IN-CLASS EXAM

C. Post-colonialism, race, and late development: The contrasting cases of South Africa and Zimbabwe

1. South Africa: from apartheid to multiracial democracy

April 4, 7: *Charles Hauss, "South Africa," (from *Comparative Politics*, 4th ed.).

In class: Excerpts of the film: *Amandla!*

April 9: *Allister Sparks, *Beyond the Miracle*, London: Profile Books, 2003, chaps. 2 and 11 ("A Three-in-One Revolution," "The Foot of the Rainbow").

April 11: *Chasing the Rainbow: A Survey of South Africa, *The Economist*, April 8, 2006.

*Additional reading TBA on leadership issues within the ANC.

2. Zimbabwe's descent into dictatorship and economic chaos

April 14: *Gretchen Bauer and Scott D. Taylor, "Zimbabwe: State and Society in Crisis," *Politics in Southern Africa*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2005.

April 16: *Alexandra Fuller, *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight*, New York: Random House Trade Paperback, 2001 (2003 paperback ed.), pp. 137-160.

*Alexandra Fuller, "The Soldier," *The New Yorker*, March 1, 2004.

D. Islam and democracy: The clash between traditional and modern

1. Are the two (in)compatible?

April 18: *Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (3), Summer 1993, 22-49.

*Excerpts from "Survey on Islam and the West," *The Economist*, Sept. 11, 2003.

2. Iran's fusion of religion and state

April 21: Hauss, chap. 13, pp. 370-383.

April 23: Hauss, chap. 13, p. 383 to end of chapter.
Additional readings may be assigned.

3. Turkey's secular state and Islamic society

April 25: *Ataturk's Long Shadow: Survey on Turkey (excerpts), *The Economist*, June 8, 2000.

April 28: *Jenny B. White, "State Feminism, Modernization, and the Turkish Republican Woman," *NWSA Journal*, vol. 15, no. 3 (2003), 145-159.

In class: excerpts from PBS *Wide Angle* program, "Turkey's Tigers."

April 30: The 2007 crisis between the AKP government and the military

*Vincent Boland, "Crescent rising: Why modern Turks are less willing to jettison tradition," *Financial Times*, July 17, 2007.

*"The burden of victory" and "The lesson from Turkey," *The Economist*, July 28, 2007.

In class: excerpts from PBS *Wide Angle* program: "Turkey's Tigers."

May 2: Turkey and the EU

*Excerpts from "Looking to Europe" Survey on Turkey, *The Economist*, March 19, 2005. Read all but "City lights," "Troublesome neighbors," and "Den of Thieves."

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 5, 1-3 PM, Engineering 202