**POSC 2401: Comparative Politics**

**Section 101**  
Fall 2013, MWF 12:00-12:50; Wehr Chemistry 002  
E-mail: Lowell.Barrington@mu.edu

**Professor Lowell Barrington**  
Office: 468 WWP  
Office Phone: 288-5234  
Office Hrs.: MWF 2:00-4:00 & by appt.

**Course Overview:** This course provides an introduction to the comparative study of domestic politics in countries around the world. In this course, you will be introduced to some of the most important concepts, theories, and issues in this field of political science. There is some debate about what “comparative politics” means. Many see it simply as the study of domestic politics in countries outside the United States. Others believe that it is about comparing political systems in order to generate general statements about politics. In this course, you will be exposed to both of these ideas. You will learn about the domestic politics of a number of important countries. But, you will also be expected to compare them to each other and to use the concepts and theories covered in the course to understand better the politics of these states and domestic politics in general.

Many introductory courses in comparative politics spend the first half of the semester on concepts and theories and the second half on specific countries. I take a different approach. Each week of the semester, we will focus on a set of concepts and theories important to comparative politics. During most weeks, we will also examine that topic in a group of countries representative of different types of political systems around the world: The United Kingdom (Great Britain), Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, China, India, Nigeria, and Iran, as well as France, South Africa, and Iraq. Most comparative courses do not discuss Mexico in detail. But just as I believe that students studying international relations should focus more on the important trends of regionalization and regionalism, so I believe that American students need a better understanding of the domestic politics of our neighbor to the south. We will also focus in detail on one additional country during Week 14. You will help select that country. Your short PowerPoint presentation will argue for a certain developing country (the choice of the country is up to you, from the list at the end of the syllabus) based on how it fits—or, perhaps more interesting, doesn’t fit—with the theories and concepts presented during the semester. Convince me that we should study it.

POSC 2401 falls under the “Individual and Social Behavior” section of Marquette’s Core of Common Studies. As a result, this course will contribute to your ability to understand central concepts, theories, and methods used to explain individual and social behavior in political science; to use knowledge of social scientific methods to analyze examples of individual and social behavior; and to evaluate the applicability of social scientific knowledge for understanding individual and social behavior in particular contexts.

**Requirements and Grading:** You are expected to do the readings for the course on time (during the week that they are listed in the syllabus, unless I say otherwise), and there are several incentives to do so. First, class sessions will be easier to follow if you have completed the readings. Second, the amount of reading is reasonable, but not small. It will not be easy to catch up if you fall behind. Third, from time to time, we will discuss readings in class. This is particularly true of our coverage of the topics in practice in the countries. Along with your attendance, your participation in these and other discussions can affect your final semester grade (see below). Fourth, there will be twelve quizzes covering the readings during the semester. Finally, on the midterm and final exams, those who mention specific ideas from course readings will receive higher grades—all other things equal—than those who do not.

Your final semester grade will be based on the quizzes (20% total); the PowerPoint presentation (see the assignment description at the end of the syllabus, 15%); two blog entries (see the assignment description at the end of the syllabus, 10%); an in-class midterm (20%); the final exam (30%); and attendance and participation (5%). Quizzes will be multiple choice; the exams will be essay-based. On your PowerPoint presentation and blog entries (but not the in-class exams), spelling, grammar, and other style elements will be taken into account in determining your grade. Class attendance is mandatory. But, since certain situations may arise that make it difficult or impossible to attend a particular class session, you will be able to miss six sessions of this class during the semester. After that, I will lower your final semester grade by one letter grade (B to BC, for example) with each additional absence. In addition to attendance and participation having a direct impact on your grade, anyone ending the semester in the “gray area” between two letter grades will be bumped up or down depending on attendance and participation.

You should also follow day-to-day events, especially in our countries of focus, during the course of the semester. You can do this by reading daily papers such as The New York Times, weekly news publications such as The Economist, or reputable news outlets on the internet such as cnn.com or the BBC. We will discuss current events from time to time in class.
While generally a nice person, I take academic dishonesty very seriously. Academic dishonesty violates the core principles of Marquette, and it is unfair to your fellow classmates. If you are caught copying during tests/quizzes, plagiarizing on assignments (representing someone else's ideas as your own, including by not adequately citing them), or helping someone do either of these, you will receive an F on that assignment, be reported to your College, and receive any other punishments that are warranted. Don’t test me on this one! To provide additional incentives for this not to be an issue on the blog posts, after you submit them via the D2L drop box, I will be submitting them to turnitin.com.

Readings: There are only two books/readers which you are required to buy: (1) a special version of my comparative politics textbook (Lowell Barrington Comparative Politics: Structures & Choices, Marquette University, Wadsworth/Cengage, 2013) and (2) a customized online reader (Comparative Politics, Cengage, 2013). Both the textbook and the access code for the online reader are available at Bookmarq, and you should be able to buy them as a bundle. Instructions for accessing the online reader will be handed out in class. A few other selected readings will be on the class site for D2L. Additional readings will be available on the D2L website for this class. Go to https://d2l.mu.edu/ and log in. On your home page, scroll down to the “2013 Fall Term” tab, look for the “Political Science” sub-tab, and click on the link “POSC 2401 101 Comparative Politics - 1430_1686_101.” Once you reach the POSC 2401 course homepage, click on the “Content” link on the taskbar at the top of the page to access the reserve readings.

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE
* = reading on D2L

PART I: Political Science and Comparative Politics


Readings:

Comparative Politics Online Reader: Obucina, Vedran. “Nation State and European Identity.”

Week 2 (Sep 2-6): Science, Political Science, and Comparative Politics

Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 1, pp. 13-27.

SEPTEMBER 2: NO CLASS, MEMORIAL DAY.

PART II: Economics, Culture, and Identity

Week 3 (Sep 9-13): Economic Structure and Political Outcomes

Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 2 (“Economic Class, Development, Systems, and Globalization”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Kasebalaban, Hasan. “Globalization and the Crisis of Modernization in Authoritarian Turkey.”
Week 4 (Sep 16-20): Political Culture and Ideology
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 3 (“Ideas as Structure: Political Culture and Ideology”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Conradt, David P. “Political Culture in Unified Germany: The First Ten Years.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Morris, Stephen D. “Corruption and Mexican Political Culture.”

Week 5 (Sep 23-27): Identity and Social Divisions
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 4 (Identity Structure”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Winant, Howard. “Race in the Twenty-First Century.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: The Economist. “Forty Shades of Green -- Political Islam.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: DeBartolo, Michael. “Does Religious Pluralism Play a Role in Fostering Civic Engagement?”

PART III: Governing Institutions

Week 6 (Sep 30-Oct 4): Political Systems and Their Constitutions
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 5 (“Political Systems and Their Rules”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Economist Intelligence Unit. “UK Politics…”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Beer, Daniel. “Russia’s Managed Democracy…”

Week 7 (Oct 7-11): Executives and Legislatures
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 6 (“Legislatures and Executives”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Conley, Richard S. “Presidential Republics and Divided Government: Lawmaking and Executive Politics in the United States and France.”

OCTOBER 11 (FRIDAY): MIDTERM EXAM, IN CLASS.

Week 8 (Oct 14-18): Courts, Bureaucracies, and Militaries
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 7 (“Unelected Components of the Government: Judiciaries, Bureaucracies, and Militaries”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Blor, Shawn. “Justice Aboard…”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: The Economist. “Democracy by Court Order; Nigeria.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Nyanto, Kgomasotso. “South Africa: Justice by the Colour Bar.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: “Egypt Revolution Gloss Fades as Military Rulers Anger Youth Leaders.”

OCTOBER 18 (FRIDAY): NO CLASS, MIDTERM BREAK.

PART IV: Elites, Masses, and Political Decision Making

Week 9 (Oct 21-25): Linking Elites and Masses I: Interest Groups and “Civil Society”
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 8 (“Political Participation and Approaches to Linking Masses and Elites”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: La Botz, Dan. “Mexico’s Labor Movement in Transition.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: “Tiananmen Square Declaration of Human Rights.”
Week 10 (Oct 28-Nov 1): Linking Elites and Masses II: Electoral Systems and Political Parties
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 9 (“Political Parties and Electoral Systems”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Tezcur, Gunes Murat. “Iran’s Presidential Election...”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Campbell, Leslie. “Party-building in the Middle East.”

Week 11 (Nov 4-8): Political Leaders and Their Decisions
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 10 (“Leadership and the Importance of Individuals in the Political Process”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Mandela, Nelson. “Mandela’s ‘Apartheid Has No Future: Africa is Ours’.”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Matthews, Owen, and Anna Nemtsova. “Moscow’s Phony Liberal.”

PART V: Understanding Political Outcomes Using Structures and Choices

Week 12 (Nov 11-15): Regime Transitions: Democratization and Democratic Breakdown
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 11 (“Regime Transitions”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Putnam, Robert D. “What Makes Democracy Work?”
Comparative Politics Online Reader: The Economist. “An (Iron) Fistful of Help...”

November 11 (Monday), PowerPoint Due, in the D2L Dropbox, by 5:00 p.m.
The details of the assignment are at the end of the syllabus.

Week 13 (Nov 18-22): Policy Outcomes and Political “Performance”
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, chapter 13 (“Comparative Public Policy”).
Comparative Politics Online Reader: All Things Considered. “Bringing the Bard Behind Bars in South Africa.”

PART VI: Conclusion

Week 14 (Nov 25-29): Politics in ???
Readings: TBA.

November 27-29: No Class, Thanksgiving Break.

Week 15 (Dec 2-6): Conclusion: From Separate Countries to Broader Understandings.
Readings:
Barrington, CPSC, epilogue, “Structured Choices and the Comparative Study of Politics”.
Comparative Politics Online Reader: Blair, Tony. “A Battle for Global Values.”

Final Exam Review: December 4 (Wednesday), in class.

Final Exam: December 13 (Friday), 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Blog Entries

Twice during the semester, you will turn in a blog entry via the Drop Box in D2L, similar to the ones that have appeared on the blog related to my textbook. Each of your two entries should be a Word document that is several paragraphs long (400-500 words), double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Each blog entry should identify an important, current domestic political issue in one of the nine Topic-in-Countries (TIC) cases from the textbook. It should summarize the issue, provide one or more links to stories about it from reputable news outlets, and provide commentary that connects the story to themes or concepts discussed in the textbook. (See the blog site at: http://structuresandchoices.blogspot.com for examples.) Although you are expected to summarize the issue, your blog entry should not simply be a summary of an event, nor should it just restate information found on the sites you suggest as links. Make sure you express how the story relates to points discussed in the class, and specifically in the book. If I your blog post, I may choose it to appear on my blog and (obviously) credit you for your post. If your post is chosen to appear on the blog, I will let you know ahead of time. If you would do not wish to have your entry posted on the site, please let me know. Along with how interesting and important your blog entry is, spelling and grammar will be taken into account in your grade on these blog entry assignments.

PowerPoint Assignment: Due via D2L, November 11 (Monday).

Question: What country should we study in Week 14, and why?

In a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation (not counting the “title” slide and a Works Cited slide), answer the question above. Present an argument for why we should study the country you chose from the list of countries on the following page. Consider the topics that we have discussed in the course. How will your country help us to understand better one or more of the concepts and issues we have examined? Does it fill a void, providing an example of something important that the other countries we are looking at do not? While it will be tempting to do so, do not describe a lot of the country’s basic history in your PowerPoint. Cover only the history that you need to mention to make your points about the country’s value as a case. Remember, I want to know why you think that I and your fellow classmates should spend a week studying the country you choose, and simply having some interesting events in its history will not distinguish it from other potential countries we could study.

The majority of the grade on this assignment will be the effectiveness of the PowerPoint in convincing me that “your” country is the best one to study. Thus, your argument matters at least as much as how the presentation looks. However, the look of the PowerPoint presentation will also be taken into account, and you are welcome to enhance the presentation with photos, audio clips, and/or video clips. You may not use more than one audio and one video clip in the presentation, and each one can be no longer than 2 minutes in duration. Although it is common to use bullet point formatting in a PowerPoint—indeed, you should generally not have large blocks of text in paragraph form—spelling and grammar will also be taken into account in the grade. In addition, plagiarism is not acceptable in any form. Direct quotations must be in quotation marks, and you should use parenthetical citations to any ideas you are borrowing from others. We will discuss this more in class. While short and in PowerPoint form, this is a research project. I expect you to find current information about the country on which you chose to write. You should look not only at news magazines like The Economist but also at academic journals that may carry articles on your country. Also, you can (and should) use the readings from class where appropriate. A Works Cited list should be included as an additional slide in the PowerPoint presentation. It would be reasonable to have at least 10 sources that you actually reference in the PowerPoint presentation.

There are three restrictions on the choice of countries. First, it must be a developing country. This means that states in Latin America (including the Caribbean), Africa, the Middle East, South or Southeast Asia, and Pacific Islands regions are acceptable, but Japan, Australia, and countries in Europe and North America are not. Second, the country must be in the bottom fifty in the world in population size. Third, because of the large number of people who chose them in the past, I am excluding Qatar and Kuwait from the list of countries on which you can write. A list of appropriate countries per these two criteria is on the next page. See me if you have any questions on the assignment.
### Appropriate Countries for the PowerPoint Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antigua and Barbuda</th>
<th>Kiribati</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>Maldives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>Marshall Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Nauru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Palau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>Saint Kitts and Nevis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comoros</td>
<td>Saint Vincent and Grenadines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>Samoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>Seychelles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated States of Micrones</td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>Suriname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>Swaziland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>Tonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>