

**POSC 2401-101: Comparative Politics**  
**Dr. Giaimo**

**Spring 2010**

Course time and location:

MWF 11:00-11:50 AM  
Wehr Chemistry 112

Dr. Giaimo's office:

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Office Hours:

Mon, Wed, Fri. 9:15-9:45 AM  
Mon, Wed. 2:00-2:30 PM  
Fri, 12:00-12:30 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. Three in-class, multiple choice quizzes: 15% of your grade (5% each).
2. In-class exam: 20% of your grade.
3. Take-home essay exam: 20% of your grade.
4. In-class final exam: 30% of your grade.
5. Class participation and attendance: 15% of your grade.

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 and counts as part of your class participation grade. Therefore, 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. You should complete the readings in advance of class so that you can participate in a meaningful way in 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 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. Exams and quizzes will draw on class material and assigned readings. 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.

### **Policies on Late Assignments and Academic Dishonesty**

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**

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

Charles Hauss, *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009.

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 **YOU MUST 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 10 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).

Literature, film, and music also provide different perspectives on the world, its people, cultures, and politics. For those of you interested in world music, Alverno College also sponsors a world music series throughout the academic year. Check their website for more information on these events.

## Class Schedule and Assignments

\* = required reserve readings

### I. INTRODUCTION

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

Jan. 20: Course introduction. Hauss, chap. 1.

#### B. Political authority, the state and civil society

Jan. 22: \*Max Weber, "What Is a State?" in Bernard E. Brown, ed., *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., Belmont, CA, Thomson/Wadsworth, 2000 (hereafter referred to as Brown, 2000).

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

#### Jan. 25: No class; instructor out of town.

Jan. 27: \*Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone," in Brown, 2000.

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

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

#### A. Parties and electoral systems in Western Europe

Jan. 29: Hauss, chap. 2.

#### B. Great Britain: gradual democratization; the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy

Feb. 1, 3: Hauss, chap. 4, pp. 68-96 up to "Public Policy"

#### Political economy: the rise and fall of the postwar consensus

Feb. 5, 8: Hauss, chap. 4, p. 96 ("Public Policy") to end of chapter.

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

#### The Brown government

Feb. 10: \*James Blitz, "Not brooding but smiling," *Financial Times*, Sept. 9, 2006.

\*"Who killed New Labour?" *The Economist*, September 20, 2008, pp. 37-39.

#### Feb. 12: 1<sup>st</sup> QUIZ

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

Feb. 12, 15: The failure of democracy and the rise of fascism

\*David P. Conradt, *The German Polity*, 9th ed., Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009, chap. 1 ("The Historical Setting").

Haus, chap. 6, pp. 140-144 (up to "The Evolution of the German State").

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

Feb. 17, 19: The postwar Federal Republic of Germany

Haus, chap. 6 (pp. 149-173 only).

Feb. 22: 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. 24: Contemporary issues in the Federal Republic of Germany

\*Excerpts from "Waiting for a Wunder: A Survey of Germany," *The Economist*, Feb. 11, 2006. Read only "In a bind" and "Squaring the circle."

\*Readings on 2009 German election TBA.

**Feb. 26: 1st IN-CLASS EXAM**

### **III. COMMUNIST AND POST-COMMUNIST REGIMES**

#### **A. What was communism?**

March 1: Haus, chap. 8.

#### **B. The Soviet Union and its collapse**

March 3, 5: Haus, chap. 9 (pp. 220-236).

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

#### **C. Post-communist Russia and the rise of soft authoritarianism**

March 8: Haus, chap. 9 (pp. 237-259).

March 10:

\*N. Buckley and Arkady Ostrovsky, "Back in business—how Putin's allies are turning Russia into a corporate state," *Financial Times*, June 19, 2006.

\*N. Buckley, "The pull of power: how nothing is left to chance in Putin's 'managed democracy,'" *Financial Times*, June 27, 2006.

\*"The making of a neo-KGB state," *The Economist*, Aug. 25, 2007, pp. 25-28.

\*C. Clover, "Tension at the top as crisis deepens," and "True test of a Kremlin relationship," *Financial Times*, April 15, 2009.

**March 12: 2<sup>ND</sup> QUIZ**

## **IV. DEVELOPING NATIONS: DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. Challenges for developing nations**

March 12: Hauss, chap. 11, pp. 296-313 (up to “Public Policy”).

### **March 14-21: No class; spring break**

March 22: Hauss, chap. 11, pp. 313-323 (“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,” *New Yorker*, Nov. 13, 2006.

### **B. Strategies for ending poverty and promoting democratic development**

March 24: Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty*, Introduction, chaps. 1, 3, and maps in center of the book.

March 26: Sachs, pp. 210-213, and chaps. 4, 12, 14.

March 29: Sachs, chaps. 13, 15 (read only pp. 304-308), and chap. 16.

### **March 31: TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE**

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

#### 1. South Africa: from apartheid to multiracial democracy

March 31: \*Charles Hauss, “South Africa,” (from *Comparative Politics*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.); read up through end of apartheid.

### **April 2, 5: No class; Easter break.**

April 7: \*Hauss, “South Africa,” read from post-apartheid era to end of chapter.

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

April 9: \*Allister Sparks, *Beyond the Miracle*, London: Profile Books, 2003, chap. 2, “A Three-in-One Revolution.”

April 12: \*Chasing the Rainbow: A Survey of South Africa, *The Economist*, April 8, 2006.

\*“Voting for the people’s man,” *The Economist*, April 18, 2009.

\*R. Lapper, “Deft amid difficulties,” *Financial Times*, Aug. 14, 2009.

#### 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.  
 \*Alec Russell, 'Mugabe plays an old hand in poll gamble,' and 'Broken promise leaves war veteran disillusioned,' *Financial Times*, April 7, 2008.  
 \*Tony Hawkins, 'Harare rivals sign historic power deal' and 'Economic legacy poses tough task for Tsvangirai,' *Financial Times*, Sept. 16, 2008.  
 \*'Zimbabwe tests a recipe for gridlock,' *Financial Times* editorial, 9/16/08.

## April 19: 3<sup>rd</sup> QUIZ

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

#### 1. Are the two (in)compatible?

April 19: \*'Survey on Islam and the West' (excerpts), Sept. 11, 2003

#### 2. Iran's fusion of religion and state

April 21: Hauss, chap. 13, up to p. 378.

April 23: Hauss, chap. 13, p. 378 ('The People and Politics') to end of chapter.

In class: PBS *Frontline*, 'A Death in Tehran,' Nov. 17, 2009.

#### April 26: Iran's current political crisis

\*'Veiled threat,' *New Yorker*, Oct. 5, 2009, pp. 38-43.

\*Additional readings TBA.

In class: PBS *Frontline*, 'A Death in Tehran,' Nov. 17, 2009.

#### 3. Turkey's secular state and Islamic society

April 28: \*Ataturk's Long Shadow: Survey on Turkey (excerpts), *The Economist*, June 8, 2000.

April 30: \*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*, 'Turkey's Tigers,' Aug. 22, 2006.

#### May 3, 5: The test of democracy in 2007-08

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

\**The Economist* readings on 2007 presidential election.

\*'A narrow scrape for democracy' and 'Saved by a judicial whisker,' *The Economist*, Aug. 2, 2008.

In class: excerpts from PBS *Wide Angle*, 'Turkey's Tigers,' Aug. 22, 2006.

May 7: Course wrap-up. No reading.

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 13, 1:00-3:00 PM, Wehr Chemistry 112.**