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POSC 2401-103
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COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Course Description: Comparative politics is the search for patterns of commonality and contrast among the diverse political systems of the world. The purpose of studying comparative politics is not only to broaden our knowledge of political institutions and practices, but also, by examining alternative approaches to political development and methods of resolving social conflict, to enhance our understanding of the nature of politics itself. This course is an introduction to the basic concepts which political scientists use to understand political development, political culture, governmental institutions and processes, and public policy conflict in advanced industrial democracies (Great Britain, France, and Germany), developing democracies (India, Russia, and Mexico) and non-democracies (China and Iran).

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to achieve a basic understanding of and to think critically about the predominant theories and models of political development, political culture, institutions, and public policy conflict resolution.

Texts: The following books are required and may be purchased at the Bookstore:

Kesselman, Mark; Krieger, Joel; and Joseph, William, Eds. *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, 5th edition.

Kesselman, Mark. *Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2nd edition.

Additional readings may be distributed in class.

Class Format: This course is a lecture course with open-ended discussion. As such, students are encouraged to raise questions and make pertinent comments during the lectures. The lectures for this class will not necessarily repeat or review material in the text, thus it is essential to complete the reading assignments **before** the first lecture on each topic in order to fully understand and appreciate the lectures. Students should read a daily newspaper with good coverage of political events in other countries to enhance understanding of politics in other countries. *The New York Times* (www.nytimes.com) and *The Wall Street Journal* have excellent international coverage. In addition, students may wish to read the weekly news magazine *The Economist* (<http://www.economist.com/printedition>), for a European perspective on political events around the world.

Exams: There will be two exams and ten quizzes. Material for the exams and quizzes will be drawn from readings and lectures. Exams and quizzes will require students to demonstrate knowledge of the political development, political institutions and processes, and public policy issues of each country. Exams will also require students to apply the core concepts of comparative politics, including comparing and contrasting political institutions and processes across state lines and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the political institutions and processes in each country.

Essay on Constitutional Recommendations: To enhance understanding of political institutions and encourage critical thinking and writing skills, students will write a 5-7 page paper recommending political institutions and arrangements for a constitution for the newly sovereign, independent state.

Grading Policy: The final grade will be based on points earned on the exams, quizzes, Constitution assignment, and class participation.

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Quizzes: 20%

Constitution essay: 25%

Class Participation: 5%

Grades will be distributed as follows:

A 93%-100%

AB 88%-92%

B 83%-87%

BC 78%-82%

C 73%-77%

CD 68%-72%

D 60%-69%

F 59% and below

Attendance Policy: Regular and prompt attendance is required for all lectures. Class attendance is important because lectures will generally differ in content from the readings and announcements regarding any changes in the course schedule will be made in class only. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered and to get notes from another student. Attendance at exams is mandatory. Make-up exams will be given only to students who have a written doctor's excuse for illness, a verifiable family emergency, or a signed excuse from a faculty advisor for participation in university sanctioned activities. Students who know that they will be absent on the exam day must inform the instructor in advance and may take the exam in advance.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this class. Anyone caught cheating on exams or on any other work assigned work will be punished in accord with University guidelines. Further information is available at: <http://www.marquette.edu/rc/academichonesty.shtml>

Special Needs: If you have special needs due to any type of physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, please see me during the first week of class to make appropriate arrangements to accommodate your needs. You should also contact the Office of Disability Services at 288-1645.

Essay on Constitutional Recommendations

The leaders of the independence movement of Erewhon are currently in the process of writing a constitution creating a liberal democratic state. They are seeking advice from a large number of people who have studied the governmental systems of various countries throughout the world. As you are currently studying the governmental structures of several countries, the Committee on the Constitution has specifically charged you with sharing your thoughts and justifications on the following:

- 1) unitary versus federal national structure;
- 2) structure and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial bodies;
- 3) a system of checks and balances (if necessary);
- 4) electoral system.

Your paper should **recommend** constitutional arrangements based on a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the governmental systems of the countries we have studied.

Your paper should be 5-7 typed pages (10 or 12 pt font, and one inch margins top, bottom and sides). Papers with excessive (more than 5) grammar and spelling errors will be penalized one full letter grade.

The Committee on the Constitution requests the honor of your memo on the Constitution of Erewhon no later than **April 13**.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Jan 19-21	Introduction: Why Study Comparative Politics and Government Kesselman, ch. 1 Reader, 1.1 - 1.4
Jan 6- Feb 4	Britain Kesselman, chs. 2, 7 (United States) Reader, 4.1 - 4.4, 7.1
Feb 9-18	France Kesselman, ch. 3 Reader, 1.5 - 1.6, 6.1, 7.5
Feb 23-Mar 4	Germany Kesselman, ch. 4 Reader, 5.3 - 5.5

TUESDAY, MARCH 9 – FIRST EXAM

Mar 11-25	India Kesselman, ch. 6 Reader, 6.4 - 6.5
Mar 30-Apr 8	Russia Kesselman, ch. 11 Reader, 4.5 - 4.7, 7.2

APRIL 13 – CONSTITUTION ASSIGNMENT DUE

Apr 13-15	Mexico Kesselman, ch. 10 Reader, 5.1, 6.6
Apr 20-27	China Kesselman, ch. 13 Reader, 2.2
Apr 29-4	Iran Kesselman, ch. 12 Reader, 2.4, 5.6
May 6	Conclusions

FINAL EXAM, THURSDAY, MAY 13, 10:30-12:30