

231 INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Fall 2008

Department of Political Science

Muskingum College

POLS 231-1

MWF: 3:00 – 3:50 pm

15 Cambridge Hall

Dr. Ivan Dinev Ivanov

Office Hours: MWF 1:00 – 2:00 pm; TH 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to introduce the students to diverse forms of government and politics around the world by examining them in comparative perspective. It surveys various features of different forms of governance such as types of political systems, institutional setup, economic development and identity politics. We have witnessed an almost irreversible trend of ever growing globalization and democratization in the last two decades that has influenced the evolution of contemporary governance. While globalization seems to be bringing the world closer together, the rise of identity politics creates new challenges at sub-national level which sometimes results in disintegration of states. Therefore, at the national level the course will compare various forms of democratic and non-democratic institutions in different countries and at the international level it will explore how globalization affects the behavior of the individual states. The goal of the course is threefold. First, by the end of the course students should be able to identify various forms and types of governance around the world and relate them with specific countries, nations, political leaders and events. Second, they are expected to develop the background and conceptual tools necessary to analyze international politics in comparative perspective and explain the outcome of specific events around the globe. Third, Introduction to Comparative Politics is designed to equip students with background knowledge necessary for other advanced courses in international and comparative politics.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Course Requirements:	% of final grade	Due Date
In-Class (Early) Midterm	20%	9/24
Four contemporary politics quizzes	20% (5% each)	9/8; 10/10; 10/27; 11/24

Written assignment (constitutional proposal)	15%	12/3
Final Exam	35%	12/12 at 3:30 pm
Class attendance (and participation)	10%	throughout the sem.

Grading Scale:

93-100%	A	73-76%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
83-86%	B	63-66%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-
77-79%	C+	0-59%	F

Please note that grades represent NON-NEGOTIABLE assessments of a student's comprehension of course material and they can be appealed only in the order outlined in the Student Handbook.

POLICIES AND CAVEATS:

If you have a disability that affects your performance in class (whether you are a part of the PLUS program or not), please notify the instructor **at the beginning of the semester** in order to find an accommodation that meets best student's interests. Students are expected to attend class, and attendance will be recorded at each class meeting. In the case of medical or other extraordinary circumstances, I should be informed **PRIOR** to the test about the student's impending absence by email and documentation must be provided when you return to class. Absences due to illness or injury will not be excused retroactively unless documentation is provided to the instructor. A student who misses a total of 1/3 or more class meetings will receive a class participation grade of zero (0), and may also have his or her overall course grade reduced. A student who has a total of 1/2 or more unexcused absences will receive a course grade of F.

I do **NOT** plan makeup examinations or quizzes. Missing an exam without prior permission of the instructor *may* result in a zero on that exam. Make-up tests will only be arranged in special cases, so please be sure to let me know as soon as possible if you will not be able to attend at the scheduled time.

Students are expected to follow contemporary international relations. They must read the international section of the leading national and international newspapers such as the New York Times or Financial Times every day during the semester and are **STRONGLY** encouraged to make reading this section a daily habit. Students will be given four quizzes (one take home reaction paper and three in-class quizzes) throughout the semester that are related to various topics and issues discussed in class. The date of each quiz is indicated on the tentative schedule sheet. The first of those four quizzes is a short reaction paper to the movie "Goodbye Lenin," the other three are going to be in-class quizzes. They are going to take place at specific dates as indicated in the tentative schedule.

Drawing on the country case studies, the students are also required to submit a proposal for a new constitution of a certain country, indicated by the instructor that will offer advanced and more democratic institutions, electoral systems and better ethnic accommodation among the different groups. The constitutional proposals will be based on classroom discussions and will take place in several separate stages when the students are going to submit drafts and discuss their content in the classroom. Detailed instructions will be given in class.

Lastly, I need to remind you that all of the work you submit in this course is expected to be your own. Students should review the Muskingum Code of Student Conduct and be aware of all activities defined as academic dishonesty. Although I do encourage students to exchange ideas and/or work together on certain assignments, **each student is responsible for completing and submitting his or her own assignments.** Please be advised that according to Muskingum Code of Student Conduct “all forms of dishonesty and misconduct including, but not limited to the following are prohibited:

- a. Cheating plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty (these cases are adjudicated through the processes administered by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs)”¹

If you have any doubts how to proceed in a certain situation, feel free to contact me, but always remember that your safe bet is to cite the source of information. For further details on plagiarism and appropriate citation visit the University of Wisconsin-Madison website and check a detailed instructional brochure about references on my webpage:

http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA_PC.html

Please do not forget that all cell phones and pagers should be **turned off completely** (not muted!!!) during class time and I will be very disappointed to hear ring tones during our class.

READINGS:

For this class, you will need to purchase the following books, available at the college bookstore:

Patrick H. O’Neil, Essentials of Comparative Politics, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 2007)

Patrick H. O’Neil, Karl Fields, & Don Share, Cases in Comparative Politics, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 2007)

¹ See Code of Student Conduct: General Regulations;” also available on the Internet: <http://www.muskingum.edu/home/campuslife/downloads/studenthandbook.pdf>, 06/04/2008.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

Part one: Introduction

What is comparative politics, what are we comparing? Key terms, concepts and approaches for comparing states, nations and political systems. Issues of political institutions, identity politics and globalization

Essentials, Ch. 1&2

What is the role of society?

Essentials, Ch. 3

Part two: Democracy and state

Democracy and the State; Essentials, Ch. 6

Advanced Democracies; Essentials, Ch. 7

Gabriel Almond, "Capitalism and democracy," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Sep., 1991), pp. 467-474.

The United Kingdom; Cases, Ch. 2

France; Cases, Ch. 4

Germany; Mark Kesselman et al. *Introduction to Comparative Politics* (2007), pp. 148-98.

Part three: Communism and post-communism

Understanding communism; Essentials, Ch. 8

Economic transition

Russia; Cases, Ch. 6

China; Cases, Ch. 7

Part four: Authoritarianism and Dictatorships and transition to democracy

Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism; Essentials, Ch. 5

African politics: two case studies

South Africa; Cases, Ch. 12

Nigeria; Cases, Ch. 13

Part five: Less Developed (LDCs) and Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs)

Understanding Industrialization; Essentials, Ch. 9

Central and South America:

Mexico; Cases, Ch. 10

Brazil; Cases, Ch. 11

Post-colonialism and Asian politics:
India; Cases, Ch. 8

Part six: religions, civilizations and political violence

Essentials, Ch. 11, article on political violence from reader
The concept of political violence
Islam, Judaism and the politics of the Middle East
Case study on Israel and the Middle East
[Readings are posted on Blackboard]
Iran; Cases, Ch. 9

Part seven: issues of globalization, development and environmental politics

Essentials, Ch. 10
Case studies on globalization, global environmental politics
[Readings are posted on Blackboard]²

² Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. I reserve the right to add supplementary readings if necessary. TBA Readings will be announced later in class.

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Tentative Schedule

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week One 8/25-8/29	8/25 Introduction 1	8/27 Introduction 2	8/29 No class Movie (“Goodbye Lenin”) CH 15 Thursday 5-7 pm
Week Two 9/1 – 9/5	9/1 Introduction 3	9/3 Modern States	9/5 CP and Democracy
Week Three 9/8 – 9/12	9/8 Paper/Quiz 1 due Advanced Democracies	9/10 British Politics	9/12 French Politics
Week Four 9/15 – 9/19	9/15 German Politics	9/17 <i>Discussion on advanced democracies: U.S. and Europe</i>	9/19 Understanding Communism and Post- Communism
Week Five 9/22 – 9/26	9/22 Transition to Democracy	9/24 Midterm Review: key concepts and cases	9/26 Midterm
Week Six 9/29 – 10/3	9/29 Eastern Europe’s democratization	10/1 <i>Discussion: Eastern Europe’s transition</i>	10/3 EA Grades Due Case Study on Russia
Week Seven	10/6 Case Study on China	10/8 <i>Discussion: Russia and China’s modernization</i>	10/10 In-class Quiz 2
Week Eight	10/13 Fall Break (no class)	10/15 Authoritarianism	10/17 Totalitarianism
Week Nine	10/20 Case Study: South Africa	10/22 Case Study: Nigeria	10/24 <i>Discussion on Africa</i>
Week Ten	10/27 In-class Quiz 3	10/29 Constitution Proposal Project: instructions	10/31 Modernization and Industrialization
Week Eleven	11/3 Case Study on Mexico	11/5 Case Study on Brazil	11/7 Post-Colonialism and Asian Politics
Week Twelve	11/10 Case Study on India	11/12 <i>Discussion: on economic development and modernization</i>	11/14 Religions and Politics in the Middle East
Week Thirteen	11/17 Case Study on Israel	11/19 Case Study on Iran	11/21 <i>Discussion on the Politics in the Middle East</i>
Week Fourteen	11/24 In class Quiz 4	11/26 Thanksgiving Break (no Classes)	11/28 Thanksgiving Break (no Classes)
Week Fifteen	12/3 Constitutional Proposal Project Due Globalization	12/5 Globalization and Global Environmental Politics	12/7 Energy and Environment; B&F, Q&A