

Syllabus: Comparative Government and Politics

Professor Jonathan Slapin
email: jonathan.slapin@unlv.edu
tel:(702) 895-3354
office: WRI A210

Fall 2007
TR 2:30PM - 3:45PM WRI C301

1 Aim of Course

The aim of this course is to provide students with a broad overview of the comparative politics subfield. The course will examine democratic political institutions, democratization, and international political economy. Students will gain an understanding of the comparative method and will use it to analyze politics in a diverse set of countries from developing world to advanced industrialized democracies. Students will seek answers to questions such as, “How does democracy work in different parts of the world?”, “Why is democracy desirable?”, “What prevents some states from becoming democratic?”, “What is the relationship between wealth and democracy?”, and “How do countries become wealthy?” While it is impossible to find a definitive answer to these questions, by the end of the semester students are expected to know the basic arguments in the political science literature regarding these questions and they are expected to think critically about these questions themselves.

2 Office Hours

Monday 10-12AM, Thursday 1:15-2:15PM or by appointment. Location: WRI A210.

3 Grading

Grades will be based on 2 midterms (25% each), a final (40%), and class participation (10%). All exams will contain a major writing component. I will make every effort to return student exams in class within a week. Upon receiving their grade, any complaints must be made to me in writing and must specifically address how the exam was unfairly graded. Students must wait 24 hours after the exam has been returned to file a complaint. Further information about the exams will be provided during the semester.

Class participation includes both attending class and actively taking part in class discussions. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. As a general rule, a student missing a class because of observance of a religious holiday shall have the opportunity to make up missed work. Students must notify the instructor of anticipated absences by the last day of late registration, August 31, 2007, to be assured of this opportunity. Students who represent UNLV at any official extracurricular activity shall also have the opportunity to make up assignments, but the student must provide official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

4 Academic Misconduct

“Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join

the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution."

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: "Using the words or ideas of another, from the internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources." See the "Student Academic Misconduct Policy" (<http://studentlife.unlv.edu/judicial/misconductPolicy.html>).

5 Copyright Information

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **YOU ARE INDIVIDUALLY AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLATIONS OF COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE LAWS. THE UNIVERSITY WILL NEITHER PROTECT NOR DEFEND YOU NOR ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE OR STUDENT VIOLATIONS OF FAIR USE LAWS.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, you are encouraged to visit the website: <http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright>.

6 Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Faculty should not provide students accommodations without being in receipt of this plan. UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: VOICE (702) 895-0866, TTY (702) 895-0652, FAX (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/>.

7 Rebelmail

By policy, faculty and staff should only e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after admission to the university. Non-admitted students should contact the Student Help Desk at (702) 895-0761, in the Student Union Room 231, or by e-mail: studenthelp@unlv.edu. See <http://rebelmail.unlv.edu/> for information.

8 UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. See <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

9 Readings

There are two required texts for this class: Eagles, Holoman, and Johnston (EHJ) "Politics: An Introduction to Democratic Government" (2nd edition) and Dahl "On Democracy." These are available for purchase in the

campus bookstore. Additional readings will be available on e-reserves through the library or through links I will provide.

10 Course Plan

Week 1 Introduction: The Comparative Method

- 1) EHJ chapter 2
- 2) Elster (1989) *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* p3-10.

Week 2 Why Democracy?

- 1) EHJ chapter 7
- 2) Dahl chapters 4-5

Week 3 Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems

- 1) Readings: EHJ chapter 9
- 2) Excerpts from Lijphart "Parliamentary vs. Presidential Government."
 - a) Mainwaring (1990) "Presidentialism in Latin America."
 - b) Linz (1990) "The Perils of Presidentialism"
 - c) Horowitz (1990) "Comparing Democratic Systems"

Week 4 Elections and Parties

- 1) Dahl chapter 11
- 2) EHJ chapter 11, chapter 12.1-12.2 (p337-348)
- 3) "How to Rig an Election," *The Economist*, 27 April 2002.

Week 5 Legislatures and Federalism

- 1) EHJ chapter 10
- 2) Tsebelis and Money *Bicameralism* chapters 1-2

Week 6 Direct Democracy, Midterm on Thursday, October 4

- 1) Dahl chapter 9
- 2) 2nd half of EHJ Chapter 12 (348-358)

Week 7 Judges and Bureaucrats

- 1) EHJ chapters 13-14
- 2) Shepsle and Boncheck, "Principal-Agent Relationships," in *Analyzing Politics*, pp. 360-70.

Week 8 Democratization and Development: Why Care?

- 1) "The Road to Riches," *The Economist*, Dec 31, 1999 (10-12)
- 2) Collier and Gunning (1999) "Why has Africa Grown Slowly?" *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*
- 3) Sachs, *The End of Poverty* chapters 1 and 3

Week 9 Democracy and Growth

- 1) Olson, "Dictatorship, Democracy and Development" (567-575)
- 2) Dahl chapters 13-14

Week 10 Democracy and Growth cont.

- 1) North and Weingast (1989) "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England," *Journal of Economic History* 49, pp. 803-832.
- 2) Easterly, *The Elusive Quest for Growth*, chapter 12

Week 11 Review and Midterm on Thursday, November 8

Week 12 Growth and Trade

- 1) "Trade Winds," *The Economist*, 8 November 1997.
- 2) Grieco and Ikenberry, "Developing Nations and International Trade," in *State Power and World Markets* (New York: WW Norton, 2003), pp. 252-257.
- 3) Waterbury, "The Long Gestation and Brief Triumph of Import Substituting Industrialization," *World Development* 27, 2 (1999), pp. 323-41.

Week 13 Globalization, What is it?

Note: No class on Thursday (Thanksgiving)

- 1) EHJ chapter 16
- 2) Grieco and Ikenberry, "The Consequences of Economic Globalization and "National Reactions to Economic Globalization," in *State Power and World Markets* (New York: WW Norton, 2003), pp. 222-239.

Week 14 Globalization and the Welfare State

- 1) EHJ chapter 15
- 2) Garrett (1998) "Global Markets and National Politics: Collision Course or Virtuous Circle?" *International Organization* 52(4): 787-824.

Week 15 Wrap-up and Review

Final Exam Tuesday, December 11, 3:10PM as scheduled by university.