

PSC 211
Comparative Government and Politics
Spring 2007
MW 11:30 AM-12:45 PM
TBE B176

Professor: Dr. Michele Kuenzi
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Course Description

Comparative politics is one of the broadest fields of political science. In this field, one addresses issues related to, for example, political institutions, political culture, political economy, and political development in countries across the world. Although some associate comparative politics with “the comparative method,” those conducting research in the area of comparative politics use a multitude of methodologies and pursue diverse topics. In this course, some of the basic concepts and tools employed in comparative politics will be introduced. Areas such as political institutions, political development and democratization will be highlighted. In addition, the political systems of specific countries will be examined.

Course Requirements

Required Texts and Reading:

James N. Danziger. 2007. *Understanding the Political World* Eight Edition. Pearson Longman.

Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach. 2005. *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*. Cambridge University Press.

Reserve Readings (electronic): I will designate reserve readings with an **R** in the list of readings. The web site is: <http://ereserves.library.unlv.edu/eres/default.aspx> The readings are listed in alphabetical order by title.

Handouts

Grades

The total number of points that can be achieved in this course is 400. The points are allocated in the following way:

	Number of Points	Percentage Equivalent
Quizzes	100	25%
Mid term	120	30%
Attendance	20	5%
Participation	20	5%
Final Exam	140	35%
Totals	400	100%

In other words, quizzes count for 25% of your grade, the mid term for 30%, attendance for 5%, participation for 5%, and the final examination for 35%.

According to the point system, final grades will be assigned in the following way:

A	374 points to 400 points
A-	358 points to 373 points
B+	346 points to 357points
B	330 points to 345 points
B-	318 points to 329 points
C+	306 points to 317 points
C	290 points to 305 points
C-	278 points to 289 points
D+	266 points to 277 points
D	250 points to 265 points
D-	238 points to 249 points
F	237 points and below

Exams

The exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. **Make-up exams will not be given** except in the case of extreme circumstances. The student must be able provide documentation that the absence is for a reason recognized by the university (e.g., illness, death in the family, observance of a religious holiday) and make arrangements with me **prior** to the scheduled exam date. If it is absolutely impossible to make prior arrangements with me, students must contact me as soon as possible about the situation. (Please notify me of any planned absences for religious holidays or official extracurricular activity for UNLV by February 12, 2007).

Quizzes

Four quizzes will be administered during the course. **The quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class.** Students may drop their lowest quiz score. Since the lowest quiz score can be dropped and students know in advance the dates of the quizzes, **no makeup quizzes will be administered.**

Quizzes and exams will be based on material covered during class in lectures, films or class discussions and from the required readings. I will periodically introduce current event articles or materials as they relate to the topics and concepts being covered in class. Students will, of course, be responsible for this material as well as material covered in films and guest lectures.

Attendance, Participation and General Expectations

Attendance will be taken each class. Students may miss up to three classes without losing attendance points. Because students are already allowed three absences during the term, three points will be subtracted from the attendance points for every absence beyond three, whatever the reason for the absence. Attending class is a very important part of the learning process. If anyone foresees the possibility of missing class more than three times, she/he should consider taking PSC 211 when she/he will be able to attend all of the classes. **Signing the attendance sheet for another student is a form of fraud**, and anyone participating in this activity will be penalized.

Participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged. Of course, participation should be constructive, and all comments should be relevant to the material being covered in class. Students must **do all of the reading!** I will call on students in class and expect their answers to reflect familiarity with the ideas and information in the readings. Respect should be shown for all other class members at all times. Inappropriate and disruptive participation/behavior will result in a drop in the student's grade. If you are habitually late, the attendance portion of your course grade will be marked down substantially.

Students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive promptly and have a collegial demeanor. Students are not allowed to sleep, read newspapers, listen to headphones, or talk to others during class. Engaging in these behaviors will result in a drop in the student's grade. **You must turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices during class. Any exceptions must be cleared with me in advance. If you look at your cell phone during a quiz or exam, you will receive a zero for that quiz or exam.** Arriving late, leaving early, or interrupting class with a cell phone or other electronic device will also result in a drop in the student's grade. **Students are not allowed to tape record, photograph, video tape or otherwise electronically record any of the class.**

I reserve the right to modify the course syllabus. Students will be responsible for knowing any changes made to the syllabus during class time whether they were in attendance or not. The instructor's lecture notes are not available to students; it is the student's responsibility to obtain class notes from a classmate, should class be missed.

Learning Enhancement Services (LES) is the office to provide Disability Services. If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact LES for coordination in your academic accommodations. LES is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex, suite 137. The phone number is 702-895-0866, or TTD 702-895-0652, or you may visit the website at www.unlv.edu/studentlife/les.

Academic Honesty:

All breaches in academic honesty will be handled in accordance with the UNLV Student Conduct Code and Policies, which can be accessed at <http://www.unlv.edu/studentlife>.

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Date	
Week 1	
Wednesday, 1/17	Class Introduction: Read the Syllabus Carefully!
Week 2	
Monday, 1/22	Comparative Politics: Concepts, Topics and Methods Danzinger, Chapter 1 R: Collier, David. "The Comparative Method." In Ada W. Finifter (ed.). <i>Political Science: The State of the Discipline II</i> . Washington, DC: American Political Science Association.
Wednesday, 1/24	Democracy and Regime Types Danzinger pp. 169-188 R: Schmitter, Philippe and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is and Is Not."
Week 3	Political Culture
Monday, 1/29	Political Beliefs and Ideology Danzinger, Chapter 2
Wednesday, 1/31	Political Behavior Danzinger, Chapter 3
Week 4	
Monday, 2/5	Political Socialization Danzinger, Chapter 4
Wednesday, 2/7	Quiz 1 Civil Society and Social Capital R: Putnam, Robert. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 6(1): 65-78.
Week 5	
Monday, 2/12	Political Institutions: Introduction Danzinger, Chapter 6 and pp. 188-191
Wednesday, 2/14	Parliamentary versus Presidential Regimes R: Lijphart, Chapter 7, "Executive-Legislative Relations: Patterns of Dominance and Balance of Power." Danzinger, pp. 191-197
Week 6	
Monday, 2/19	President's Day Recess
Wednesday, 2/21	Electoral Systems R: Lijphart, Chapter 8, "Electoral Systems: Majority and Plurality Methods Versus Proportional Representation."
Week 7	
Monday, 2/26	Quiz 2 Catch Up Day
Wednesday, 2/28	Political Party Systems R: Lijphart, Chapter 5, "Party Systems: Two Party and Multiparty Systems." Danzinger, pp. 197-205
Week 8	
Monday, 3/5	Review for the Midterm Examination
Wednesday, 3/7	Midterm Examination
Week 9	SPRING BREAK
Monday, 3/12	Spring Break: No Class

Wednesday, 3/14	Spring Break: No Class
Week 10	
Monday, 3/19	Political Economy Danzinger, Chapter 8
Wednesday, 3/21	Economic and Political Development I Danzinger, Chapter 10
Week 11	
Monday, 3/26	Economic and Political Development II Danzinger, Chapter 14
Wednesday, 3/28	Quiz 3 Contentious Politics Danzinger, Chapter 12.
Week 12	
Monday, 4/2	Catch up
Wednesday, 4/4	Ethnicity and Politics R: Taras, Ray and Rajat Ganguly. 2002. "Ethnic Conflict on the World Stage." Chapter One in <i>Understanding Ethnic Conflict: The International Dimension</i>
Week 13	
Monday, 4/9	Case Study: France Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 4
Wednesday, 4/11	Constitution Building Exercise
Week 14	
Monday, 4/16	Case Study: United Kingdom Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 3
Wednesday, 4/18	Case Study: Japan Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 6
Week 15	
Monday, 4/23	Case Study: Mexico Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 9
Wednesday, 4/25	Quiz 4 Case Study: South Africa Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 12
Week 16	
Monday, 4/30	Case Study: Russia Kopstein and Lichbach, Chapter 7
Wednesday, 5/2	Review for the Final Exam
Week 17	
Wednesday May 9 10:10 AM	FINAL EXAMINATION