

POL 2700: Comparative Political Systems

University of Missouri

Fall 2018

M W 12:00-12:50pm, Mumford Hall 133

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Sections: 01A, 01B, 01D

Purpose: The course is designed to introduce students to some of the basic concepts and issues encountered in the comparative study of politics. Comparative politics is more than the act of comparing countries, but of using different countries to attempt to understand broader political phenomena. As such it is an analytic, and not merely descriptive, enterprise. Students will learn about key concepts related to political development, regime type, institutional structure, and policymaking by studying a variety of countries that serve as illustrative cases. Additionally, we will often use the United States as a point of departure for our discussions about these other cases.

The countries we will discuss are representative of developed countries and developing nations. Thus, many of the lessons we will draw from these cases can be directly applied to other cases not covered in class. As you will note from the syllabus, however, the course is not organized around a country-by-country study. Instead, the organization is intended to develop conceptual tools to compare these countries and generalize to other cases. *Comparative politics is not simply the description of other countries. Comparative politics is the study of multiple countries to understand why particular political outcomes occur.*

Grades: There are two components of your grade. The first component (80%) is based on exams. There will be four exams each weighted 20%. The exams will contain multiple choice questions about topics from the preceding lectures (meaning the exams are not cumulative). Exams will cover information from the lectures, discussion sections and reading materials. **I do not scale or curve exams. The grade you earn is the grade that you will receive. At this point, I do not envision extra credit opportunities.**

The second component (20%) will be based on class participation. Your class participation will be based on lab attendance as well as participation in class discussion and activities. Attendance at lectures and labs are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for a passing grade. Ideal answers to

questions on the examinations will express clear knowledge of both the assigned reading materials and the content of the lectures. In addition, the lectures will be used to deliver important class information.

Final class grades will be assigned with the following grading scale:

A+	=	97.0 - 100
A	=	90.0 - 96.99
B+	=	87.0 - 89.99
B	=	80.0 - 86.99
C+	=	77.0 - 79.99
C	=	70.0 - 76.99
D+	=	67.0 - 69.99
D	=	60.0 - 66.99
F	=	0 - 59.99

Readings: There will not always be perfect unity between the course lectures and assigned readings. Thus it will be necessary to attend all lectures and to read the assigned materials in order to be exposed to all of the material that you are responsible for in this course.

The following required text is available at local bookstores (as well as through online sources).

- Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder and Sona Golder. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. CQ Press.

– **Note that any edition will be sufficient!**

Canvas: We will be using Canvas (canvas.missouri.edu) to display grades, post additional readings, and for announcements.

Other Considerations

- Out of respect for fellow students, each person will refrain from talking, whispering, eating, making offensive remarks, newspaper reading, and other disruptive behavior during lecture. Cell phones must be turned off and may not be used during class time. Inappropriate classroom behavior may result in the student being requested to leave the classroom. More information about my electronics policy will be given in class.
- Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. In this course, you are expected to submit original work and behave in a respectful manner toward both the

professor and other students in the class. Breaches of the academic integrity rules are extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach range from instructor-imposed academic sanctions, such as a failing grade for the course, to University-imposed disciplinary sanctions, such as probation or expulsion. If you have questions, please consult the University's academic integrity website, <http://academicintegrity.missouri.edu/>, and the University M-book, www.missouri.edu/~mbook. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student plagiarizing (or cheating on tests) will receive an automatic "F" for that assignment, no exceptions!**

- Final Examination: Each student must take the final examination at the time assigned in the University's schedule of classes. You MUST NOT make any travel arrangements for holidays, family occasions, or the like that would require you to miss this examination. There will be no exemptions from the final or early final examinations given.
- If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

- University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may make audio or video recordings of course activity unless specifically prohibited by the faculty member. However, the redistribution of audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course is prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Make-up Exams/Excused Absences

Make-up exams will only be given for university-excused absences. For any of these absences to be "excused," you must provide me with written documentation. To be excused the student must notify his or her instructor in writing (acknowledged e-mail message is acceptable) prior to the date of absence if such notification is feasible (in particular in times of university-excused absences). In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. unanticipated illness, accident, or emergency) the student must provide notification by the end of the second working day after the absence by 5:00 PM. This notification should include an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the class.

The student must also provide documentation substantiating the reason for the absence that is satisfactory to the instructor prior to taking the make-up exam. Failing to take a make-up exam at a previously agreed-to time will result in a zero. The make-up exam must be taken within one week of the original test date listed in the syllabus, except under extreme circumstances approved by the instructor. For illness, documentation should include an official note from a doctor or clinic.

Also, keep in mind that an exam proctored outside of the normal exam time may be of a different format than the original exam. If you do not have an excused absence you will receive a zero for the exam. **No exceptions.**

Late assignments lose a letter grade per calendar day late. Also note that papers are due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Any time after that is considered to be a day late.

Class Schedule

We will spend as much time as necessary on each topic for this course. Because I am unable to predict in advance how long each topic will take, the schedule below is only a rough guideline. *I expect that you will have read the assigned readings **before** the class period for which they are assigned. I will announce additional required readings during class meetings.*

Part 1: What Is Comparative Politics?

Week 1: August 20-22

- Monday: Course Overview/Chapter 1
- Wednesday: Chapter 2

Week 2: August 27-29

- Monday: Chapter 2 (continued)
- Wednesday: Chapter 3

Week 3: September 3-5

- Monday: No Class (Labor Day)
- Wednesday: Chapter 3 (continued)

Week 4: September 10-12

- Monday: Chapter 4
- Wednesday: Chapter 4 (continued)

Part 2: What Is Democracy?

Week 5: September 17-19

- Monday: Exam I
- Wednesday: Chapter 5

Week 6: September 24-26

- Monday: Chapter 5 (continued)
- Wednesday: Chapter 6

Week 7: October 1-3

- Monday: Chapter 6 (continued)
- Wednesday: Chapter 7

Week 8: October 8-10

- Monday: Chapter 8
- Wednesday: Chapter 8 (continued)

Part 3: Democratic Institutions

Week 9: October 15-17

- Monday: Exam II
- Wednesday: Chapter 9

Week 10: October 22-24

- Monday: Chapter 9 (continued)
- Wednesday: Chapter 10

Week 11: October 29-31

- Monday: Chapter 11
- Wednesday: Chapter 11 (continued)

Week 12: November 5-7

- Monday: Chapter 12
- Wednesday: Chapter 12 (continued)

Part 4: Consequences of Democracy

Week 13: November 12-14

- Monday: Exam III
- Wednesday: Chapter 13

Week 14: November 19-21

- Monday: No Class (Thanksgiving)
- Wednesday: No Class (Thanksgiving)

Week 15: November 26-28

- Monday: Chapter 13 (continued)
- Wednesday: Chapter 14

Week 16: December 3-5

- Monday: Chapter 15
- Wednesday: Chapter 16
- Friday: Reading day (no lab)

Final Examination: Thursday, December 13, 12:30-2:30pm