SYLLABUS

This course introduces you to comparative politics, one of the four sub-fields in political science. As a field of study, comparative politics focuses on the diversity of political systems around the world. The field therefore encompasses a diverse array of topics, from competing forms of democracy to the nature of economic development. In this course, we will explore the political diversity of the world through a series of theoretically-informed case studies.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Define and apply key concepts in comparative politics, including state, nation, political culture, and interest groups.
2. Explain and evaluate the importance of specific historical events in the context of the political and economic development of the countries studied.
3. Compare and contrast the political systems of the countries explored in the course, paying particular attention to historical, political, economic, geographical, and moral aspects of governance in each country.
4. Use the comparative method to analyze contemporary political systems.

Required Texts. In this course we use the following texts, available in paper and e-book version.

- MyPoliSciLab (www.mypoliscilab.com), which includes practice tests, multimedia activities, and more to reinforce your understanding of the textbook.

Recommended Texts. You are encouraged to follow current events by regularly reading:


Assignments. For each unit, students will have three types of assignments:

- A review exercise worth up to 5 points (0-does not meet expectations, 3-meets expectations; 5 exceeds expectations).
- A discussion essay (200-400 words) about the country/countries assigned for the unit worth 7.5 points.
- A unit exam worth 12.5.

Grade Breakdown. Your grade breakdown is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Number of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Review (5 points)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Discussion Essay (7.5 points)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exam (12.5)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Calendar

Assignments | Due Date
---|---
Unit 1 Review | 1/31
Unit 1 Discussion | 2/7
Unit 1 Exam | 2/14
Unit 2 Review | 2/28
Unit 2 Discussion | 3/7
Unit 2 Exam | 3/14
Unit 3 Review | 3/28
Unit 3 Discussion | 4/4
Unit 3 Exam | 4/11
Unit 4 Review | 4/25
Unit 4 Discussion | 5/2
Unit 4 Exam | 5/12

DETAILED COURSE CALENDAR

Unit 1. Comparative Politics, the State, Democratic and Non-Democratic Political Regimes.
Country: United Kingdom.

Learning Objectives:
1.1 What is comparative politics all about?
1.2 What sorts of questions do we ask in comparative politics?
1.3 How do we build arguments in comparative politics?
1.4 What challenges confront building arguments in comparative politics?
1.5 How do we obtain evidence to build arguments in comparative politics?
2.1 What makes a state successful?
2.2 What do states do?
2.3 What factors explain the emergence of the world’s first states?
2.4 What factors explain the emergence of states in recent decades?
2.5 How can we measure state "strength"?
3.1 What differentiates a democratic from a non-democratic form of government?
3.2 What political rules are necessary for institutionalized participation and contestation?
3.3 How do democracies balance the tension between limited and effective government?
3.4 How do unitary and federal constitutions address Madison’s Dilemma?
3.5 How does the relationship between executive and legislative branches of government address Madison’s Dilemma?
3.6 How does judicial review vs. parliamentary supremacy over the judiciary address Madison’s Dilemma?
3.7 How do different electoral processes address Madison’s Dilemma?
4.1 What defines non-democratic regimes?
4.2 What is the distinction between totalitarianism and authoritarianism?
4.3 What defines the distinction between communism and fascism?
4.4 What distinguishes the types of non-democratic regimes from each other?

Readings:
- Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4; Samuels, *Case Studies*, Chapter 2 (UK).
- Chapter Pre-Test: Before beginning the readings, take the chapter pre-tests in the “MyPoliSciLab for Samuels *Comparative Politics*” to get a sense of the material’s relevancy. Organize your time by using the study plans created by these pre-tests.
Chapter 1. Doing Comparative Politics

Read the chapter questions. Understand chapter objectives by reviewing pertinent topics to keep in mind as you read.

Take the Pre-Test to see the relevance of government and politics in everyday life. The results create a personal study plan with follow-up reading, video, and multimedia. Take the Pre-Test multiple times; go to Grade Tracker to view previous results.

Read this chapter in the eText. The Pearson eText and chapter audio let you access your textbook anytime, anywhere, and any way you want.

Learn the key terms for this chapter. Find key terms by learning objective, test yourself by term or definition, and download the flashcard deck to your mobile device.

See the chapter’s concepts in action. Analyze recent developments in world politics by watching streaming video from major news providers and completing the assessment.
MyPoliSciLab Activities:

- **Review Exercise.** Complete and submit answers to the review questions for one of the following:
  - Political Landscapes (Chapter 1)
  - Legislatures (Chapter 3), or
  - Civil Rights (Chapter 4)

- **Discussion.** United Kingdom:
  - Discuss how limited government emerged in the United Kingdom without a written constitution and the institutions promoting effective government in this country. Please, only use the text as a source and cite pages (300-400 words).

- **Unit Exam:** Complete the unit exam and submit it for a grade.

Unit 2. Regime Change, Political Identity, and Religion and Politics. Countries: Nigeria and Iran.

Learning Objectives:

5.1 What proportion of the world’s states have been democracies, historically?
5.2 What are the domestic-level political sources of regime change?
5.3 What are the international-level political sources of regime change?
5.4 What are the short-term causes of regime change?
5.5 What does the future hold in terms of regime change around the world?

6.1 What are the main forms of political identity?
6.2 What is the "primordialist" approach to understanding the politicization of identity?
6.3 What is the "constructivist" approach to understanding the politicization of identity?

7.1 What is the potential tension between any religious tradition and democratic principles?
7.2 Does having a predominantly Christian religious tradition necessarily mean democracy will emerge?
7.3 Does a Muslim religious culture necessarily offer little support for democracy?
7.4 Is there a relationship between economic modernization, secularization, and democratization?

Readings:
- Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, Chapters 5, 6, and 7; and Samuels, *Case Studies*, Chapters 9 (Nigeria), and 11 (Iran)
- Chapter Pre-Test: Before beginning the readings, be sure to take the chapter pre-tests to get a sense of the material’s relevancy. Organize your time by using the study plans created by these pre-tests.

MyPoliSciLab Activities:
- **Review Exercise:** Watch and submit answers to the review questions for one of the following:
  - The End of Apartheid
  - Toppling Hussein
  - Regime Change in Libya
- **Discussion.** Nigeria and Iran
  - Discuss three similarities and three differences between the histories of Nigeria and Iran, and compare these countries’ institutions. Please, only use the text as a source and cite pages (300-400 words).
- **Unit Exam:** Complete the unit exam and submit it for a grade.


Learning Objectives:
8.1 What is “gender”?
8.2 How does socio-economic modernization change attitudes about gender relations?
8.3 Why do women’s attitudes change more than men’s as a result of socio-economic change?
8.4 How have women’s growing participation in politics changed gender-related policies?
8.5 What other factors shape gender-related policies?
9.1 How do individuals coordinate their separate interests to mobilize collectively?
9.2 What are social movements and how do they form?
9.3 What are interest groups and why do they form?
9.4 What are political parties and where do they come from?

Readings:
- Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, Chapters 8 and 9; and Samuels, *Case Studies*, Chapters 4 (France), and 7 (Mexico)
- Chapter Pre-Test: Before beginning the readings, be sure to take the chapter pre-tests to get a sense of the material’s relevancy. Organize your time by using the study plans created by these pre-tests.

MyPoliSciLab Activities:
- **Review Exercise:** Watch and submit answers to the review questions for one of the following:
  - Modernization and Gender Roles or
  - Gender Politics in Iceland.
- **Discussion.** France and Mexico
  - Discuss three similarities and three differences between the revolutions of France and Mexico, and compare these countries’ institutions. Please, only use the text as a source and cite pages (300-400 words).
- **Unit Exam:** Complete the unit exam and submit it for a grade.

Learning Objectives:
11.1 What is the relationship between states and markets?
11.2 What best promotes economic development: a democratic or a non-democratic state?
11.3 What best promotes economic development: a free market or an interventionist state?
11.4 How do colonial legacies influence economic development?
13.1 What is globalization?
13.2 What are the consequences of political globalization for sovereignty and democracy?
13.3 What is economic globalization and what are its consequences?
13.4 How has cultural globalization shaped politics in the world’s states?

Readings:
• Samuels, *Comparative Politics*, Chapters 11 and 13 and Samuels, *Case Studies*, Chapters 10 (China) and 6 (India).
• Chapter Pre-Test: Before beginning the readings, be sure to take the chapter pre-tests to get a sense of the material’s relevancy. Organize your time by using the study plans created by these pre-tests.

MyPoliSciLab Activities:
- **Review Exercise.** Complete and submit answers to the review questions for:
  - Development (Chapter 11), or
  - Economic Policy (Chapter 13).
- **Discussion.** China and India.
  - Discuss three similarities and three differences between the histories of China and India, and compare these countries’ institutions. Please, only use the text as a source and cite pages (300-400 words).
- **Unit Exam:** Complete the unit exam and submit it for a grade.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade.
• View a [description of academic integrity](#).
• View the [list of student’s rights and responsibilities](#).

Disability Resource Center:
Academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor’s attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. [Contact Disability Resource Center](#) at 298-2512 for additional services.