

POLS 150: Introduction to Comparative Politics Spring 2018

Instructor: John Kennedy
Course Number:
Classroom: Malott 2001
Time: MW 9:00-9:50 am

Office: 521 Blake Hall
Office hours: MW 2:00-4:00 pm
Office number: 864-9025
E-mail: kennedy1@ku.edu

Scope and Purpose:

- ✓ Why are some societies ruled by authoritarian leaders and others have democratic systems?
- ✓ Does the political culture of a particular society influence the type of political system such as an authoritarian or democratic regime? Do social cleavages, such as religious or ethnic divisions, prevent the development of democratic institutions?
- ✓ Do inherited (previous) political institutions influence the democratization process in a particular country? That is, how difficult is the political and social transition from a dictatorship to a democracy?
- ✓ Can citizens be “satisfied” with their government even though they live under an authoritarian regime?

The above questions are some examples of the issues we address in comparative politics. This course will introduce students to a variety of methods and country case studies that comparative political scientists examine to answer these questions. In this class, we will study state institutions, political culture and the societies (including popular opinion) of twelve countries: Britain, France, Japan, India, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Iran, China and Somalia. The goal of this course is to introduce students to the comparative method and to better evaluate the international news reports presented in the popular media.

Grading: Grading is based on two mid-terms (multi-choice), discussion section assignments, four map quizzes (naming the border countries and capitals), one six to seven page paper and a final (multi-choice). Study guides will be provided for the mid-terms and final. All the questions for the midterms and the final will be taken from the study guides. The final will not be comprehensive.

Sections Assignments/Attend	15%	Map Quizzes (4)	10%
Mid-Term #1 (2/26)	15%	Research Paper (5/2)	20%
Mid-Term #2 (4/9)	15%	Simulation Paper (5/9)	10%
		Final (5/9)	15%

Readings: In addition to the required reading there will also be a few handouts (news articles) given in discussion section. *Assigned readings should be completed before each class.

Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger and William A. Joseph, *Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas*, International Edition, 7th Edition (Cengage Learning, 2016) ISBN-10:1285865332; ISBN-13: 9781285865331

*I also recommend the e-book option and also look on Amazon for used copies of the 2016 7th edition.

Class Participation: Students are encouraged to ask questions and participate during lectures. Reading assignments should be done before class.

Discussion sections: Discussing the topics raised in lecture is an important part of the learning process. However, this is a large class and it is difficult to generate an active discussion with over 100 students. Therefore, attendance in discussion sections is required. In most of the sessions, you will discuss the weekly lectures and the related countries using current news reports and headlines. For the first half of the course you will have 5 section newspaper assignments for five countries. The assignment is a one paragraph single spaced typed analysis of a particular article from one of the following sources the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time* (magazine), *US News and World Report*. In your brief analysis, you will identify country problems or issues related with either “inherited institutions”, “social cleavages” or “political culture” (this will be explained in lecture and sections before the first assignment is due). This is a cause and effect analysis. The issue is the outcome (or effect) and “inherited institutions”, “social cleavages” or “political culture” are one of the possible causes. There is more the one case, but which one has the greatest influence. The newspaper assignments will be due the week we cover a particular country. For example, section newspaper assignment about Great Britain is due the second week, France due the third week and so on. Late assignments will not be accepted after one week. The assignments are designed to help you construct your paper. Other in-class assignments will prepare you for the map quizzes and exams. Also see Section Syllabus.

State Building Simulation: In the second half of the course (after Spring Break), each section will begin preparing for the end of the semester constitutional ratification simulation. The simulation is about a fictional developing country where formal dictatorship has collapsed and new political parties have to establish a government starting with the constitution. Each discussion section will form a new political party and a party position regarding the content of the constitution (i.e. the structure of the political system). The issues include choosing a presidential verses a parliamentary system, social welfare and managing national resources. On May 1st, the classroom will become a national general assembly. Your party will attempt to ensure that your interests are represented in the constitution and you may join a collation to create a majority vote to pass a constitution or you might be in the minority collation to oppose it. A constitutional ratification simulation handout will be provided in sections.

Map Quizzes: Identifying where these counties are located and the neighboring countries is an important part of comparative politics. Therefore, we will have four map quizzes. Each quiz will ask questions about boarder countries. All the map information can be found in the text. The quizzes will take no longer than five minutes and will be taken in class (lecture).

Papers: One six to seven page paper is designed to connect the lecture and text with current events. You will choose ONE of the following three questions on consolidated democracies or transitional democracies. (1) Consolidated democracy question: *Is it change (or lack of change) in political culture, the social cleavages or government institutions that generates the greatest challenge for democracy in _____?* You will choose one of the consolidated democracies for your paper including Britain, France, Japan or India. (2) Transitional democracy question: *Is it political culture, social cleavages or inherited institutions that has the most significant influence on the current problems facing the consolidation of democracy in _____?* You will choose one of the transitional democracies for your paper including Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria or Pakistan. (3) Authoritarian regime question: *Is it political culture, social cleavages or inherited institutions that has the most significant influence on the current problems facing democratic political reform of authoritarian regimes in _____?* You will choose one of the authoritarian regimes for your paper including Iran, China or Somalia (failed state).

This is a cause and effect analysis. The outcome (or effect) is the challenge or problem facing the democracy, and “inherited institutions”, “social cleavages” or “political culture” are one of the possible causes. There is more the one case, but you need to show which one has the greatest influence. Moreover, you need to clearly define and identify a specific problem or challenge as well as clearly define “inherited institutions”, “social cleavages” or “political culture”.

The paper will use the text and at least two current (2014-2017) news reports from one of the following sources the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time* (magazine), *US News and World Report* or *The Atlantic* (see Useful Web Pages below). Remember, these are NOT descriptive papers. You will be graded on how well you answer the questions. In your paper, make sure you clearly demonstrate why *you think* one explanation is better than the other. For example, if you think the inherited institutions have a stronger negative influence on the democratic consolidation in Russia than political culture, and then explain why. In your explanation, be sure to use the text and at least two current (2014-2017) news reports (articles) to support your argument.

Make-up Exams: Students with a valid reason such as illness and documentation that satisfies the instructor can schedule a make up exam. The make-up exam will be different from the one given in class. No make up exams or map quizzes will be allowed after the last day of classes (May 2nd, 2017).

Disabilities: Any student who has a disability that may influence class participation or test taking should contact the instructor at the earliest possible date so that accommodations can be made.

Class Conduct: *Turn off all cell phones:* Each time a cell phone rings during class, *everyone* will lose one point from their final grade, but if the professor's cell phone rings then everyone will receive two extra points on their final grade. The reason for the cell phone rule is that in-class disturbances waste your classmates' time and money (tuition). Also, please do not read the newspaper, use class time to sleep, do work for other classes, or listen to music during class.

Laptop Computers: There will be No Laptop Computers in class. All the lecture outlines will be posted on Blackboard before each class. The best way to take notes is to download and print off the lecture outline and bring them with you to each class.

E-Mail: The GTAs and I will communicate with you through e-mail to answer questions regarding assignments and exams. However, all e-mail will receive a response within 24 hours. Regarding exams, the GTAs and I will *not* give exact answers for possible exam questions, but rather we will provide information to help you find the answers. Finally, professional e-mail communication is an important skill that will last beyond the class and college experience. Keep in mind how you want to present yourself through e-mail. For more information of professional e-mails see <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>.

Blackboard: This course will use Blackboard (<https://courseware.ku.edu/>). I will post the lecture out lines, study guides and lab assignments on Blackboard. If you are not familiar with this web site or you need more information please see the attached student information sheet in this syllabus.

Lectures:

Lecture 1, January 17th: Introduction and General Concepts, No Readings

Week 1: Introduction

Lecture 2, January 22nd: General Concepts and Themes
Chapter 1 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 2-20

Lecture 3, January 24th: Political Systems
Chapter 1 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 21-35

Sections: Introduction

Week 2: Great Britain

Lecture 3, January 29th: Great Britain

Chapter 2 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 36-54

Lecture 4: January 31st: Great Britain

Chapter 2 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 55-79

Sections: Newspaper Assignment #1, Great Britain

Week 3: France (Map Quiz)

Lecture 5, February 5th: France

Chapter 3 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 81-106

Lecture 6, February 7th: France

Chapter 3 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 107-124

Sections: Newspaper Assignment # 2, France (Assignment #1 due)

Week 4: Japan

Lecture 7, February 12th: Japan

Chapter 6 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 219-238

Lecture 8: February 14th: Japan

Chapter 6 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 239-264

Section: Newspaper Assignment # 3, Japan (Assignment #2 due)

Week 5: India

Lecture 9, February 19th: India

Chapter 7 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 264-292

Lecture 10, February 21st: India

Chapter 7 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 293-311

Sections: Mid-Term Review, No Assignment Due

Week 6: Brazil and Mid-Term I

***Mid Term 1, February 26th**

Lecture 11: February 28th: Brazil

Chapter 9 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 357-376

Sections: Newspaper Assignment #4, Brazil (Assignment #3 due)

Week 7: Brazil (Map Quiz) and Mexico

Lecture 12: March 5th: Brazil

Chapter 9 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 377-401

Lecture 13, March 7th: Mexico

Chapter 10 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 402-422

Sections: Newspaper Assignment #5, Mexico (Assignment #4 due)

Pass Out Assignment #6: Party Identification and Goals for the following week

Week 8: Mexico and Russia

Lecture 14: March 12th: Mexico

Chapter 10 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 423-446

Lecture 14: March 14th: Mexico

Chapter 10 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 423-446

Sections: Discuss Party Identification and Goals

*Note that Assignment #6 and Assignment #5 are due.

Pass out Assignment 7: Article 1: Legislature

Week 9: Spring Break

March 19th: No Class

March 21st: No Class

Week 10: Russia (Map Quiz)

Lecture 15: March 26th: Russia
Chapter 13 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 544-563

Lecture 16: March 28th: Russia
Chapter 13 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 564-594

Sections: Discuss Article 1: Legislature
Assignment #7 due
Pass out Assignment 8: Article 2: Executive Branch

Week 11: Iran

Lecture 17, April 2nd: Iran
Chapter 14 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 595-616

Lecture 18, April 4th: Iran
Chapter 14 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 617-640

Sections: Mid-Term Review, No Assignment Due

Week 12: Nigeria and Mid-Term II

* **Mid Term II**, April 9th

Lecture 19: April 11th: Nigeria
Chapter 12 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 495-516

Sections: Discuss Article 2: Executive Branch
(Assignment #8 due)
Pass Out Assignment 9: Article 3: Policy Proposals (A), Rights and Protections

Week 13: Nigeria and China

Lecture 20, April 16th: Nigeria
Chapter 8 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 517-543

Lecture 21, April 18th: China
Chapter 15 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 641-660

Sections: Discuss Article 3: Policy Proposals (A), Rights and Protections
(Assignment #9 due)
Pass out Assignment 10: Article 3: Policy Proposals (B), Social Welfare and Economy

Week 14: China, State Building and Simulation Prep

Lecture 22, April 23rd: China

Chapter 15 in *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, pp. 661-686

Lecture 24, April 25th State Building and Simulation Prep

Readings on Blackboard

Sections: Discuss Article 3: Policy Proposals (B), Social Welfare and Economy
(Assignment #10 due)

Week 15: Simulation

Lecture 25: April 30th: In Class Constitutional Simulation

Lecture 26, May 2nd: Simulation discussion and final review session (Final Paper Due)

Wednesday, May 9th **Final Exam** 7:30-10:00 am (same room).

Useful Web Pages:

BBC World Service

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/>

New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

US News and World Report

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm>

World Values Survey

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

Human Development Reports

<http://hdr.undp.org/>

World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org/>

CIA Factbook

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

Globalis

This is an interactive world atlas where you decide what is to be displayed on the map.

<http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/>

IDEA

Created in 1995, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an intergovernmental organization with member states from all continents, has a mandate to support sustainable democracy worldwide.

<http://www.idea.int/index.cfm>

IDEA: Very good section on Women and Politics
<http://www.idea.int/gender/>

Gender Action
Gender Action to promote women's rights and gender equality in developing countries
<http://www.genderaction.org/index.html>

World Music and Box Office Ratings Charts
<http://allcharts.org/>