Instructor: Cássio Muniz 
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Office Hours: Mo/We, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
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Course Description
This comparative politics course will introduce students to the political cultures, structures, processes, and policy performance of the world's political systems - developing and developed, democratic and authoritarian. We begin with a theoretical introduction, which provides the framework for the systematic comparison of any political system. We then examine central issues related to specific countries that are representative of the various regions. The case studies consider two Western Europeans consolidated democracies (Britain and France), a developing country with consolidated democracy (Brazil), a developing country with a faulty democratic regime (Nigeria), a former communist regime (Russia), and a reformed communist regime (China). This course aims to answer to the following questions: What are the main forces transforming contemporary societies? How does the government systems affect changes in these societies? What hinders community building, economic development, and democracy strengthening? What are some of the major problems currently facing world countries?

Learning Objectives
• To understand and critically appraise alternate conceptualizations of the political systems as prisms through which to understand a great variety of regional, national, and sub-national experiences in relevant parts of the world;
• To gain understanding of key institutions and processes shaping politics and political change in the world;
• To master a theoretical perspectives on comparative politics in the world's nations and apply them to key empirical issues, historical and current;
• To examine how global forces and systems — political, economic, cultural, and social — influence and are influenced by the world nations;
• The ability to read, comprehend, and critique professional writing.

Grades
Grades will be based on three quizzes (20%), one midterm (35%), one final exam (35%), and attendance (10%). No make-up exams will be given without a medical excuse or an excused University absence. Students must also produce the appropriate documentation stating why they were not able to be in class at the exact time of the exam. If you have a problem or miss an exam, get in touch with me immediately (beforehand if possible). If you miss an exam without giving me prior
notice, you MUST contact me within 24 hours of that exam or you will not be allowed to take a make-up exam under any circumstances.

The midterm will be given on October 15, 2014. The final exam will take place on Thursday, December 18, 2014, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Students who need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this class should contact me during the first two weeks of class. There are four quizzes on the assigned reading and on map identification. Your three highest quiz scores will count toward your grade (i.e. the lowest grade will be dropped). There is no make up for quizzes. If you miss a quiz, that quiz grade will become your lowest grade and will be discounted.

**Letter Grade Breakdown**

A (96-100); A- (90-95); B+ (86-89); B (83-85); B- (80-82); C+ (76-79); C (73-75); C- (70-72); D+ (66-69); D (63-65); D- (60-62); F (0-59)

**Quiz Schedule** (subject to change, in which case it will be announced in class):

- Quiz 1: Sep. 24 (Wed) – Content of Weeks 1-4 and Europe’s Map
- Quiz 2: Oct. 22 (Wed) – Content of Weeks 5-8 and Americas’ Map
- Quiz 3: Nov. 12 (Wed) – Content of Weeks 9-11 and Africa’s Map
- Quiz 4: Dec. 3 (Wed) – Content of Weeks 12-14 and Asia & Middle East’s Map

**UWM Policies and Procedures**

For additional information about UWM University policies see the Secretary of the University Web site at: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf). This web site contains a list of University policies regarding such issues as incomPLEtes, grade appeal procedures, and University policy governing academic misconduct, among other things.

**What I expect of you**

Be involved! I assume you are taking this course because you are interested in this topic and not simply because it meets a graduation requirement. You have ample opportunity with in class discussions to share your interests and ideas. I expect that you will keep up with readings prior to classes each week. The amount of reading varies with each topic and article; some readings require in-depth study, while others can be read quickly. A general rule-of-thumb is spending 3 hours outside of class per credit. So, you should plan to spend about 9 hours per week taking notes on readings, doing assignments, exploring online resources and discussing the readings in preparation for weekly classes. The minimum time investment is 48 hours per credit, or 144 hours/semester for a 3-credit course

**Required Textbook and Readings**


**Schedule**
**Week 1 – Introduction and Theoretical Framework**  
*Sep. 3: Introduction/Issues and Problems in Comparative Politics*  
Chapter, 1.

**Week 2 – Theoretical Framework/System and Process**  
*Sep. 8: Structural-Functional Approach/Political Culture and Socialization*  
Chapters, 2 and 3.  
*Sep. 10: Interest Articulation and Aggregation*  
Chapters, 4 and 5.

**Week 3 – Process and Policy/Politics in Britain**  
*Sep. 15: Policymaking and Public Policy*  
Chapters, 6 and 7.  
*Sep. 17: Britain* - Chapter, 8. pp. 148-159.

**Week 4 - Politics in Britain**  
*Sep. 22: Britain* - Chapter, 8. pp. 159-172.  

(QUIZ 1 & Europe’s Map)

**Week 5 – Politics in Britain/Politics in France**  
*Sep. 29: Britain* - Chapter, 8. pp. 183-191.  

**Week 6 – Politics in France**  

**Week 7 - Politics in France**  
*Oct. 15: Mid-Term Exam*

**Week 8 – Politics in Brazil**  
*Oct. 20: Brazil* - Chapter, 15. pp. 482-495.  

(QUIZ 2 & America’s Map)

**Week 9 – Politics in Brazil**  

**Week 10 – Politics in Nigeria**

Week 11 – Politics in Nigeria

(QUIZ 3 & Africa’s Map)

Week 12 – Politics in Russia

Week 13 - Politics in Russia
Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving)

Week 14 – Politics in China
Dec. 3 – China - Chapter, 13. pp. 393-405

(QUIZ 4 & Asia and Middle East’s Map)

Week 15 - Politics in China
Dec. 8 – China - Chapter, 13. pp. 405-419.