

POLSCI-335: Comparative Political Systems
Online, Mini-session I, 1/24/2011-2/26/2011

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This course is designed to get you thinking about comparative political science from a research point of view. While there is no expectation that you will generate independent research, the course will focus throughout on engaging “real” political science research on topics central to the Comparative Politics literature - namely, economic development, democracy, political violence, internal conflict and human rights. The focus will be on understanding the conceptual and theoretical domain of inquiry and considering explanations of the variation in these concepts across space and time. To put it a different way, we are going to focus on really trying to understand what we’re talking about and figuring out why things like democracy or human rights might be different in some places and at some times than in others.

I realize that many of you are not Political Science majors. As such, the course does not assume that everyone has a clear understanding of what Comparative Politics is or what Comparative Political Scientists do, rather I only assume that you are curious about the world around you and interested in how we might go about making systematic comparisons among sets of observations of any type. While we focus on those observations relevant to Comparative Politics, the tools we discuss could be used to make comparisons among any sets of observations on any measurable dimension.

As this is a 300-level course, I am going to shoot for 30-40 pages of reading per week. Readings will primarily come from the textbook for the course:

Landman, Todd. 2008. *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction 3rd ed.* Routledge. (ISBN: 978-0-415-41237-7, New: \$44.95, Used: \$31.00 [if available])

The third edition of the book is much expanded from the previous editions, so I am afraid that only the 3rd edition will work for the course. The book is on sale at the University Book Store for (approx \$45 New/ approx \$31 Used) and may be available more cheaply from other online retailers. There will be other readings as well, but those will be made available to use in electronic format as they are required on the course’s D2L site as required.

Unusual Features of this Course

- This is an online course and as such, you will be required to have a reliable, high-speed internet connection (cable/DSL or better). The course material, quizzes and exams will only be available online. Failure to complete quizzes or exams for any reason that is not cleared with me prior to the opening of the exam
- This course is given completely in the first mini-session (1/24-2/26). Thus, all work will have to be completed by the end of the mini-session and I expect that you will keep up with the work over the five weeks of the course.

Grading

You final grade in the course will depend on the following:

Quizzes 30%

Five quizzes (roughly one each week) will be given to test your understanding of the most recent material. These quizzes may contain multiple choice, true/false, short answer or essay questions, though not each type of question will be on each quiz. Each question will be timed, though you should have plenty of time to answer the question.

Midterm Exam 30%

The midterm exam will test you on roughly the first half of the course material and will be available to take for the 24 hours between 3:00 PM 2/10/2011 and 3:00 PM 2/11/2011. These exams will include some objective questions (i.e., multiple choice and true/false), some short answer and some essay questions. While this exam is closed-book, I will allow you to have at your disposal a single (8.5×11-inch) piece of paper with whatever you want written on it.

Final Exam 40%

The final exam will be cumulative, testing you on all of the course material and will be available to take for the 24 hours between 3:00 PM 2/25/2011 and 3:00 PM 2/26/2011. These exams will include some objective questions (i.e., multiple choice and true/false), some short answer and some essay questions. While this exam is closed-book, I will allow you to have at your disposal a single (8.5×11-inch) piece of paper with whatever you want written on it.

Expectations It should go without saying, but sadly it must not, that even though this is an online course, your work must still be your own. Quizzes are not opportunities to share with friends, the exam windows are not designed so that you might get a sneak peak at the questions. Please take pride in and responsibility for submitting your own work.

Miscellaneous

You may obtain information on UWM policies concerning academic issues and course conduct here: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>. While there are no indications of an unusually severe flu season this year (or anything else that might compromise our ability to complete the course). However, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course if such a situation arises. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

Outline

The dates provided below are the dates on which the readings should be started.

Module 1: Comparative Political Science (1/24)

- What is Comparative Politics and Why We Compare Countries.
 - Landman, Chapter 1
 - ERCP1 (D2L).
- How to Compare
 - Landman, Chapters 2
 - POCP2 (D2L)
- Comparing Many Countries / Basic Quantitative Methods
 - Landman, Chapter 3
- Comparing Few Countries / Single-Country Studies
 - Landman, Chapters 4 and 5

Quiz on Module 1 (open from 12:00 PM 1/30/2011 - 10:00 PM 1/31/2011)

Module 2: Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy (1/31)

- POCP5 (D2L)
- Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy* (D2L)
- Ken Bollen, *Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps* (D2L)

Module 3: Economic Development and Democracy (2/3)

- Landman, Chapter 6
- Seymour Lipset, *The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited* (D2L)
- Adam Przeworski and others, *Political Regimes and Economic Growth* (D2L)

Quiz on Modules 2 and 3 (open from 12:00 PM 2/6/2011 - 10:00 PM 2/7/2011)

Module 4: Transitions to Democracy (2/7)

- Landman, Chapter 9
- POCP8 (D2L)
- Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave, Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (D2L)
- Larry Diamond, *Democratic Rollback, Return of the Predatory State*

Midterm Exam (open from 3:00 PM 2/10/2011 - 3:00 PM 2/11/2011)

Module 5: Human Rights (2/14)

- Landman, Chapter 11
- *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (D2L)
- Christian Davenport, *State Repression and Political Order* (D2L)
- US State Department. *2009 Human Rights report: Introduction* (D2L)

Module 6: Political Dissent (2/17)

- Landman, Chapter 7 & 8
- Martha Crenshaw, *The Causes of Terrorism* (D2L)
- Stathis Kalyvas, *What is a Civil War and Why Study It?* (D2L)

Quiz on Modules 5 and 6 (open from 12:00 PM 2/20/2011 - 10:00 PM 2/21/2011)

Module 7: Globalization (2/21)

- ERCP11 (D2L)
- Samuel Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations* (D2L)
- Barrington and others, *Case Studies in Globalization* (D2L)

Quiz on Module 7 (open from 12:00 PM 2/23/2011 - 10:00 PM 2/24/2011)

Final Exam (open from 3:00 PM 2/25/2011 - 3:00 PM 2/26/2011)