POLI 160 – Comparative Politics - Spring 2015

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Office Hours: Mon. & Weds. 11am-12 noon and by appointment

Section 1: MW 9:00-9:50, CCC 234
Section 2: MWF 10:00-10:50, CCC 234

Course Description:
This course is designed to introduce students to the sub-field of Political Science known as Comparative Politics and in so doing to meet the GEP learning outcomes for the Social Sciences and Global Awareness categories. We will do this through a comparative study of political development and politics in five countries: Germany, Russia, Iran, South Africa, and Brazil. Using these countries as case studies, we will learn about regime types and forces that propel regime change. We will address questions such as: What are the differences between democratic and authoritarian regimes? How should we define democracy? What types of factors have led to democratic transitions and what things support a deepening and consolidation of democracy? In addition to political development and democratization, we will study how political institutions work, and how variations in constitutional and electoral design impact political outcomes. We will contrast our study of democracies with brief examinations of former authoritarian regimes – Nazi Germany, Soviet Communism, South African Apartheid, and military rule in Brazil, as well as an in-depth look at the current Islamic Republic of Iran.

By the end of the course you will be able to explain differences between democracies and various types of non-democratic regimes. You will have developed a more nuanced understanding of democracy and the tensions inherent in it. You will have a clearer understanding not only of current political issues in each of the five countries we will study, but also of the forces – political, economic, historical, and cultural – that helped shape today’s world. You will have reflected on the intrinsic relationship between economic and political development and considered some of the reasons countries transitioned to democracy when they did. You will have developed a clearer understanding of parliamentary government and how it differs from presidentialism, as well as the tradeoffs inherent in the choice of electoral systems. Finally, you will have a better understanding of and appreciation for the formidable challenges faced by citizens and leaders in establishing and consolidating democracy, and making it meaningful for all.

“Toto, I don’t think we are in Kansas anymore.” Welcome to the wide world of comparative politics!

Course Learning Outcomes:
1) Students will gain an appreciation for the variety of forms democracy takes around the world and understand the qualitative differences between democracy and authoritarian regimes.
2) Students will apply the comparative method to the study of political development, political economy, and political institutions.
3) Students will analyze the politics of Germany, Russia, Iran, South Africa, and Brazil.
4) Students will critically analyze and assess arguments and theories developed by political scientists and scholars of comparative politics.
5) Students will relate what they learn about politics to current events and global affairs.
6) Students will be able to explain and offer examples of how political institutions, including constitutional structures and electoral systems, shape political processes.
7) Students will be able to demonstrate how political institutions in turn have been shaped by each country’s particular political development trajectory, political culture, interests, and resources.
Course Requirements and Grading:
Your grade in this course will be based on your performance in the following areas:

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<td>Quizzes (6)</td>
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<td>Short Homework Assignments (3)</td>
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<td>Media Journals (3)</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam #1</td>
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Required Texts:
  
  NOTE: From here on referred to as “KKJ”.

- There are a number of additional readings on E-reserves. E-reserves can be accessed either directly from the Library home page or by going to the D2L homepage for this class and clicking on the “E-reserve” link on the very top banner.

Clickers:
We will use “clickers” to do interactive polling and administer quizzes. You are required to lease a clicker for $8 for the semester. This semester lease fee will be automatically added to your UWSP student bill. You will need your UWSP Student ID to lease a clicker. Clickers are available from the Help Desk, located in the basement of the Library. See the Help Desk website for hours: [http://www.uwsp.edu/infotech/Pages/HelpDesk/default.aspx](http://www.uwsp.edu/infotech/Pages/HelpDesk/default.aspx)

*Important*: Your clicker may be used in any class that requires clickers for the semester.

Returning clickers: Clickers must be returned to the UWSP Help Desk before the end of finals. *Students with unreturned clickers will be billed a late fee and may be billed the replacement cost of the clicker.*

Course Format: Given that this is an introductory class, much of class time will be devoted to lecture. However, because this class is small we will also have regular opportunities for student discussion and participation. I also welcome your questions at any time. I can assure you that you will learn more if you ask questions and take an active part in class discussions. You should complete the assigned readings *before* coming to class. I design my lectures to build on and complement the reading, so your retention and comprehension of lectures will be increased if you come to class having done the reading. *If you feel like you are having trouble in the class, please come and see me.*

Short Homework Assignments: There are 4 homework assignments listed on the syllabus, which entail responding to questions on the assigned reading for that day. *Students are required to complete ONLY THREE of these assignments over the course of the semester.* You should do the reading and then take about 20 minutes to write up your answers to the questions, which are on the syllabus. You may type up or write your answers out by hand. Please do *not* write more than a page or two, as these are supposed to be brief assignments. *Responses must be handed in at the start of class on the day the reading is assigned,* as we will use these as a jumping off point for discussion. I will not accept homework assignments by e-mail or previous to or after the class for which they are assigned. Please plan accordingly. These homework assignments will be graded as check (8.5), check/check-plus (9), check-plus (10), or check-minus (7 or less).
Media Journals: Over the course of the semester you will be required to keep a media journal. This entails identifying and reading at least one recent news story on politics (broadly defined) for each of three of the five countries we are studying and then writing up a short summary and commentary on it. Please note that you only have to complete a media journal for three of the five countries we are studying. The article(s) should be recent, preferably within the last month, and not one that is assigned on the syllabus. Each journal entry should run at least a couple of paragraphs. Your journal entry should briefly describe what the story is about and then offer some analysis or commentary on its significance. For example, you might talk about how the story relates to something we have covered in class, the degree to which it reflects change or continuity, or its overall significance. The minimum is one news article per country, but I look favorably on journals that cover two or more recent stories on the same country.

You must pick stories from one of the following newspapers or magazines. The first four have excellent coverage of international events. The second set may be consulted for stories on particular countries. The New York Times and The Guardian make it very easy for you to find recent stories on specific countries: from the home page click on “World” and then a specific region and you will see a drop-down box for specific countries. If you want to use a story from a source that is not listed here, please consult with me first.

Acceptable Sources:
- The Guardian (London) (www.guardian.co.uk)
- The Independent (London) (http://www.independent.co.uk)
- The Economist (available in the periodicals section of the library)

Country Specific and Regional Coverage:
- Spiegel online (Germany) (http://www.spiegel.de/international)
- RT (Russian pro-government news network) (http://rt.com)
- Moscow Times (Independent English language newspaper out of Russia) (www.themoscowtimes.com)
- Al Jazeera (for coverage of Iran and the Middle East) (http://www.aljazeera.com/)
- Mail and Guardian (South Africa) (www.mg.co.za)

Due Dates:
Remember that you only have to complete media journals for three of the five countries. Upload your journal entries to the appropriate D2L Dropbox by midnight on the following days:
- Germany 2/11
- Iran 3/30
- Brazil 5/4
- Russia 3/9
- South Africa 4/20

I grade these journals similarly to how I grade the homework assignments. I am not looking for polished papers, but instead engagement with the issues. You do not need to spend a lot of time on these, but make sure to get them done. Find a story or a couple of stories that are of interest to you and then try to explain why they are interesting or significant. As long as you do a competent job on all of them you will receive a B. Higher levels of analysis and ability to relate the stories to course content in meaningful ways will merit higher grades.

Format: You may cover more than one article per country; if you do, group all of your entries on that country in a single file. For all entries: at the top of the page type your name, POLI 160, and Media Journal – Germany, for example. Before you begin your commentary, list the article(s), making sure to include all proper citation information. Please refer to the way I list articles in this syllabus and follow that format. If the article was found online, make sure to include the URL. Points will be deducted if you fail to list any of the following elements:
- Author
- Title
- Source (name of newspaper or magazine)
Quizzes: I will give 6 quizzes over the course of the semester that together will count for 10% of your grade. The quizzes will be given in class using clickers. Each quiz will consist of approximately 9 multiple choice questions. At the end of the semester I will drop each student’s lowest quiz score. I will announce quizzes in the preceding class. For example, if I plan to give a quiz on Wednesday, I will announce the quiz in class on Monday of that week. Quizzes generally contain questions both from the assigned reading, as well as recent lectures. Questions appearing on quizzes may also appear on exams.

Make-ups: There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes, unless you make arrangements with me ahead of time and have a legitimate excuse.

Exams: The first two midterm exams will have multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will have a multiple choice section and one essay question. The dates for all three exams are listed on the syllabus. Exams will cover material from the readings, lecture, class discussions, and movies. I will provide you with study guides at least one week before each exam.

Attendance: Regular attendance is very important for success in this class and will also count for 5% of your grade. I will make note of attendance after each class and will also keep track of attendance using the clickers. In addition to the fact that attendance will count for 5% of your grade, good attendance is essential for the following reasons:
1. Quizzes and homework assignments will be given throughout the semester and will figure into your grade.
2. There will be material covered in lecture and class discussions that is not covered in the readings; you are responsible for both.
3. Your attendance record over the course of the semester may also be considered when I calculate final grades.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to abide by the guidelines for academic integrity contained in the UW System Administrative Code. As a student it behooves you to be well acquainted with these guidelines and to understand what constitutes plagiarism, as violations can result in severe consequences. For the purposes of this class, the basic rule is to do your own work on exams and short writing assignments. I take cheating seriously and will take action if an incident comes to my attention. Please let me know if you are aware of cheating taking place during the quizzes or exams.

The Media Journals and any film extra credits that you do must be uploaded to the class D2L dropbox. The dropbox is connected to the plagiarism detection program, Turnitin.com. Do NOT cut and paste or copy from someone else!!! That is plagiarism. If I discover a case of plagiarism, at the very least the student will not receive credit for the assignment.

Current Events: The things we will be studying are directly relevant to much that is taking place in the news. I strongly encourage you (if you do not already do so) to read a major newspaper with good coverage of international affairs on a daily basis (see newspapers listed above). I also encourage you to try listening to National Public Radio (NPR); their news programs are excellent and will keep you up-to-date on current events and important issues, both domestic and international. You can hear NPR news on Wisconsin Public Radio, which has two local radio stations: the Ideas Network at 89.1 FM and News and Classical at 90.9 FM. You can also listen live and access podcasts of previous shows at www.wpr.org.

Classroom Etiquette:
- Turn off your cell phones before coming to class and refrain from eating; drinks are permissible.
- Arriving late or leaving during class is disruptive. Please make every effort to be on time. I take particular offense at students leaving when class is in session. If you come to class, plan to stay for the whole session!!! If you leave in the middle I reserve the right to deduct points from your grade. If you know in advance that you have to leave early, please let me know before class begins.
Communications and Technology:

- There is a D2L section set up for this class, which you should access regularly and get accustomed to using. There you will find the syllabus and other materials that you will need as they become available. There is also a news box that I will use to post announcements and reminders. Lecture power points will be posted on the D2L Content page; when possible I will post the power points before class, but I will not be able to do this for every class. Finally, you will upload your media journals to the D2L dropbox.
- In addition, I will be using Remind 101 in order to communicate with the class. You can choose either to receive my messages as texts on your cell phone or as e-mails. Take a moment to subscribe to Remind 101, so that you do not miss any important communications from me. Instructions for subscribing (this is a free service) can be found on the last page of the syllabus.

Extra Credit:
Over the course of the semester I will announce opportunities for extra credit, such as attending a lecture on campus. Another extra credit opportunity is to watch one of the recommended feature films listed below. For each extra credit activity that you do, you will need to turn in a brief write-up of your reaction to the event or film. Tell me a bit about what you did or saw and offer some commentary. These write-ups will not be graded. For each extra credit opportunity that you complete a write-up on, you will get an extra point added to either a quiz score or a homework or media journal grade. For example, if you received an 8 on a quiz, then the extra credit point will bump that up to a 9. For event write-ups, please turn in a hard copy to me in class (either typed or hand written is fine); film write-ups need to be uploaded to the appropriate dropbox.

Extra Credit Films

**German:**
- “Good-bye Lenin!” – Taking place in 1990 right after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this funny film is about a son’s attempt to shield his fragile mother, who has just emerged from a long coma, from the realization that her beloved country of East Germany is no more. Available at IMC.

**Iranian:**
- “Persepolis” – Based on the graphic novel of the same name, this animated feature film is about a young girl growing up in Iran during the Iranian Revolution. Available at IMC.

**South African:**
- “Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom” – A British feature film on Nelson Mandela’s life based on his autobiography of the same name. Available at video rental stores.
- “Invictus” – A wonderful U.S. film on Nelson Mandela and how he used the Rugby World Cup in 1994 to build national unity after the end of apartheid. Mandela is played wonderfully by Morgan Freeman. Available at IMC.
- “District 9” – South African futuristic sci-fi film with strong parallels to apartheid. Available at IMC.

**Brazilian:**
- “Central Station” – A Brazilian film about a homeless child. Beautiful and moving. Nominated for Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. Available at IMC.
- “City of God” – Film takes place in a Brazilian favela (slum) in Rio and deals with issues of drugs, violence, and poverty. Available online through Films on Demand; find the link on the Library Homepage.
- “Neighboring Sounds” – A relatively recent Brazilian film that looks at middle class life today and the echoes of history that still haunt modern Brazil. UWSP does not own it, but it has been available on Netflicks.
Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 – Introduction to the Course & Democracy
1/21 – Introduction to the course

1/23 – Dahl’s criteria for a democratic process
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 1, pp. 4-11, and 30-33 (Note: Read for better understanding of comparative politics, but you do not need to master all the terms contained herein yet. We will come back to many of them later.)

*Homework assignment #1 on Dahl:
(Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief):
Look at Dahl’s 5 conditions for a democratic process on p. 38 and respond to these two questions:
1. When did the U.S. become a modern representative democracy (or polyarchy)? NOTE: International students may write about their own country in relation to Dahl.
2. In what ways does U.S. democracy today or your own governmental system meet Dahl’s 5 conditions? Where does it fall short?

Week 2 – German Political Development: From Fascism to Democracy
1/26 – Germany’s Late Political Development
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 140-146 (ending at “The Third Reich”)

1/28 – Fascism
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 146-148 (ending at “A Divided Germany”)

1/30 – Building Democracy in Germany
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 148-152.
• Nicholas Kulish. “Decades of German Pacifism Yield to Bigger Military Role.” *NYT,* Jan. 5, 2013. (E-R)
• Kate Connelly. “Promoting tolerance in Germany could define Angela Merkel’s leadership.” *The Guardian,* January 16, 2015. (E-R)

Week 3 – Germany’s Political Economy and Institutions
2/2 – Germany’s Social Market Economy
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 4, Section 2, pp. 152-161.
• John Studzinski. “Germany is right: There is no right to profit, but the right to work is essential.” *The Guardian,* February 5, 2013. (E-reserves)

2/4 – Introduction to Political Institutions and Electoral Systems

2/6 – Germany’s Constitutional Structure and Electoral System
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 162-172 (Note: Skip section on “Other State Institutions”, pp. 166-169)
Week 4 – Parties and Elections in Germany
2/9 - German Political Parties Mock Campaign
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 173-181. NOTE: For each of the 5 major German parties you should know the main facts about their origin and their general ideological orientation.
- Read up on recent stories on German political parties and the 2013 Federal Election on the Speigel Online International Website. Go to their “German Election” page: http://www.spiegel.de/international/topic/german_election_blog/

2/11 - German Election Simulation
*DUE: MEDIA JOURNAL ON GERMANY. UPLOAD BY MIDNIGHT.

2/13 – Coalition Formation in a Parliamentary System
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 4, pp. 181-186.

Week 5 – Female Representation and Midterm Exam #1
2/16 – Electoral Systems and Female Representation in Government
Readings:

*Homework assignment #2: (Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief):
Based on the readings, answer 2 of the following questions:
1. What are some of the reasons given by Phillips and/or Norris to explain the underrepresentation of women in politics? ( Mention a few factors)
2. Do you agree with the authors that underrepresentation is a problem? Why or why not? Make sure to address the arguments made by Phillips and/or Mendelberg and Karpowitz. Finally, how does the Steinhauer article relate?
3. Norris suggests that today the main point of contention is not so much whether underrepresentation (women being just one group among others that experience this) is a problem, but instead what are the “most effective and appropriate ways” to increase representation of underrepresented groups in legislatures. What role do electoral systems and quotas play in this regards? Would you favor electoral reform and/or the use of quotas in order to address underrepresentation?

2/18 – Exam Review

2/20 – MIDTERM EXAM #1

Week 6 – Russian Political Development
2/23 – From Tsarism to the Bolshevik Revolution
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 8, pp. 332-336 (ending at “The Stalin Revolution)
2/25 – Soviet Communism

_Readings:
- KKK, Ch. 8, pp. 336-339

2/27 – The Fall of Communism

_Reading:_ KKK, Ch. 8, Section 2, pp. 339-343

**Week 7 – Russian Political Economy and Institutions**

3/2 – Russia’s Turbulent Transition to a Market Economy

_Reading:_ KKK, Ch. 8, Section 2, pp. 343-352

3/4 – Russia’s Political Institutions

_Readings:_
- KKK, Ch. 8, Section 3, pp. 352-369 (ending at “Political Culture, Citizenship, and Identity”)

3/6 – Domestic Politics in Putin’s Russia

_Readings:_
- KKK, Ch. 8, pp. 369-381

**Week 8 – From Putin’s Russia to Iran**

3/9 – Putin’s Ideology

_Readings:_

* DUE: MEDIA JOURNAL ENTRY ON RUSSIA. UPLOAD BY MIDNIGHT.

3/11 – Russia and the West Today

_Readings:_
- John J. Mearsheimer. “Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions that Provoked Putin.” _Foreign Affairs This Week_, September 2014. (E-reserves)

3/13 – Iran’s Historical Development

_Readings:_
- KKK, Ch. 13, pp. 578-584

**March 14-22 – Spring Break – Enjoy!!!**
Week 9 – Islamic Republic of Iran: Origins and Ideology
3/23 – Political Islam & the Iranian Revolution
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 13, pp. 585-591 & “Society and Economy” pp. 594-598.

3/25 – Women and the Islamic State
Readings:
*Homework assignment #3:
(Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief): Based on Reading Lolita in Tehran respond to question #1 and either #2 or #3:
1. What is Nafisi describing in this book, and why is it subversive? AND
2. Recount an event described in this book and convey your reaction to it.
   OR
3. What did this reading teach you about authoritarianism?

3/27 – Political Institutions & Power in Islamic Republic of Iran
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 13, Section 3, pp. 599-608 (Note: Skip sections on “Subnational Government” & “Semipublic Institutions”, pp. 605-606)

Week 10 – Iranian Domestic and International Politics Today
3/30 – Iranian Politics and Society: Between Reform and Reaction
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 13, Sections 4 & 5, pp. 609-618
- Saeed Kamali Dehghan. “Hassan Rouhani sworn in as president of Iran, urging moderation and respect.” The Guardian, August 4, 2013. (E-reserves)
*DUE: MEDIA JOURNAL ON IRAN. UPLOAD BY MIDNIGHT.*

4/1 – Iran and the World Today: Nuclear Negotiating
Readings:

4/3 – Exam Review
Week 11 – Midterm #2 & South Africa
4/6 - MIDTERM EXAM #2 – Russia and Iran

4/8 – South Africa: Colonialism and Apartheid
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 11, pp. 480-488 (end at “S.A. Miracle”); & “Apartheid Economics”, pp. 493-494.

4/10 – South Africa’s Negotiated Transition
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 11, pp. 488-493; & “South Africa and the International Political Economy”, pp. 498-499.

Week 12 – South Africa: Addressing the Legacies of Apartheid
IN-CLASS MOVIE: “Long Night’s Journey into Day”
Reading: KKJ, Ch. 11, “Political, Culture, Citizenship, and Identity”, pp. 514-515

4/15 – South African Political Institutions: From Powersharing to ANC Dominance
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 11, Section 3, pp. 499-503; and Section 4, pp. 508-516.

4/17 - Addressing Apartheid’s Economic Legacies
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 11, “Society and Economy”, pp. 494-498

*Homework assignment #4:
(Note: Write for no more than 20 minutes; this is meant to be brief):
After reading the Kasrils and Zuern articles, respond to the following questions:
1. What is the nature of the “Faustian pact” described by Kasrils?
2. How would you explain the rise of protests in South Africa?
3. If you were a member of the ANC, would you argue for changes in economic policy? Name one or two key changes you would advocate.

Week 13 – From South Africa to Brazil
4/20 – Current Challenges and Future Prospects for the Rainbow Nation
Readings:
• KKJ, Ch. 11, Section 3, pp. 503-508 (Note: skip “Subnational Government); & Section 5, pp. 516-520
• Lydia Polgreen. “Killing of Strikers Alters South Africa Politics.” NYT, August 16, 2013. (E-R)
*DUE: MEDIA JOURNAL ENTRY ON SOUTH AFRICA. UPLOAD BY MIDNIGHT.
4/22 – Introduction to Brazil: Colonialism’s Long Shadow
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 9, pp. 386-391 (ending at “The Rise of Bureaucratic Authoritarianism”)

4/24 – From Military Rule to Democracy
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 9, pp. 391-399 (up to “The Fiscal System”)

Week 14 – Brazil and the Promise of Democracy
4/27 – Lula and the Worker’s Party
In-class MOVIE SCREENING: “Lula’s Brazil” (Part 1)
Readings:

4/29 – Addressing Poverty and Inequality in Brazil
In-class MOVIE SCREENING: “Lula’s Brazil” (Part 2)
Readings: KKJ, Ch. 9, “Interests, Social Movements, and Protest,” pp. 423-425 (ending at Section 5)

5/1 – The PT in Power from Lula to Dilma - Accomplishments and Challenges
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 9, “Brazil in the Global Economy,” pp. 403-406

Week 15 – Brazilian Political Institutions and Current Politics
5/4 – Brazil’s Political Institutions & Party System
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 9, pp. 406-409 (up to “The Bureaucracy”); Section 4, pp. 414-420 (ending at “Political Culture, Citizenship, and Identity”)
*DUE: MEDIA JOURNAL ENTRY ON BRAZIL. UPLOAD BY MIDNIGHT.*

5/6 – Politics in Brazil Today: Mega-sporting Events, Protest, and the 2014 Elections
Readings:
- KKJ, Ch. 9, Section 5, pp. 425-430
- David Zirin. “Mass World Cup Protests Rock Brazil.” *The Nation,* June 18, 2013. (E-reserves)

5/8 – Conclusions and Review for Final Exam

**FINAL EXAMS:**
- Section 1: Monday, May 11th, 12:30-14:30, CCC 234
- Section 2: Tuesday, May 12th, 14:45-16:45, CCC 234