CPO3103 - Comparative Politics
Dr. Bruce M. Wilson

Syllabus

Instructor Contact:

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Course Information:

Course Name	CPO3103 - Comparative Politics
Credit Hours	3 Credit Hours
Semester/Year	Spring 2012
Location	Online; no face-to-face meeting required

Course Description

Government and politics in selected countries, with emphasis on comparative analysis of contemporary problems, politics, political culture, behavior, and institutions.

Prerequisites: POS 2041 or Consent of the Instructor.

Course Objectives

The course offers an introduction to comparative politics by providing an overview of politics in industrialized, socialist, and less developed countries. Among others, we look at Great Britain, Germany, Russia, China, Iraq, India, and Mexico. The course thus presents students with a variety of political systems. We will emphasize similarities as well as variation among particular types of political systems, such as parliamentary democracies or less developed countries. The overarching theme of the course is an emphasis on different trajectories of democratization: How did democracy develop in different countries? How are democratic rules manifested? What mechanisms are in place to make sure democratic rules are implemented? And why are, or were, some countries not democratic for extended periods of time? What factors have motivated recent transitions to democracy? Thus, students will be familiarized with crucial concepts of democracy and differences across democratic systems. Likewise, it will become clear that dictatorships can also be organized in different ways. The country studies illustrate that both democracies and dictatorships can have different origins and, similarly, that different democratic and authoritarian countries are confronted with different political, social, and economic problems. The course is organized around modules that focus either on a specific concept or on comparative country studies.

Required Text:

The following book is available for purchase at the University Bookstore or from any online bookshop. It is expected that you obtain the book during the first week of class in order to keep up with the assignments. If you order the book online, please allow sufficient time for delivery.

Charles Hauss. *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*. Belmont: Wadsworth, Cengage. 2011. 7th edition.

It is important that you buy this edition of the book. There is no need to buy any supplemental materials that may be offered by the bookstore.

Supplemental texts

Additional readings will be available online at no extra cost. The readings will be listed in the Modules.

Course Requirements:

You will have to complete a total of 8 online modules: one introductory module, 6 substantive modules, and a substantial research paper. I will drop the lowest grade of the substantive modules. The grades for the introductory module and the research paper will not be dropped. Thus, if your schedule becomes particularly busy, you miss deadlines, or something unexpected happens, you can use the "drop" option for that module.

You will also need to be able to save your work in MS Word readable format (.doc, .docx, .rtf, .txt).

Expectations

I expect all students to be actively engaged in the course throughout the entire semester. This class requires that you meet regular deadlines, prepare the readings, complete quizzes, participate in online discussions, write several short essays, and complete a substantial research paper. You are also expected to follow the Course Protocol and to read all e-mails and announcements related to the course.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

- All late work will be penalized at a rate of 5 points per day late (including weekend days and holidays unless otherwise noted in the module).
- If only parts of a module are submitted late, that particular assignment will receive the late penalty (unless noted otherwise in the module).
- Late discussion postings will receive no credit - there is no late option for discussion postings.
- Quizzes will not be reopened after the due date; no exceptions! Please plan ahead accordingly.
- No work will be accepted more than a week after the deadline.
- There are no substitute assignments and positively no extra-credit, so please don't ask!

Evaluation and Grading

To repeat, you will have to complete a total of 8 online modules: one introductory module, 6 substantive modules, and a substantial research paper. I will drop the lowest grade of the substantive modules. The grades for the introductory module and the research paper will not be dropped.

- The nature of online classes requires cooperation among students. So, this class is not a "competitive sport" but should be an interesting, thought-provoking, collaborative discovery of major issues and topics in Comparative politics.
- Grading information on specific assignments will be provided in the assignment itself.
- The class takes an active learning approach. Thus, students should be prepared to engage in discussions, read and think, write short essays and papers, complete quizzes, and identify additional sources to share with the class.
- You are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments for this class.
- You are also responsible for checking that the grades posted online are correct; any discrepancies must be reported to the instructor within 1 week of being posted.

Assignment	**Percentage of Grade**
Module 1	3%
6 substantive modules	
	14% each
(lowest grade gets dropped)	
Research paper	27%
Total	100%

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Letter Grade	**Points**
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone. Furthermore, all your work for this course must be original work, that is, you are not allowed to submit work that you have prepared for another course.

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Disability Statement:

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Schedule:

The Schedule is listed under the "Schedule" button on the course homepage. There is no final exam in this course since all course work is graded in the individual Modules.

Schedule

The schedule lists the beginning and ending date for the modules. Each module will have intermittent deadlines; please make sure to check those deadlines as soon as the module is opened to make sure you will not miss any deadlines. All readings refer to the textbook; additional readings are available online and will be listed in the modules themselves.

Dates	Topic	Reading
Jan 9-17	**"Getting Started"**: Introduction to Comparative Politics and Learning Online	Hauss ch 1
Jan 12-23	**"Constitutions":** What do constitutions do? How do they develop? Are written constitutions different from unwritten ones? • reading, quizzes, discussion, short essay	Hauss ch.2 and pp. 65-78
Jan 9-30	**Newspaper project**: Beginning of research project (term paper). • develop research paper proposal	see Module
Jan 31- Feb 13	**Industrialized countries**:	Hauss ch. 4 (rest; review pp. 65-78),

	"*Parties, Policies, and Ideology*": How do parliamentary systems work? Do parties make a difference for policy making in Great Britain and Germany? • reading, quizzes, discussion	ch 6
Feb 14-27	**Socialist countries:** *"Is Socialism a viable regime form?"*: Why has the Soviet system collapsed, but the Chinese one has not? • reading, quizzes, discussion, short essay	Hauss chs 8, 9, 10
Feb 28- Mar 2	Research paper: taking stock. Use the time to map the progress on your research paper.	
Mar 12-26	**Less developed countries I:** *Different Pathways to Democracy:*How do less developed countries democratize? Why was Mexico's democracy incomplete for so long? What spurred Mexico's recent democratization processes? • reading, quizzes, discussion	Hauss chs 11, 16
Mar 27- Apr 9	**Less developed countries II:** *"The Legacy of Colonialism"*: How can we explain the different trajectories of former British colonies - India and Iraq? • reading, quizzes, discussion	Hauss chs 12, 14
Apr 10- 20	**The Impact of Political Institutions:** *"Presidents and Parliaments":* What are the consequences of having either a parliamentary or presidential system of government?	readings specified in module, available online
Apr 20-24	**Newspaper project** - consolidating your research	**Paper due before 11:00 p.m. April**

		24th
April 24	**Paper due before 11:00 p.m.**	