Comparative Politics
Fall 2015

Course Information

Course Name	Comparative Politics
Course ID & Section	CPO 3103 0W59
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Fall 2015
Location	World Wide Web

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Dr. Anca Turcu
Office	UCF Valencia West, Building 11, Office 227 and also available through Canvas Chat
Office Hours	Thursdays: 10:00AM- 12:00 PM.
E-mail	Anca.Turcu@ucf.edu You may also e-mail me by using the Canvas e-mail/ message system. I will use that system to send out updates, important messages or announcements. If you e-mail me, I will do my best to get back to you quickly, but I may take up to 48 hours to respond. Please note that I do only respond to e-mail during regular business hours.
Academic and Content Related Questions	If you have questions about the academic material or class content, do not hesitate to contact me! Questions, feedback or comments are all welcome. For non-academic (not course content related questions), please see below.
Other Contact Information	If you have questions regarding technical support or any other non-academic, non-course content related issues, you have to seek help through the technical support link on the class Home Page.

Course Description

This class will explore the government and politics of a number of countries around the Globe while providing a comparative insight into the institutions, electoral systems and processes that are specific to their governments. We will also examine historical contexts, political culture, social realities and policy outcomes specific to each country.

Course Objectives

On completing this course students will be able to:

1. describe and analyze differences between the institutions and governmental systems of different countries
2. discuss the implications of different electoral systems for institutional change
3. comprehend traits of political culture and current developments in different countries
4. analyze the impact of institutions and government policies upon the democratization process in each country

Required Text

"Comparative Politics" by David J. Samuels, Pearson Education, 1st edition, 2012

Other Materials: Documentaries and Clips

For some modules in this class, you will be asked to watch documentaries, clips and other multimedia materials. Most of these clips will be available for free online via YouTube, PBS.org, TEDTalks and other sources. I will provide further details about these video materials in each individual module and provide you with links or a clear indication where you can find the material. Not viewing these documentaries or clips is not an option, since they are a central part of the class and quizzes and the written assignments will draw on these materials quite extensively.

Academic Calendar

Week	Module	Topic(s)	Readings
Intro Week (08/24-31)	Introductory Module	Introduction and class overview	Syllabus
Week 1 (08/31-09/07)	Module 1	Doing Comparative Politics	Samuels Ch.1
Week 2 (09/07- 14)	Module 2	The State	Samuels Ch.2

Week 3 (09/14- 21)	Module 3	Democratic Political Regimes	Samuels Ch. 3
Week 4 (09/21- 28)	Module 4	Non-Democratic Political Regimes	Samuels Ch.4
Week 5 (09/28-10/05)	Module 5	Regime Change	Samuels Ch. 5
Week 6 (10/05-12)	Module 6	Political Identity	Samuels Ch. 6
Week 7 (10/12- 19)	Module 7	Religion and Politics	Samuels Ch.7
Week 8 (10/19-26)	Module 8	Gender and Politics	Samuels Ch. 8
Week 9 (10/26-11/02)	Module 9	Collective Action	Samuels Ch. 9
Week 10 (11/02-09)	Module 10	Political Violence	Samuels Ch. 10
Week 11 (11/09-16)	Module 11	Political Economy and Development	Samuels Ch. 11
Week 12 (11/16-23)	Module 12	The Political Economy of Redistribution	Samuels Ch. 12
Week 13 (11/23-30)	Module 13	Globalization	Samuels Ch. 13
Week 14 (11/30-12/07)	No New Module	Final Project	Complete your Final Project by 12/07

Course Requirements

Weekly Assignments Thirteen weekly assignments (starting with Week 1: 08/31-09/07) will test your knowledge of the material from the module covered during each week. These weekly assignments may be quizzes (timed), short response papers, online discussions or other assignments. Your lowest scoring weekly assignment will be dropped at the end of class, leaving you with twelve weekly assignment scores, worth 5% of your grade each. That is, twelve weekly assignments will make up 60% of your final grade. If you miss a weekly assignment, or fail to submit it on time, you will automatically be assigned a grade of 0 for that assignment. Assignments will be available, with the rest of the content for each module, on the Monday of each week and will close by the Monday evening (at 11:59 PM EST), of the following week. If the weekly assignment happens to be a quiz, note that

quizzes are timed and may be taken only once. Note that all written assignments will be checked for plagiarism, so make sure to take all necessary measures needed to avoid plagiarism. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, take this UCF library tutorial: http://infolit.ucf.edu/students/modules/#article116 Students who cheat, commit plagiarism or engage in any other type of dishonest academic behavior will fail the class, (will receive an F grade) and will also be subject to disciplinary proceedings. Please review the UCF Golden Rule: http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/ Please allow for plenty of time to complete each weekly assignment, so that you avoid last minute submissions and the technical difficulties that sometimes accompany them. Late submission of weekly assignment will not be allowed. After the weekly assignment closes, I will release grades and correct answers and you will have one week to review your answers and let me know if you have questions regarding your grade. After that, weekly assignment questions and answers will no longer be visible. No weekly assignments will be due for Intro Week and Week 14.. Weekly assignments submitted after the due date will be given a grade of 0.

Final Written Project: Students will have to submit a final written project by Monday, 12/07 at 11:59 PM EST. This project will be worth 40% of your final grade. The assignment for the final project will be posted online on Monday, 11/23. The final assignment should not be submitted late and will incur a 10 points penalty for every 24 hour delay past due date. No submissions will be allowed later than 72 hours past due date. Any missed assignment will be given a grade of 0. Cheating and plagiarism rules apply to this assignment as explained above.

Due Dates

Weekly assignments: due weekly (starting with Week 1: 08/31- 09/07) on Monday evenings by 11:59 PM EST EXCEPT for the Introductory Week and Week 14-- when there is no weekly assignment. Also, Module 1 and the weekly assignment for Week 1 will be posted on Tuesday, 09/08, as Monday 09/07, the university will be closed in observance of Labor Day.

Final project: due by 12/07 2015 at 11:59 PM EST.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups

I will not grant extensions if you fail to submit your work due to technical difficulties. You are solely responsible if you fail to submit a quiz or an assignment due to technical difficulties, save for a major natural disaster (i.e. a hurricane). In the event of a hurricane, which causes power outages and evacuations, do not panic about your online assignments. Your safety and that of your family is your first priority. When power is restored, contact me and I will work with you to determine the best course of action. Other circumstances, which may be considered "unavoidable", include medical or legal emergencies. Pertinent, official documentation, will be required if you plan on requesting to make up a quiz or assignment due to unavoidable circumstances. You have to submit such documentation no later than a week after the due date of the missed assignment has passed. Documentation submitted after that date will not be deemed acceptable.

Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Weekly Assignments (12)	60%
Final Project	40%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	63 – 66
D-	60 – 62
F	59 and below

Grading Formula

(final project*.40) + [(sum of 12 highest scoring weekly assignments assignments/12) *.60] = final grade

Attendance Policy

This course is web-based, fully online and considered a "W" course. Students are expected to fully participate in all online activities and to complete all assignments by the due dates.

Participation and a timely completion of work and assignments are both considered similar to attendance in a face-to-face class. Assignments that are not turned into Canvas before the due date, will receive 0 points. Missed quizzes cannot be retaken.

Federal Financial Aid Requirement

UCF must comply with a federal financial aid regulation that states that in order to receive federal aid, students must be actively academically engaged (according to a federal definition) in each course in which they are enrolled. All faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. Without verification of this engagement, students will not receive their aid.

In order to document that you began this course, you will have to submit the student introduction, opened under "discussions". Make sure you do so by no later than January 16th. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid, or will mean that you will not receive your aid. A bonus for completing the student introduction post is the fact that you will receive 2 points extra credit added to your grade for the first quiz of the semester.

Academic Honesty

Students must demonstrate a high level of responsibility and academic honesty and must respect the Golden Rule. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one’s own work or material that is not one’s own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records.

If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, take this UCF library tutorial: http://infolit.ucf.edu/students/modules/#article116

Students who cheat, plagiarize, self-plagiarize, falsify records or practice any other form of academic dishonesty will receive an automatic FZ grade for the class and will be referred to the university for further disciplinary action.

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.

Viruses

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course (good ones include McAfee or Norton).

Also, back up your files: "My hard drive crashed. My modem doesn't work. My printer is out of ink." These are today's equivalents of "My dog ate my homework." These events really do occur and they are really inconvenient when they do. However, these are not valid excuses for failing to get your work in on time.

E-mail Protocols

E-mail will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you: Check your e-mail at least once every 48 hours during regular business hours (more often is better).

Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply. Please not that your professor only checks and answers to e-mails during regular business hours.

Include Subject headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or topic.

Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important, but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.

Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.

Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered shouting. Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or e-mail).

Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

Sign your e-mail messages.

Never assume that your e-mail can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail. Never send or keep anything that you would mind seeing on the evening news.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Technical Assistance

For specific problems in any of the areas below or for further information go to the corresponding link for assistance.

UCF Home Page will help find UCF resources.

UCF Service Desk: You can also call the Service Desk at 407-823-5117.

Learning Online This site provides information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.

Buying a new computer or upgrading your current equipment http://www.cstore.ucf.edu/

Technical Discussion Topic: If you have technical questions and/or problems, please post a message to the Technical Discussion Topic. I encourage members of the class who are technically proficient to also monitor this discussion topic and assist your classmates.

If your equipment problems prevent you from using e-mail from home, there are many computer labs on campus and virtually every public library offers Internet access.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Important Disclaimer

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I will provide notification of such changes in a timely manner.