

## Comparative Political Systems: Political Science (PSCI 251)

Spring 2009	Professor: Martyn de Bruyn
Northeastern Illinois University	Office: CLS 2050
Time: MW 5:40 – 6:55	Office Hours: MW 10:00 – 11:00 and MW 4:00 – 5:30
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### Course Content:

This course is an introduction to comparative politics. In this course students will study different political systems (democracies, semi-democracies, and authoritarian regimes) by way of selective case studies. Major issues in comparative politics, such as democratization, political culture, political economy, constitutionalism, political leadership, and political parties and elections will be discussed in some detail. Even though this is not a course in American politics, comparisons with the United States will be drawn where appropriate.

The successful completion of English 101 is a prerequisite for this course.

### Course Objectives:

1. Provide students with an understanding of and appreciation for the diverse nature of different political systems in operation around the world.
2. Students will learn to critically evaluate advantages and disadvantages of different political systems.
3. Improve student's understanding of the major concepts in comparative politics such as democracy, development, and political culture.
4. Students will better understand political development as path dependent.
5. Students will become better readers and writers in the discipline of political science.

### Student Learning Goals:

1. Students will be able to locate, select, and document secondary source material relevant to an issue.
2. Students will be able to analyze and incorporate research into their own argument.
3. Students will be able to identify multiple perspectives on a text/issue and articulate those perspectives.
4. Through critical revision, students will learn to assert a position and support it using the tools of research in a well-developed, well-reasoned written document.

### Required Texts:

Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach. 2009. Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities and Institutions in a Changing Global Order. Third Edition. Cambridge University Press.

Scott, Gregory, and Stephen Garrison (2007) The Political Science Writers Manual. Sixth Edition. Pearson Prentice Hall.

Christian Soe. 2009. Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 08/09. 26<sup>th</sup> Edition. McGraw Hill. Supplemental readings will be posted on blackboard.

### **Course Requirements:**

(1) Reading: The overall class format is lectures/discussion. All readings of each class session must be completed before coming to class. Participation in discussions will demand thorough knowledge of the readings.

(2) Midterm and Final Exam: The comprehensive midterm and final exams consist of multiple essay questions about the materials read for the class as well as class discussions. The essays will be graded based on substantive rather than spelling and style criteria.

*Make-up Policy:* Make-up tests will be permitted only in the case of illness (accompanied by a formal medical excuse) or serious emergency. In such a case, contact Professor de Bruyn in advance of the scheduled exam if at all possible. If you cannot reach Professor de Bruyn in person, leave a message by phone (5653). If you must be away for a university-sponsored event (such as a competition or performance), please make arrangements with me in advance. Missed tests receive a grade of 0.

(3) Article Reviews: This is a 3-4 page paper in which the student maps the main argument of an article. Students will write three article reviews from selected articles out of the Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 08/09. The article reviews are due at the beginning of class. Students can submit only one review per class session. Students are required to write at least one article review before the midterm. No late submissions of article reviews will be accepted. For evaluation criteria page 6 of the syllabus.

*Time Management:* An important skill required for success is college is time management. It is important that you plan ahead to make sure that you hand in your assignments on time. If you will be absent on the day that an assignment is due please make an arrangement with the professor to turn your assignment in early. Assignments that are handed in late will not be accepted unless the student can document a serious emergency.

(4) Policy Analysis Paper: Policy analysis papers are written briefs that help decision makers evaluate the merits of a particular policy. Specific substantive details and possible topics of this paper will be discussed in class in week six (6). Students will write a first draft of the paper, based on two scholarly sources, of approximately five (5) pages. For the second and final draft students add at least two scholarly sources and one non-scholarly source to their paper. The final draft will be approximately eight (8) pages. A specific guideline for the first draft of the paper is provided on page 7 of the syllabus. A guideline for the final draft will be provided later in the semester.

(5) Students will be required to perform multiple in class writing assignments, such as paraphrase, abstract, citation, and library exercises. Although these exploratory in class writing assignments are not graded they are required in order for students to pass the class.

(6) Attendance: Over the semester, you will be allowed two unexcused absences. Make sure to use these excused absences wisely, because all absences in excess of three will count against your participation grade. If you have 0-2 recorded absences, you will get 20 points for attendance; 3 recorded absences, 10 points; 4 or more recorded absences, 0 point. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class period. Students who arrive late or have to leave early will be considered absent. It is NOT necessary to inform the professor of your absence unless there is test scheduled for that particular class period.

<b>Grading:</b>		<b>Scale:</b>
Midterm Exam	40 points	
Final Exam	40 points	A > 180
Article Reviews (3)	30 points (10 each)	B 160-180
Paper 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft	30 points	C 140-159
Paper 2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft	40 points	D 120-139
Attendance	20 points	F < 120
Total	200 points	

**The following descriptions of the letter grades correspond to the overall course grade only.**

**A** Completion of course requirements in an outstanding manner, reflecting a degree of accomplishment that is exceptional.

**B** Completion of course requirements in an entirely acceptable manner, demonstrating an excellent grasp of the subject matter, and the likelihood of successful completion of further courses in the same area.

**C** Completion of the course requirements in an acceptable manner, reflecting a basic understanding of the subject matter of the course and the possibility of successful completion of further courses in the same subject area.

**D** Fulfillment of the minimum performance requirements prescribed by the instructor, but not in such a manner that higher level courses in the same area can be recommended.

**F** Failure to demonstrate acceptable competence in the subject matter of the course, and/or failure to fulfill the requirements of the course.

#### **Additional Information:**

*Office Hours:* Feel free to come in and talk about questions you may have; how you're doing in the class, and other academic related issues. You can use my office hours or, if they don't coincide with your available time, email or call in order to make an alternative appointment.

*Grading and Incomplete:* I am glad to discuss with you the result of your exam, article review or paper. For these discussions to be beneficial, it is important that they pertain to substance and are not solely focused on getting a higher grade. You may schedule an appointment with me to discuss your work on the day after it has been returned to you. This will enable you to carefully review the comments I have written on your work in advance of our discussion. No incomplete will be given for a course except when your doctor decides you are not able to complete this course for a medical reason.

*Students with Disabilities:* In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Northeastern Illinois University does not discriminate against students or employees on the basis of disability. In addition, the University provides reasonable accommodations for students and employees with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodations in the classroom should contact the Accessibility Center, (773-442-5495;TDD 773- 442-5499). Persons seeking handicapped parking permits should contact the Health Service, (773-442-5800). Employees seeking reasonable accommodations in the workplace, persons with concerns about discrimination on the basis of disability, and persons with any questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 should contact the Affirmative Action Office. The University President has designated the Affirmative Action Officer to receive grievances and coordinate compliance activities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

*Academic Honesty:* Northeastern Illinois University students are expected to exhibit the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic misconduct such as plagiarism or cheating is unacceptable and will be handled in accordance with University policy on academic misconduct. (See Student Survival Kit)

Honesty, along with freedom of expression, and mutual respect, are age-old values of university life. Honesty includes academy honesty. Plagiarism involves presenting another person's written work or ideas as your own, or using either in your own work without giving due credit to the original source. Paraphrasing text without giving credit to the author is not an acceptable research practice.

Never simply lift language off of a web site (or any source) or closely paraphrase it without citing the source. Cutting and pasting from web sources without proper use of quotes and citations is a form of plagiarism. Such work will not receive a passing grade, and the student may be further penalized.

*The Writing Lab:* is a free service available to any student enrolled in a class at NEIU. Tutors are available to work with students by appointment. To make an appointment, stop by CLS 2046 or call the lab at 773-442-5480. Additionally, an appointment can be requested online by going to the following webpage: <http://www.neiu.edu/~ewlab/subPages/appointment.html>  
The lab is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.  
The lab is also open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday.  
You may request a verification of attendance from the tutor with whom you work.

**Date, Topic and Reading Assignments  
(Tentative, subject to change)**

CP = Comparative Politics

AE = Annual Editions

WM = Writer's Manual

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
M	1/12	Introduction: What is Comparative Politics?	CP Ch 1 WM Ch 1 Writing as Communication
W	1/14	Introduction: What is Comparative Politics?	AE #1 and 37 WM Ch 3 Paper Formats
M	1/19	<b>MLK Holiday</b>	
W	1/21	Comparative Political Analysis	CP Ch 2 AE # 14, 16
M	1/26	Democracy and Democratic Development	AE # 17 and 40 WM Ch 8 Article Critiques
W	1/28	No Class	Professor attends conference
M	2/2	Citation styles	WM Ch 2 Writing Competently and Ch 4 Citing Sources
W	2/4	Visit to NEIU Library	WM Ch 6 Library Information Resources
M	2/9	Early Developers: The United Kingdom	CP Ch 3
M	2/16	Early Developers: The United Kingdom	AE # 2,3 and 4
W	2/18	Policy Analysis Papers	WM Ch 12 Policy Analysis Papers
M	2/23	Late Developers: Germany	CP Ch 5
W	2/25	Late Developers: Germany	AE # 7 and 8
M	3/2	Review	
W	3/4	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
M	3/9	Film: Democracy and Development	<b>First Draft Policy Analysis Paper due</b>
W	3/11	Finish film and discussion	
M	3/16	Developing Democracies: Mexico	CP Ch 9
W	3/18	Developing Democracies: Mexico	AE # 30 and 31
M	3/23	<b>Spring break</b>	
W	3/25	<b>Spring break</b>	
M	3/30	Developing Democracies: India	CP Ch 10
W	4/1	Developing Democracies:	CP Ch 10

		India	
M	4/6	Developing Democracies: India	AE # 35
W	4/8	Authoritarian Development: China	CP Ch 8
M	4/13	Authoritarian Development: China	CP Ch 8
W	4/15	Authoritarian Development: China	AE # 33 and 34
M	4/20	Film: Development in China and India	<b>Second Draft Policy Analysis Paper due</b>
W	4/22	Islamic Development: Iran	CP Ch 11
M	4/27	Islamic Development: Iran	CP Ch 11
W	4/29	Review	
M	5/4	<b>Final Exam</b>	

### Article Review Rubric

Scoring Criteria NAME_____	Good	Needs Some Improve ment	Needs Much Improve ment
General Topic: The broad question(s) the author addresses in the article are correctly indentified.	2	1	0
Research Question: The specific question the author tries to answer is correctly indentified.	3	2	1
Argument Summary: Evidence is provided to back up the Research Question.	3	2	1
Conclusion: The author's conclusion is sufficiently discussed and the student's opinion regarding the conclusion is well formulated.	2	1	0

**Policy Analysis Paper Rubric (first draft)**

Scoring Criteria	Excellent	Good	Needs Some Improvement	Needs Much Improvement
NAME_____				
Basic background information regarding the policy issue is provided and documented	4	3	2	1
The description of the current policy in force is clear and thorough	4	3	2	1
The pros and cons of the policy are clearly addressed	4	3	2	1
Policy alternatives are presented and a recommendation as to the feasibility is provided.	4	3	2	1
Mechanics (Grammar, spelling, references, tone, and organization)	4	3	2	1
Correct use of Citations and References	4	3	2	1
The word choice and tone of the memo are professional and not too technical.	3	2	1	0
The memo is well organized and each section is clearly identified.	3	2	1	0
Comments and Suggestions				