Introduction to Comparative Politics  
Political Science 12  
Fall 2006  
Ticket# 22660

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Course Description  
Political Science 12 is an intensive study of issues associated with selected foreign governments, modernization, revolution, political change and world ideological conflict. It is strongly recommended that you complete a course in American Government, i.e. PS 1, before enrolling in this course.

Course Objectives  
The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the field of comparative politics. The theme “American Exceptionalism” will be explored to establish a foundation, a point of reference for the student. Numerous authors will be reviewed with special attention to the work of Seymour M. Lipset. Discussions will include observations about socio-cultural, institutional and, more directly, political traits which make the American experience different from the rest of the world. We will use Canada as a comparative reference to illustrate further the unique characteristics of the United States Government.

After completion of the overview, the course expands the students’ base by adopting a country-by-country approach following Michael Roskin’s textbook and articles in Comparative Politics reader. This strategy acquaints the beginning Political Science student with several topics:

- historical contexts  
- geographical settings  
- major issues, values and actors  
- institutional frameworks  
- political process and outcome

Three major trends are found in the field of comparative politics. They are the “third wave of democratization,” the shift from planned economies to more market oriented economies, and the surge of identity politics. We will discuss how these trends relate to specific countries.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:  
This is an online course therefore, you, as a student, need to be able to: use a computer, a web browser to navigate the Internet, word processing program, send and receive e-mail. You must be independent, self-motivated, willing to learn in isolation, good at expressing yourself in writing, and aware of technology as a convenience and not as a barrier. You will want to be sure that your computer's settings are optimized for running a Blackboard course. This means that you will need to enable Java and set the cache to reload every time. One of the following browsers must be used to download assignments and to take the quizzes: Netscape Navigator, Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer. Note: AOL requires special attention so please contact your service administrator for additional assistance. Additional software includes a media player and Adobe Reader 5.0 or newer.
**Required Texts and Related Issues**

Two textbooks and one website are/is required for this class (listed below). Both are available in the bookstore and are on reserve in the campus library. The website link to access this course is [http://socccd.blackboard.com/](http://socccd.blackboard.com/). The site contains chapter summaries, review questions, on-line quizzes, and exercises for each book.

This is a condensed course necessitates approximately **100 PAGES OF READING EVERY WEEK**, in addition to reviews before exams. Class discussions will encompass important points of reading assignments.

While looking for significant similarities and differences, we will strive for a middle range of generalization that aims at giving the serious student not only knowledge about politics in different countries but also a critical command of some key ideas and concepts. Comparative understanding of the political process in diverse settings is a natural by-product of our discussions.

3. It is **highly recommended** the student read a daily newspaper, preferably the *Los Angeles Times* or *New York Times* in order to remain informed on current events. Both are available on the web.

**Recommended Readings**

I will incorporate other publications relevant to topics of the class. Take note of these important titles, authors, and key ideas or concepts for possible future reference on quizzes, tests, and exams.

**Course Requirements**

Your course grade will be based on the assignments below. Your grade is based on a fixed scale, not a curve. The total number of points accrued during the semester will determine your grade. Opportunities for extra-credit points will be given throughout the course so be sure to check the announcements. Therefore, your participation is important. **There are no make-ups for quizzes.** If you are unable to take the exam on the scheduled date, please contact me, well in advance so you will not lose points. Failure to notify me in advance will result in a zero score for your grade.

**Participation**

As discussed below, attendance is important. When you are online you should be prepared for the discussion that day. In other words, read the assignment before class. The questions asked are often an indicator as to how well you understand the material. If you don’t understand something, ask. There is a strong chance that someone else has a similar question. Class participation is worth 50 points.

**Discussion Boards**

There are numerous simulations/lab exercises in mypoliscilab.com to help your understanding of political science and comparative politics. While they are not graded, they are assigned to assist you with the discussion boards which are graded. It is your responsibility to work through the exercises and incorporate them when posting your answers on the discussion boards. Each discussion board is worth 10 points.

**Quizzes**

There will be quizzes as needed to encourage reading and will be posted in the announcements when they are required. They will cover the reading assignment and are worth 5 points each.
**Exams**
There will be two exams (one midterm and one final). Both exams are worth 100 points each. Note: I do not give study guides for the exams. However, I do post practice exams which have proven to increase student test scores.

**Term Paper**
The term paper will be based on the student’s acquired knowledge of a specific country. Drawing from the textbook, articles from the reader, labs and discussions, the student will type a double-spaced seven-to-ten page paper. The paper will have Times New Roman font, 12 dpi, with one-inch margins. Additional information regarding the project is under the tab titled "course assignments". The American Psychological Association (APA) in-text citation method is suggested. **Remember to cite all work that is not your own!** See the section titled “Expectations” for additional information.

**Grading**

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<tr>
<td>Quizzes and Discussion Boards</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<td>Midterm Exams (2)</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Extra Credit: TBD</td>
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The grading scale for the course will be based on a 10% distribution:

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<td>A</td>
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<td>296 and below</td>
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**Exceptions**
While the syllabus outlines what will be covered, modifications may be necessary. It is more important to have a well-rounded knowledge of the concepts than to cover all of the countries too quickly. Therefore, I reserve the right to modify the assignments as needed. The student is responsible to stay informed of said possible changes.

**Expectations**

**Etiquette**
We will depend on each other in this course, so it is especially important that we treat each other with consideration and respect. **Respect** each others’ right to state an opinion; remember that we all come to this material with different cultural backgrounds.

Anyone who posts obscene materials will receive a failing grade on the assignment. If it occurs a second time, the student will fail the course and be referred to the appropriate administrators for disciplinary action.
**Academic Honesty**
Do your own work! If you quote, paraphrase, or summarize the work of others, cite that work appropriately. If you plagiarize work of another or are caught cheating, you will fail this course and you will be referred to the proper authorities for disciplinary action. Please refer to the catalog for additional information on plagiarism and cheating.

**Accommodation for Differing Ability**
This course meets the requirements set fourth in the accessibility checklist and universal design grip provided by Special Services. The Web pages, video presentations, textbooks and class materials used in this course are accessible to students with disabilities. If you have questions on how to make accommodations please contact Special Services.

**Student Services**
General Student Services Information is available at the Saddleback College Website. General, academic, and service information can be obtained by accessing the Counseling Division and Financial Aid Websites. Individual and small group counseling information such as academic planning and review of transcripts is available by appointment. All other student services are available on campus during normal business hours.

**Technology Failure Policies**
On occasion there may be technology problems that arise for various reasons. In order to insure that your assignments are turn in on time, you should give yourself and extra day and submit them early. When taking quizzes and exams, you should try to use a desktop with a line connection versus a wireless connection. I will give a 48-72 hour window for quizzes and exams to be completed. Again, you should not wait until the last minute to take the quizzes and exams. If there is a technological problem with blackboard, I will extend the deadline. If there is a problem with your computer, I will only reset your quiz/exam within the allotted window. When I reset the quizzes and exams, all information is cleared and you will have to take it again. NOTE: It is your responsibility to have sold network connections and insure that your computer is in working order, free of spy ware and viruses.

**Withdrawal Policy**
Please note that it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. *I will not drop you if you do not complete the course.* Please refer to the class schedule for the policies regarding this procedure.

**Important Dates**
- **First Week of Instruction Begins:** Monday, 8/21/2006
- **First Class Meeting:** Monday, 8/21/2006
- **Add without Instructor Permission by:** Sunday, 8/20/2006
- **Drop with Refund by:** Friday, 9/1/2006
- **Elect CR/NC by:** Friday, 9/22/2006
- **Drop without 'W' Grade by:** Friday, 9/22/2006
- **Drop with 'W' Grade by:** Thursday, 11/2/2006
- **Last Week of Class Ends:** Sunday, 12/17/2006
Proposed Class Schedule and Required Readings

The course will be structured into three parts. The first part will be an introduction to the governments of the United States, Canada and Mexico; the second part will focus on Europe; and the third part will look at Japan and the New Industrial Countries. Please note that while part one will rely heavily online materials, you must still follow the scheduled readings and, whenever possible, read ahead.

Part One: Part one will be an introduction to comparative politics by examining the countries of North America.

Reading – Roskin: Ch. 1 & 33;

Struggle for Democracy: Ch. 1 & 2, & “How Canadians Govern Themselves” (both online);

CP Reader: Unit 2, Parts A (Art. 14-17), C (Art. 21-24), & D (Art. 25-27), Unit 4, Part A (Art. 33 & 34),

SIMULATION: United States, Canada & Mexico

Weeks 1 & 2: Overview of the United States and American Exceptionalism & Canada
Struggle for Democracy: Ch. 1 & 2; “How Canadians Govern Themselves” (under “course materials tab); CP reader: Unit 2, Parts A (Art. 14-17), C (Art. 21-24), & D (Art. 25-27)

Week 3: Mexico and The Concept of Country: Ch. 33&1; CP reader: Unit 4, Part A (Art.33&34)
Discussion Board 1

Part Two: This part will incorporate a comparative study of Britain, France, Germany and the European Union as well as some cross-national comparisons of democratic politics.

Readings: Roskin - Devoted to the first three countries and the EU (Ch. 2-17)

CP Reader: Unit 1: Part A (Great Britain: Art. 1-4), Part B (France: Art. 5-7), and Part C (Germany: Art. 8-1), Unit 3: Part A (EU 28-30)

Simulations: Great Britain, France, and Germany

Weeks 4 & 5: Great Britain - R: Ch. 2-6, CP reader: Unit 1, Part A (Art. 1-3)
Simulations & Discussion Board 2

Weeks 6 & 7: France - R: Ch. 7-11, CP reader: Unit 1, Part B (Art. 4-6)
Simulations & Discussion Board 3

Weeks 8 & 9: Germany - R: Ch. 12-16, CP reader: Unit 1, Part C (Art. 7-9)
Simulations & Discussion Board 4

Week 9: European Union (R: Ch 17, CP reader: Unit 3, Part A (28-30)

Midterm (100 points) 50 questions M/C & T/F covers the above readings.
**Part Three:** Part three will cover Japan and the New Industrial Countries, the political transition in Russia and China, and a comparative perspective on both the Communist experience and the post-Soviet/post-Maoist developments. We will also look at the democratization in Nigeria, the political developments in Iran, and return to the three trends.

**Readings:** Roskin - Russia (Art. 18 to 22), Japan (23 to 27), China (28 to 32), Nigeria (34), & Iran (35).

**CP Reader:** Russia - Unit 3: Part B (Art. 31-32); Japan - Unit 1: Part D (Art. 12-13); China Unit 4: Part C (Art. 37-38); Nigeria - Unit 4: Part B (Art. 35-36); & Iran - Unit 4: Part E (The Muslim World: Art. 41-43).

**Simulations:** Russia, Japan, China, and Brazil

- **Weeks 9 & 10:** Russia (R: Ch. 18-22, CP reader - Unit 3: Part B (Art. 31-32) Simulation & Discussion Board 5
- **Weeks 11 & 12:** Japan (R: 23-27, CP reader - Unit 1: Part D (Art. 12-13): - Term paper due Simulation & Discussion Board 6
- **Weeks 13 & 14:** China (R: Ch. 28-32, CP reader - Unit 4: Part C (Art. 37-38) Simulation & Discussion Board 7
- **Week 15:** Nigeria (R: Ch. 34, CP reader - Unit 4: Part B (Art. 35-36)
- **Week 16:** Iran (R: Ch. 35, CP reader - Unit 4: Part E (The Muslim World: Art. 41-43)

**Final Exam:** Please check the class schedule for the date and time

Last Updated: August 1, 2006