

Introduction to Comparative Politics
PSCI 3600.002
Fall 2012
10:00 AM – 10:50 AM MWF

Professor: Dr. Christopher J. Williams
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Comparative politics is the process by which researchers test theories and hypotheses through the process of comparison across nations, time, policies, etc. This course provides for an introduction to the study of comparative politics. This course will begin with a discussion of basic comparative research design. We will then explore substantive ideas within the broad field of comparative politics, such as institutional design, political participation (both conventional and unconventional), and public policy.

The primary goals of this course are threefold. First, this course will attempt to encourage the development of an understanding of the comparative system of inquiry. Second, this course seeks to provide a broad knowledge of major theoretical approaches to the study of comparative politics. Finally, this class will seek to provide for the development of critical and analytical thinking skills that can be applied not only to politics but also to other areas of study.

Although this will be primarily a lecture course, there will also be frequent classroom discussion and class activities. Further, you will be required to read some academic research concerning various aspects of comparative politics, and you will be asked to discuss this material in class. You will further be asked to engage in a semester long, group project in which you are asked to build a new constitution for an existing state.

Exemplary Learning Objective Summary:

- Develop an understanding of the comparative system of inquiry.
- To gain a broad knowledge of the major theoretical approaches in comparative politics.
- Develop critical and analytical thinking skills.

Required Books

Rod Hague and Martin Harrop. 2010. *Political Science: A Comparative Introduction*. 6th ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Important dates

September 5 – Group Project Assigned
September 7 – Map Quiz (N. American, S. America, Europe)
September 14 – Map Quiz (Africa, Asia, Oceania)
September 17 – Article Review Project assigned
September 28 – Group Constitution Project Paper 1 and Presentation Due
October 10 – Midterm Exam
October 19 – Article Review Paper due

November 2 – In Class Election
November 19 – Discussion Day
December 3 – Group Project Due
December 12 – Final Exam

Grades

Map quizzes: 5%
Midterm exam: 30%
Final exam: 30%
Article review paper (3-6 pages): 10%
Group project (10-12 pages): 25%

Grading will follow a standard scale:

A=89.5-100%
B=79.5-89.4%
C=69.5-79.4%
D=59.5-69.4%
F=0-59.4%

Communications

There are multiple ways of contacting me if you have any questions about the class. I will always be in my office during my office hours, however, I am regularly in my office, and I have an open door policy. Moreover, you may also contact me via e-mail. I am diligent in returning e-mails quickly.

Exams

There will be two exams. The first exam (midterm) will consist of 30 multiple choice questions worth 2 points each and 1 long essay worth 40 points. The second exam (final) will consist of 2 out of 4 short essays worth 30 points each and 1 out of 2 long essays worth 40 points. The final exam is comprehensive and thus, will cover all material discussed in class. Each exam will be worth 30% of your final grade. This means if you do not take one of the exams you can do no better than a C in this class.

Makeup exams will only be given in light of a university excused absence or at the discretion of the instructor. Inform me of your absence before the examination date, either in person or by e-mail. You will have one class period to complete the makeup exam, which consists of answering **three long essay questions. All makeup exams will take place during pre-finals week. YOU MUST CONTACT ME 72 HOURS BEFORE THE MAKEUP DAY IN ORDER TO SCHEDULE AN EXAM.**

Article Review Paper

You will be required to turn in an article review paper on October 19th. You will be asked to read 1 of 4 classic articles in comparative politics. You will then be asked to write a review of this article consisting of a short synopsis of the piece, a critique of the piece, and some possible avenues for future research. This project will not be easy, as reading academic research is an acquired skill, therefore, it is recommended that you have taken PSCI 2300. Further, you will find it helpful to start this paper early and talk to me frequently. If you have any further questions, please feel free to ask me.

Group Project

You will randomly be assigned to a group of 6 to 7 students. You will be assigned a random existing state (i.e. other country), and asked to meet on regular occasions to devise a new constitution for that state. You will be provided with some general background information about that state, however, it will be your responsibility to do some research into the current political situation of that state. You will be expected to build a constitution for that state in which you account for legislative/executive make-up, electoral system, judicial make-up, etc. Your constitution does not have to be democratic, and should be based on the readings we have done in class, as well as lectures and class discussion. You will then be asked to turn in a written constitution signed by all members of the group along with a 10-12 page paper discussing why you chose the institutional design that you did, as well as what the ramifications of this institutional design will be for the political system of your state.

On September 28th, your group will be asked to turn in a 1-2 page paper that explains the current political institutional setup of your group's country. Your groups will also be asked to give a short 5 to 7 minute presentation concerning that country's political institutions.

On December 3rd and 5th each group will be required to present its new constitution for its state. You will be asked to discuss the institutional arrangement you have created, and why. There will be a brief question and answer session after each presentation.

Map Quiz

As this is a class that touches upon the politics of countries throughout the world you will be asked to know where those countries are. You will be given maps of all the regions of the world and asked to study these maps. You will be given two map quizzes worth a total of 5% of your final grade. The first of these quizzes will ask you to look at a map of North America, South America, and Europe, and you will be asked to label 50 countries with the proper name. The second of these quizzes will ask you to look at a map of the Africa, Asia, and Oceania, and you will be asked to label 50 countries with the proper name.

Attendance and Blackboard

Attendance is expected, but not required for this class. As this class is quite intensive, you will undoubtedly learn more and be more successful if you attend class.

All announcements, including, but not limited to, changes to the syllabus, assignment due dates, and exam dates (however, exam dates are fixed, barring a major event, i.e. closing of school, etc.) will be announced either in class or through Blackboard. Therefore, even though attendance is not required, an announcement may be made which you may be unaware of if you do not attend class. Further, you are responsible for checking Blackboard regularly. Not all announcements will necessarily be made through Blackboard, however, some may be made through Blackboard. Thus, it is in your best interest to attend class, and check Blackboard everyday.

Class Discussion

Although your grade is not dependent upon class discussion, this is a small group, and discussion will be a large part of the class. We will be having class discussions quite often, if not everyday. Needless to say, greater class discussion will make this course far more fun and interesting. Students should come prepared to discuss the readings for that day. A good way to do this is to take notes while you're reading, and jot down a few questions you have.

University of North Texas Statement of ODA/ADA Compliance

The Political Science Department cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation to

make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request on or before the sixth class day (beginning of the second week of classes).

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please notify me by the second week of class. You are also encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at (940) 565-4323. The ODA makes formal recommendations regarding necessary and appropriate accommodations based on specifically diagnosed disabilities. The Political Science Department cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request on or before the add/drop deadline.

Policies on Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Incidents of plagiarism and/or cheating will result in a failing grade for the class and further penalties per the University's judicial process.

The Political Science Department adheres to and enforces UNT's policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). Students in this class should review the policy (UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16), which may be located online (http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf). Violations of academic integrity in this course will be addressed in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy.

Students may appeal any decision under the policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 "Student Standards of Academic Integrity."

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, see the professor. Finally, students agree that, by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to www.turnitin.com or a similar plagiarism prevention system.

The UNT Department of Political Science Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism: The UNT Policy on Academic Integrity defines cheating as the use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to: use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes, or other assessments; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments; acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic materials belong to a faculty or staff member of the University; dual submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor; any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment. Plagiarism is defined as use of another's thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student's intent, including but not limited to: the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation; the knowing or negligent

unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials. Forgery is defined as altering a score, grade or official academic University record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student. Fabrication is defined as falsifying or inventing any information, data or research as part of an academic exercise. Facilitating academic dishonesty is defined as helping or assisting another in the commission of academic dishonesty. Finally, sabotage is defined as acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others.

The following academic penalties may be assessed at the instructor's discretion upon determination that academic dishonesty has occurred. Admonitions and educational assignments are not appealable:

- A. Admonition. The student may be issued a verbal or written warning.
- B. Assignment of Educational Coursework. The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
- C. Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment. The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade.
- D. Course Failure. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course. Should the procedure for appeal of a case of academic dishonesty extend beyond the date when the instructor submits course grades for the semester, the student will be assigned a grade that reflects the penalty, which shall be adjusted, as appropriate, at the conclusion of any appeal process. Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy on Academic Integrity.

Initial meeting: Introduction

Week 1 (August 29th): Introduction and Preliminaries

Required Reading:

None, but please start studying the regional maps of the world handed out as you will be taking a map quiz next week.

NO CLASS AUGUST 30TH AS DR. WILLIAMS WILL BE AT THE APSA CONFERENCE IN NEW ORLEANS

Week 2 (September 5th - 7th): What is Comparative Politics and How to Study It

Required reading:

September 5th: Hague and Harrop Chs. 1-3.

GROUP CONSTITUTION PROJECT: You will be randomly assigned groups and a state on September 5th.

NOTE: No class on September 3rd due to Labor Day.

September 7th: Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682-693. (Available on Jstor)

MAP QUIZ: North America, South American and Europe - Friday, September 7th

Week 3 (September 10th – 14th): Democracies

Required reading:

September 10th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 5

September 12th: Dahl, Robert. 2005. "What Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?" *Political Science Quarterly*. 120(2): 187-197. (Available on Jstor)

September 14th: Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT. (Ch. 1; available on Blackboard)

MAP QUIZ: Africa, Asia, and Oceania – Friday, September 14th

Week 4 (September 17th – 21st): Authoritarian Regimes and Democratic Transitions

Required reading:

September 17th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 6 and pp. 398-404.

ARTICLE REVIEW PAPER: You will be given your choice of 1 of 4 articles on September 17th.

September 19th: Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Ch. 1 (available on Blackboard)

September 21st: Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Ch. 2 (pay less attention to the math, and more attention to the ideas; available on Blackboard)

Week 5 (September 24th – 28th): Political Culture

Required reading:

September 24th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 7

September 26th: Inglehart, Ronald. 1988. "The Renaissance of Political Culture." *The American Political Science Review* 84(4): 1203-1230. (available on Jstor)

GROUP CONSTITUTION PROJECT: Paper concerning state's political institutions due, and 5 to 7 minute presentation about the current political institutions of your country due on September 28th.

Week 6 (October 1st – 5th): Political Participation

Required reading:

October 1st: Hague and Harrop Ch. 9

October 3rd: Kaase, Max. 1999. "Interpersonal trust, political trust and non-institutionalised political participation in Western Europe." *West European Politics* 22(3): 1-21. (Available on Jstor)

October 5th: Krishna, Anirudh. 2002. "Enhancing Political Participation in Democracies: What is the Role of Social Capital?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35(4): 437-460. (Available on Jstor)

Week 7 (October 8th - 12th): Review and Midterm

Required reading:

None

October 8th: Review for Midterm

October 10th: Midterm exam

October 12th: Use this day to work on your group project

Week 8 (October 15th - 19th): Multi-Level Governance

Required reading:

October 15th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 14 and pp. 295-298.

October 17th: Guibernau, Montserrat. 2000. "Spain: Catalonia and the Basque Country." *Parliamentary Affairs* 53(1): 55-68. (Available through UNT Library online)

October 19th: "Scottish Independence: More than Just Words." *The Economist*. Jan. 28, 2012. (Available at <http://www.economist.com/node/21543531>)

ARTICLE REVIEW PAPER: Due October 19th

Week 9 (October 22nd - 26th): Presidential and Semi-Presidential Systems

Required reading:

October 22nd: Hague and Harrop Ch. 16 (pp. 319-326 & 334-344).

October 25th: Linz, Juan. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51-69. (Available through Project MUSE on UNT Library's website)

October 26th: Siaroff, Alan. 2003. "Comparative presidencies: The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction." *European Journal of Political Research* 42(3): 287-312. (Available on Jstor)

Week 10 (October 29th – November 2nd): Parliamentary Systems and Government Formation

Required reading:

October 29th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 16 (pp. 326-334) & Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT. (Ch. 2; available on Blackboard)

October 31st: Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT. (Ch. 3; available on Blackboard)

November 2nd: In-Class Election

Week 11 (November 5th – 9th): Elections and Electoral Systems

Required reading:

November 5th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 10

November 7th: Mainwaring, Scott. 1991. "Politicians, Parties, and Electoral Systems: Brazil in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Politics* 24(1): 21-43. (Available on Jstor)

November 9th: Karp, Jeffrey A. and Susan A. Banducci. 1999. "The Impact of Proportional Representation on Turnout: Evidence from New Zealand." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 34(3): 363-377. (Available on Jstor)

Week 12 (November 12th – 16th): Political Parties and Party Systems

Required reading:

November 12th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 11

November 14th: Riker, William H. 1982. "The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science." *The American Political Science Review* 76(4): 753-766. (Available on Jstor)

November 16th: Mair, Peter, and Cas Mudde. 1998. "The Party Family and Its Study." *Annual Review of Political Science* 211-229. (Available on Jstor)

Week 13 (November 19th – 23rd): Political Parties and Party Systems

Required reading:

None

November 19th: Current Events Discussion

November 21st & 23rd: NO CLASS, HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!

Week 14 (November 26th – 30th): Public Policy and Political Economy

Required reading:

November 26th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 18

November 28th: Hague and Harrop Ch. 19

November 30th: Bloom, David E. and David Canning. 2000. "The Health and Wealth of Nations." *Science* 287(5456): 1207-1209. (Available on Jstor)

Week 15 (December 3rd – 7th):

Required reading:

December 3rd – 5th: Group Presentation

GROUP CONSTITUTION PROJECT: Final papers are due at the beginning of class on December 3rd. On the 3rd and 5th groups will present their constitutions to the class.

December 7th: Final Exam Review

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 12th at 8:00am