

Department of Political Science
University of Colorado
Ketchum Hall

PSCI 2012: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Instructor: Sarah Wilson Sokhey

MWF, 1-1:50pm, GRAP classroom, Spring Semester 2010

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“To eat and to talk, to be free from hunger and oppression—these elementary values animate a worldwide quest for political democracy and economic rationality.”

-Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (1991)

Course Description & Objectives

This course is intended to introduce students to some of the main topics studied in comparative political science. While goals like economic stability and democracy (i.e., to eat and to talk) are often thought to be universal, countries vary widely in their specific political and economic goals and the means they use to accomplish them. During the semester we will discuss questions such as: What is democracy? How and why have countries become democratic during different eras? How do economic developments affect political changes around the world? Does culture influence government & politics? How do democratic governments vary? And what are the consequences of different types of democratic systems of government?

In addressing these big questions in comparative politics, our course is organized around the determinants and consequences of different types of democratic systems of governance. In the first half of the course, we will examine the different determinants—economic, political, and cultural—of democracy, transitions to democracy, and whether having a democratic system of governance matters. In the second half of the course we will discuss the different types of democracies around the world. We will complement each of our thematic topics with a specific country example including Mexico, Iran, Russia, and the United Kingdom in order to give students a particular context in which to understand the more abstract concepts covered in class. During the final two weeks of the course, students will present their own research applying concepts covered in the course to a country of their choice (with the exclusion of the United States, Mexico, Iran, Russia, or the United Kingdom).

This course is designed to primarily be a discussion-based seminar. For many of the questions listed above, there are not definitive answers. For the course to work as a seminar, students must come to class prepared to discuss the readings for that day. You should expect to read, write, and talk (a lot) in this course!

Requirements

Your course grade will be based on the following criteria:

Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Country Paper	15%
3 Response Papers	15% total (5% each)
Attendance & Participation	10%

* I consider reading and engaging with ideas (rather than rote memorization) the most important part of the class and this is reflected in the distribution of your grade as laid out above. Note that 20% of your final grade is based solely on reading, attending & participating in class. This means that simply missing enough class would result in a grade of “80” if you received a perfect score on all exams and the course paper.

Exams

There will be two exams and a final exam. Exams #1 and #2 will consist of short answer and essay questions. Exam #1 will cover the material from weeks 1-7. Exam #2 will cover material from weeks 8-14.

The final exam will consist of long essay questions touching on material covered throughout the entire semester.

Country Paper

Our course focuses on major ideas and lessons from comparative politics and uses 4 country cases as illustrative examples—Mexico, Iran, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

For your course paper, you will be asked to write a 5-page paper applying the political experiences of one country (other than the United States, Mexico, Iran, Russia, or the United Kingdom) to the concepts covered in class. The idea behind this assignment is to give you the opportunity to engage the course material in the context of a country in which are you most interested. This will also give you the opportunity to share what you learn with your classmates.

The course paper is due on **Monday, April 19th**. You are required to submit a paper copy in class AND an electronic copy on CU Learn. Points will be deducted from your paper grade if you fail to submit both a paper copy and an electronic version.

Late papers will be penalized a half-letter grade for each day they are late (including weekends).

Five percent of the grade on your course paper will be based on your presentation & discussion of your research during the final two weeks of class.

Sources for Course Paper

Your paper must include a minimum of 5 academic sources (that are not course materials we read for class). Your grade will be penalized if you have not referenced appropriate sources for your

paper. Academic sources refer to books and journal articles. Newspaper articles and websites do not count as academic sources.

A note on Wikipedia:

DO NOT CITE WIKIPEDIA under any circumstances in your paper! Wikipedia is open source and, while it often has useful and sometimes accurate general knowledge, it is NOT an academic or an authoritative source. This, of course, also means you should not use information from Wikipedia that you have not verified elsewhere. You should also not plagiarize from Wikipedia. Please be aware that it is exceptionally easy to detect plagiarism from Wikipedia (and many other sources). Please see the section below regarding academic honesty for more information on plagiarism.

More information on the course paper & the presentations will be provided later in the course.

Response Papers

Your response papers should be 2-3 pages in length, double-space, Times New Roman in 11 or 12 point font. Your response paper should directly address the material covered in the course readings. If your response paper is off topic, you will receive a "0" on the assignment.

You must submit a paper copy of your response paper in class. Points will be deducted if you do not submit a paper copy in class.

While you are only required to submit 3 response papers, you will notice on the course schedule below that there are 4 due dates listed. You may choose to submit a 4th response paper to replace your grade on one of the previous response papers.

I will not accept any late response papers under any circumstances. If you miss the deadline for a response paper, you will receive a "0" for that assignment.

More detailed information about how you should write the response papers will be provided in class.

Attendance & Participation

You are required to attend class regularly & participate in discussions. Half of this component of your grade is based on attendance & the other half is based on participation.

Attendance

You get 5 excused absences to use at your discretion. Illness and schedule conflicts DO count towards these excused absences. After these 5 absences, you lose half a percentage point for every additional absence.

Participation & Cold-Calling

Prior to each class, I will use a computer to randomly generate 3 names on the roster. Those 3 students will be asked the first 3 questions. If you cannot answer the question, you will lose ½ a percentage point off of your attendance & participation grade. However, you can make-up this ½ a percentage point by correctly answering a question or otherwise offering meaningful contribution to the class in the same class session.

Extra Credit

There is one opportunity for extra credit in this course. You will notice that in several of the required books for the course, we do not read the entire book. For extra credit, you may read a chapter from one of these books that is not assigned and complete a 1-page response paper. Please check with me before completing the extra credit to make sure what you are reading is acceptable for extra credit.

To receive extra credit, you should complete an optional recommended reading and write a one-page summary which: 1) *briefly* summarizes the content of the reading, and 2) gives *your reaction & thoughts* about the reading. Your response paper should tie into what we are covering in the course. You may complete TWO recommended readings for extra credit. Each recommended reading response you complete is worth 2 points on your final grade. You may only receive 1 extra credit point if the response paper does not summarize the reading correctly or does not give your reaction to the reading.

If you are especially interested in a topic on the syllabus for which there is not a recommended optional reading, please let me know and I may be able to recommend readings for extra credit.

The response paper does not have to be turned in on the day for which it is listed. You must turn in your extra credit response papers by the last day of class.

Required Books

- 1) *Principle of Comparative Politics*, William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, & Sona Nadenichek Golder, ISBN: 978-0-87289-289-7
*Used copies are acceptable. There is only one edition which was published in 2009
- 2) *Comparative Politics Today*
*Be sure to get the special order version sent to the CU bookstore. The version for our class only includes 5 country cases and should be cheaper than buying a complete used copy through online venues.
- 3) *Russia's Capitalist Revolution: Why Market Reform Succeeded and Democracy Failed*, Anders Aslund
*Used copies are acceptable.
- 4) *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, Ray Tekeyh
*Used copies are acceptable.

Recommended reading on politics in various countries:

*These books are not required for purchase.

- 1) *Managing Mexico: Economists From Nationalism to Neoliberalism*, 2001
- 2) *Mexico's Political Awakening*, Vikram K. Chand, 2001
- 3) *Mexico: The Struggle for Democratic Development*, Daniel Levy, Kathleen Bruhn, and Emilio Zebadua, 2001
- 4) *Being Modern in Iran*, Fariba Adelkhah, 2000
- 5) *Putin's Labyrinth*, Steve Levine, 2008
- 6) *The Rebels: How Blair Mislaid His Majority*, Philip Cowley, 2005
- 7) *China Road*, Rob Gifford, 2007
- 8) *We Are All the Same*, Jim Wooten, 2004
- 9) *Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan*, Mary Anne Weaver, 2002

Contacting Instructor

I am available Mondays and Wednesdays after class for office hours. I am also happy to make arrangements to meet with you at a time that is more convenient for your schedule. Please let me know what times would be more convenient for you if you are unable to meet during my office hours.

A note about e-mail

E-mail is the quickest and easiest way to contact me outside of class and I always make an effort to respond promptly. Although e-mail is an easy and convenient form of correspondence, you should think of e-mails to any of your instructors as professional correspondence. This means that your message should adhere to norms of academic writing including the use of proper punctuation. You should also avoid IM style language or excessive use of abbreviations. The better I can understand your e-mail, the better I am able to help you in a constructive manner. Some questions are best answered in class or in person during office hours; in these cases, I will let you know that I will address your question in class or that we should arrange a time to talk.

Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>. Disability Services' letters for students with disabilities indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations. The syllabus statements and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.

Religious Observance

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please note, however, that requests for special accommodations need to be presented in a timely manner: at least one week prior to scheduled exams/assignments. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html-student_code

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

Academic Honesty & Student Conduct

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at: <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own and should not be work you have submitted in any other course. No cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy. **If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.** Plagiarism does not only include lifting text verbatim from another source and using it as your own, but includes (among other things) paraphrasing a work and not properly citing it in your paper.

When considering whether or not to plagiarize, consider whether you are willing to fail the course and possibly facing other university sanctions for doing so. If you are having difficulty completing course assignments, consider alternatives to cheating including contacting me (or your other instructors) for help. The consequences of turning in a poorly done assignment are always much less severe than plagiarizing.

Extensions & Make-ups

As a general rule, I will not grant any extensions or make-ups. All deadlines have been clearly marked on the course schedule and you should make note of them. In case of extreme emergency (such as serious illness), extensions and make-ups must be discussed with the instructor individually and will be arranged on a case-by-case basis contingent on proper documentation of any incident preventing the student from meeting the deadline.

*****IMPORTANT NOTE: Assignments should be submitted in class, not via e-mail or left in my mailbox in the political science department. If extenuating circumstances require you to submit your assignment by e-mail or by leaving it in my mailbox, it is your responsibility to make sure I get it. You should be sure to get confirmation that I have received your assignment in this case.**

Course papers will be penalized one-half letter grade for each day they are later (including weekends).

Grading

I will use the following scale in assessing grades:

A	94+	C+	77-79	E	59 and below
A-	90-93	C	74-76		
B+	87-89	C-	70-73		
B	84-86	D+	67-69		
B-	80-83	D-	60-66		

Course Schedule

I reserve the right to make adjustments to the schedule & readings as necessary. I may occasionally alert you to supplementary materials available on <http://culearn.colorado.edu>.

Unless otherwise noted, all readings from chapters refer to *Principles of Comparative Politics* (Clark, Golder, and Golder).

Readings that are not from the required books (listed above) will be posted on our course website on CU Learn. I strongly encourage you to print out the readings on CU Learn and bring them to class. If I call on you in class with questions about the readings, you have a better chance of answering if you can reference the reading. While you can reference these readings on a laptop, students often appear to have more difficulty to quickly referencing a particular page or section on a laptop.

	Date	Topic & Reading Assignment	Deadlines
Week 1	Mon., Jan. 11	Introduction <i>What is comparative politics? Why is the course organized around a study of democracy?</i>	
	Wed., Jan. 13	Chapter 1, : Introduction (in <i>Principles of Comparative Politics</i>), pp. 1-16	
	Fri., Jan. 15	What is Science? Chapter 2, Introduction & section entitled "Science & Falsification," pp. 17-19, 40-51	
Week 2	Mon., Jan. 18	***No Class. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday***	
	Wed., Jan. 20	What is Politics? Chapter 3, pp. 55-80	
	Fri., Jan. 22.	Origins of the Modern State Chapter 4, pp. 91-123	
Week 3	Mon., Jan. 25	Economic Determinants of Democracy Chapter 6, pp. 169-181, "Classic Modernization Theory"	
	Wed., Jan. 27	Chapter 6, pp. 182-197, "A Variant of Modernization Theory"	
	Fri., Jan. 29	Chapter 6, pp. 198-202, "Some More Empirical Evidence"	
Week 4	Mon., Feb. 1	Case Study of Economic Determinants of Democracy: MEXICO Mexico chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> , Read 1 st half of chapter ("Country Bio" through "Political Structure and Institutions")	

	Wed., Feb. 3	Mexico chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> , Read 2 nd half of chapter ("Recruiting the political elites" through "Mexico's Political Future")	
	Fri., Feb. 5	Vikram Chand, <i>Mexico's Political Awakening</i> , University of Notre Dame Press, 2001, Conclusion & Epilogue: pages 265-297 **This reading will be posted on our course website on CU Learn. I strongly encourage you to print out these chapters and bring them with you to class. *You may read other chapters in the Chand book & write a response paper for optional extra credit.	Response Paper Due
Week 5	Mon., Feb. 8	Cultural Determinants of Democracy Chapter 7, pp. 207-237	
	Wed., Feb. 10	Chapter 7, pp. 239-250	
	Fri., Feb. 12	Case Study of Cultural Determinants of Democracy: IRAN Takeyh, Ray. <i>Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic</i> , Read the Introduction and Conclusion Iran chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> , read sections: Country Bio-Iran, Current Policy Challenges, and Institutions of the Islamic Republic AND Conclusion	
Week 6	Mon., Feb. 15	Iran (cont.) Takeyh, Ray. <i>Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic</i> , Chapter 1 (Khomeini's Legacy), pp. 9-30 and Chapter 2 (Conservatives, pragmatists, and reformers), pp. 31-58	
	Wed., Feb. 17		
	Fri., Feb. 19		
Week 7	Mon., Feb. 22	Iran (cont.) Takeyh, Ray. <i>Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic</i> , Chapter 3 (Iran's place in the greater Middle East), pp. 59-82 *You may read other chapters in the Takeyh book & write a response paper for optional extra credit.	Response Paper Due
	Wed., Feb. 24	Review for Exam #1	
	Fri., Feb. 26		EXAM #1

Week 8	Mon., March 1	Democratic Transition Chapter 8, pp. 255-275 (Bottom-Up Transitions to Democracy)	
	Wed., March 3	Chapter 8, pp. 276-292 (Top-Down Transitions to Democracy)	
	Fri., March 5	Case Study of Democratic Transition: RUSSIA Russia chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> , read sections: "Country Bio—Russia" through "Russian Political Culture in the Post-Soviet Period", AND "The Politics of Economic Reform"	
Week 9	Mon., March 8	Russia, cont. Aslund, Anders, <i>Russia's Capitalist Revolution</i> , Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007, Chapter 3 (Revolution: 1991-93), pp. 85-127	
	Wed., March 10	Russia, cont. Aslund, Anders, <i>Russia's Capitalist Revolution</i> , Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007, Chapter 7 (Authoritarianism and Recentralization: 2004-07)	
	Fri., March 12	Russia, cont. Aslund, Anders, <i>Russia's Capitalist Revolution</i> , Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007, Chapter 8 (Conclusion: Why Market Reform Succeeded and Democracy Failed), pp. 277-308 *You may read other chapters in the Aslund book & write a response paper for optional extra credit.	Response Paper Due
Week 10	Mon., March 15	Does Democracy Make a Difference? Chapter 9, pp. 311-330 (The Effect of Regime Type on Democratic Performance)	
	Wed., March 17	Chapter 9, pp. 331-350 (Selectorate Theory)	
	Fri., March 19	Adam Hochschild, <i>King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa</i> , New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998. (This reading will be posted on CU Learn.)	
Week 11	Mon., March 22	***SPRING BREAK***	
	Wed., March 24	***SPRING BREAK***	
	Fri., March 26	***SPRING BREAK***	

Week 12	Mon., March 29	Parliamentary vs. Presidential Systems Chapter 11, section entitled “Classifying Parliamentary, Presidential, & Mixed Democracies,” pp. 395-400 (Read ahead for Wednesday!)	
	Wed., March 31	Chapter 11, section entitled “Making & Breaking Governments: Parliamentary Democracies,” pp. 400-443	
	Fri., April 2	Chapter 15, section entitled “Presidentialism & Democratic Survival,” pp. 742-752	
Week 13	Mon., April 5	Case Study of a Parliamentary System: UNITED KINGDOM Britain chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> (Read 1 st half of chapter, “Country Bio—United Kingdom” through “Political Participation”)	
	Wed., April 7	Britain chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i> (read 2 nd half of chapter “Organizing Group Interests” through “Policy Outcomes and Changes in Society”)	Response Paper Due (Optional)
	Fri., April 9	Elections & Electoral Systems Single-Member Districts (SMD) vs. Proportional Representation (PR) Downs’ Median Voter Theorem & Duverger’s “Law” Chapter 12, pp. 463-476, 493-510, 517-526 Chapter 13, pp. 572-597 (Number of Parties: Duverger’s Theory) Chapter 10, p. 371 (Read Box Insert: “The Median Voter Theorem and Party Competition”) *Reference handout on Downs & Duverger when studying electoral systems.	
Week 14	Mon., April 12	Mixing Institutional Systems Chapter 15, pp. 723-763 (“Electoral Law, Federalism, & Ethnic Conflict,” “Presidentialism and Democratic Survival” and “Conclusion”) <u>Optional Extra Credit Reading:</u> France chapter in <i>Comparative Politics Today</i>	
	Wed., April 14	Review for Exam #2	
	Fri., April 16		EXAM #2

Week 15	Mon., April 19	Student Presentations The final two weeks of the course will consist of student presentations of their course papers & discussion about these papers. About 10 minutes will be devoted to each student's topic. There will be 5 minutes for a brief presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A. Each student is required to submit 2 questions in writing for each presenter. Part of the presentation grade is based on the submission of questions about other presenters in class.	
	Wed., April 21	Student Presentations	
	Fri., April 23	Student Presentations	
Week 16	Mon., April 26	Student Presentations	
	Wed., April 28	Student Presentations	
	Fri., April 30	Student Presentations	Final day to submit extra credit response papers
		FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, May 5th, 4:30pm-7pm	