

Introduction to Comparative Politics	Professor Sven Steinmo
Political Science 2012 Spring 2018	Office Hours: Wed: 2:00 -5:30pm
Class Web Page: See Canvas website	Office: Ketchum 157
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Course Purpose:

This course is intended as an introduction to different political and economic systems found around the world. We will focus on several broad issues and questions and examine a limited set of countries for comparison. It is my hope to introduce the student to a variety of issues and dilemmas that are likely to be of key significance to them as citizens in a globalizing and shrinking world. We will explore the relationships between political, economic and social development as we seek to understand three basic questions:

- **1) “How did ‘The West’ become so rich?”**
- **2) “Why are poor countries so poor?” and**
- **3) “Will the 21st Century be Asian?”**

Structure of the Course:

In the first five weeks of the course we begin a discussion of the democratic/capitalist world. We ask, how and why did democratic capitalism develop when and where it did? Here we will try to understand the relationship between capitalism and the growth of modern democracy. We will see that the very meaning of “democracy” and the functioning of modern capitalism can be quite different in these ostensibly similar countries. In this section of the course we will focus on the cases of Britain and the United States. We explore the relationship between liberal democratic capitalism and their rise as world powers. We will also examine some of the stresses these countries now face as the world becomes ever more ‘globalized.’

In the second part of the course we will examine some less developed nations in the world today. First, we will look at some of the generic problems of less developed nations in an attempt to understand their common dilemmas as they try to modernize in an increasingly integrated world. Of course, we cannot cover all countries in the developing world in one semester so we will focus on the African case of Nigeria as well as our Latin American neighbor to the south, Mexico. We hope to develop a somewhat better understanding of the different issues, opportunities and conflicts that these countries and regions face. We will try to understand both why these countries have not “succeeded” in becoming liberal capitalist democracies, and whether the standards and models of essentially European/American capitalist democracy are reasonable and appropriate for countries struggling with nationhood in the modern global world economy.

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In the final third of the course we will examine the newly rising powers in East Asia. Many have suggested that these countries will be the next superpowers as twilight of liberal democratic capitalism wanes. First, we will look at the rise (and fall?) of the Japanese economic miracle and then the booming power of China.

We conclude the course by returning to our original questions about the rise (and fall?) of liberal democracy in an increasing competitive and globalized world.

In conclusion, this course is intended to offer students somewhat of a survey of the world through the lens of comparative politics. I hope to give the students an understanding of the variation in political and economic systems in the world and to give them some tools which might help them understand why different countries have taken such divergent paths. Once we have a better understanding of how and why modern countries are so different, then perhaps we can have a more intelligent discussion about how and whether they can or should be “more like us.”

Requirements:

Your grade in the course will be based on: 1) a mid-term exam (25%); 2) a CWA research paper (15%); 3) the final exam (35%); 4) participation and attendance in discussion seminars (10%); 5) two in class “pop” quizzes (10%); and 6) class attendance in the lectures will count for (5%). Students must acquire and bring class “clickers” to the weekly lectures. These will be used to mark attendance as well as helping facilitate class lectures.

- 1st Mid-term, in class = 25% of class grade.
- Conference on World Affairs paper = 15% of class grade.
- Final exam, Sun. May 6, 1:30 p.m = 35% of class grade
- Recitation participation and attendance = 10 % of class grade
- Two Recitation “pop” quizzes = 5% of class grade (each)
- Lecture attendance = 5% of class grade

Exams:

The mid-term will be worth 25% of the class grade. The final will be cumulative and will count for 35% of the class grade. The mid-term and final exams will consist of short answer questions as well as essay questions. These essay questions will be available at our WEB site at least one week before each exam. Exams will cover both assigned reading and materials presented in the class lecture/discussions as well as materials presented in the documentary films shown during class.

Conference on World Affairs paper

During the week of the Conference on World Affairs (CWA) held here on campus April 9 to 14 there will be no formal class sessions. Students are expected, however to attend at least two CWA panel discussions and write a five to seven page research essay on the topic discussed in these sessions. Paper topics must be approved by your TA prior to the CWA week. These papers should examine the topic(s) discussed in this (or these) sessions in depth and will require outside research on the topic at hand. The paper should cite panelists specifically as well as conduct

independent research on the topic under consideration. If you are persistent, you may be able to interview CWA participants as well. The CWA papers will be due in your recitation section one week after CWA week. More information about the CWA can be found here: <https://www.colorado.edu/cwa/attend/cwa-week>.

Recitation sections:

Participation in the weekly discussion sections is an important component of this class and will account for 10% of your overall course grade. Students are expected to read the assigned reading for each class session before their discussion class recitation meets. Student's grade in recitation will be based on: a) attendance, b) participation and c) preparedness (e.g. have you done the reading and are you prepared to discuss/debate it?). Additionally, there will be two short "pop" quizzes offered in each recitation section. Each TA will offer these quizzes at times that they each deems appropriate – they will be held at different times during the semester for each discussion section. These quizzes consist of a small number of short answer questions and will cover the class readings and discussion materials. They will be worth a total of 10% of the course grade. If you are not in class when a quiz is offered, you will receive a 0, unless you have a medical or otherwise approved excuse.

Attendance:

Attendance in lectures and discussion seminars is mandatory. You are allowed 3 missed class lectures and 1 (one) recitation seminar without an excuse and suffer no penalty. If you miss more than four lectures, or one discussion section, your grade will be negatively impacted.

Required Readings:

O'Neil et al., *Cases in Comparative Politics*, Norton, 2018

Course reader: "University of Colorado Boulder PSCI 2012, *Introduction to Comparative Politics Custom Edition*" Exclusive * Paperback ISBN: 9781544329949

Additional readings will be available on the class website/Canvas page.

Final points:

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determine accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website \(www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students\)](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition

or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Classroom Behavior

Faculty and students should be aware of the campus [Classroom and Course-Related Behavior policy](#) which describes examples of unacceptable classroom behavior and provides information on how to handle such circumstances should they arise. Faculty are encouraged to address the issue of classroom behavior in the syllabus, and to understand their [professional rights and duties](#).

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. 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. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).