

PSc 2603: Governments Around the World
Prof. Paul Goode
University of Oklahoma
Spring 2008

Burton Hall, Rm 210
TTh 9:00-10:15 am

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

One of the paradoxes of today's world is that the differences among countries and peoples are becoming more salient even as globalization progresses. This course seeks to give students some essential tools for evaluating those differences and coming to grips with the world outside the United States' borders. The course materials integrate in-depth country studies with the nuts and bolts of comparative political analysis, including fundamental concepts like power, the state and its institutions, political culture, the nation, and democracy. Throughout we will cover some of the enduring puzzles in comparative politics: Are parliaments better than presidents? What determines why democracy succeeds in some countries and fails in others? What is the relative weight of culture, institutions, and leadership in determining the kind of politics that prevail in any given country?

PREREQUISITE: PSc 1113 American Federal Government

REQUIRED READINGS

Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach, *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order* 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

In addition, a course packet of required readings is available from King Kopy, located at 119 W. Boyd St, Suite 112 (phone: 321-0202).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

While academic honesty is presumed and required on the part of students in this course, you are expected to have read and familiarized yourself with the university's guide to academic integrity

[\(http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/\)](http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/). If you use other people's work in a research paper without crediting them or paraphrase someone else's work but essentially copy their ideas, then you are presenting their work as your own. This is known as plagiarism and the penalties are severe. *I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty.* Any act of plagiarism or academic misconduct will result in an automatic F for the entire semester. In addition, official charges of academic misconduct will be filed with the university, for which the penalties typically include suspension, loss of academic credit, required community service, and permanent notation of academic misconduct on your record and transcripts.

ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. **The university requires students with disabilities to register with the Office of Disability Services (located in Goddard Health Center, Suite 166, phone 325-3852 or TDD only 325-4173) prior to receiving accommodations in this course.**

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays. Students who plan to observe a holiday should notify me immediately in order to make appropriate arrangements.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

25% Quizzes
25% Midterm Exam
25% Research Paper
25% Final Exam

Quizzes (25%): There will be regular quizzes at the start of class on the materials to be covered for that day. The quizzes will be multiple choice. *There are no makeups for quizzes.*

Midterm Exam (25%): The midterm exam will be held in class on Thursday, March 6. The midterm will cover all material covered during the first part of the semester and the format of the exam will be announced in advance.

Research Paper (25%): All students will research and write a 10-12 page paper. The paper will be due on Tuesday, April 8. *No late papers will be accepted.* See details below.

Final Exam (25%): The final exam will take place on Monday, May 5 (8:00-10:00 am). Be sure to bring a blue book and dark pen or pencil. If you're very nice, you might bring an extra for the unfortunate soul who forgets their blue book and/or writing implement.

RESEARCH PAPER

Throughout the course of the semester, we will be examining politics from the standpoint of three approaches based on *interests*, *institutions*, and *identities*. Select a country that has *not* been studied in this course (in other words, one that *is not* included on the syllabus as a case study) and argue which of these approaches is most helpful for understanding an important political phenomenon in that country's politics.

Some examples of topics:

- The persistence (or breakdown) of Great Britain's two-party system
- Ethnic conflict and accommodation in India
- French national identity and the November 2005 riots
- Obstacles to nation-building in South Africa after apartheid
- Sources of democratic transition (or authoritarian reversal) in Mexico
- Legacies of communist rule and the success of Vladimir Putin

NOTE: I am a *very* strict grader when it comes to research papers. Read and follow the requirements and tips below if you hope to get an A on your paper. You have been warned.

Paper Requirements:

- 10-12 pages, double-spaced, formatted with 12-point font (Times New Roman or similar, *not Courier*) and 1-inch margins.
- Make sure the paper has a *title* and that each page is *numbered*.
- *Proper punctuation and spelling* are essential. Only papers that have been thoroughly proofread stand a chance of receiving a B or above.
- Use footnotes or endnotes throughout the paper and include a full bibliography (not included in the page count). Use a standard reference style consistently through the entire paper.
- Use *at least five academic sources*, and be sure to cite them often. Articles from academic journals and books from university presses are good sources.
- **NO ONLINE SOURCES WILL BE ACCEPTED.** That's right, no websites. Roll up your sleeves and use the library. Comb through the stacks, find a book that looks useful, then look at the books shelved next to it. Discover where journals are held and what they smell like.
- **Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a failing grade (F) for the paper and a formal charge of academic misconduct. See the note on academic honesty (above). If you are uncertain about the proper use of quotations, feel free to ask the instructor.**

Tips for writing a better paper:

- **START WORK EARLY.** Use your time wisely and don't leave it until the weekend before the paper is due.

- Resist the urge to summarize pages and pages of your country's history. Stick to the most relevant aspects as reflected by key concepts.
- Bear in mind that the purpose of the paper is to persuade as well as inform. *Facts don't speak for themselves* – you have to interpret them for the reader.
- Do not fill the page with quotations. Use them sparingly and only when crucial to demonstrating your point.
- **PROOFREAD.** Get a friend (or even better, get an enemy) to do it again for you. Put it aside for a few days, then proof read again. Don't trust your computer to check and correct all your spelling and grammar.

IMPORTANT DATES

Final day to register or add a class: January 18

Midterm Exam: Thursday, March 6

Spring Break: March 15-23

Research Paper due: Tuesday, April 8

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 7 (1:30-3:30 pm)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

NOTE: Readings designated with * are located in the course pack.

Week 1: January 15-17

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Kopstein & Lichbach: Ch. 1

Week 2: January 22-24

Research Methods

Kopstein & Lichbach: Ch. 2

* Lave & March, "Observation, Speculation and Modeling"

Week 3: January 29-31

The State and Regime Types

* Weber, "Politics as a Vocation"

* Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In"

* Dahl, *Polyarchy*

* Linz & Stepan, "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes"

Weeks 4-5: February 5-14

Constitutions, Electoral Systems, and Parties

- * Stepan & Skach, "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism" (especially pp. 1-5, 16-22)
- * Duverger, "The Number of Parties"
- * Michels, "The Iron Law of Oligarchy"

United Kingdom

Kopstein & Lichbach: Ch. 3

India

Kopstein & Lichbach: Ch. 10

Weeks 6-7: February 19-28

Culture and National Identity

- * Greenfeld, "The Political Significance of Culture"
- * Hobsbawm, "The Nation as Invented Tradition"
- * Lieven, "An Exceptional Nationalism?" (esp. pp.28-40)

France

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 4

Germany

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 5

Week 8: March 4-6

Review (Tuesday) & Midterm Exam (Thursday)

Week 9: March 11-13

TBA

Week 10: March 18-20

SPRING BREAK

Weeks 11-12: March 25-April 3

Regime Transitions & Democratization

- * Linz & Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies"
- * Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm"
- * Levitsky & Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism"

Mexico

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 9

South Africa

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 12

Weeks 13-14: April 8-17

RESEARCH PAPER DUE: TUESDAY, APRIL 8

Communism & Post-Communism

- * Marx & Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party"
- * Havel, "Power of the Powerless"
- * Przeworski, "A Prologue: The Fall of Communism"

Russia

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 7

China

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 8

Week 15: April 22-24

Religion & Politics

- * Juergensmeyer, "The New Religious State"
- * Zakaria, "The Islamic Exception"

Iran

Kopstein & Lichbach, Ch. 10

Week 16: April 29-May 1

Catch Up & Review

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 5 (8:00-10:00 am)