Course Description:

Comparative politics is one of the major subfields of political science and consists of the systematic focus of comparing, contrasting and analyzing the different political systems and institutions of the world as well as the actions of individuals and groups. This course will provide you with an overview of the central themes and concepts in the subfield and introduce the core principles of conducting comparative research in the social sciences. The study and analysis of other political systems will provide each of you with a more comprehensive understanding of the U.S. political system and an increased understanding of the political developments in today's globalized world. Theories and questions that address political phenomena including democratization, economic reform, nationalism/ethnic violence, the transformation of the modern state and institutional development will be discussed over the course of the semester. In addition, you will also learn how the different phenomena and concepts are applied when studying specific cases from around the world. At the end of the semester, each of you will possess a greater understanding of the subfield of comparative politics as well as how theories and concepts can be applied to explain political developments in different locations and time periods.

Requirements:

Department ETS Exam- This exam is conducted by the department as a way to track students' progress within the major. There will three different sessions held for the exam Jan. 20th (5:30-8:30 PM in SWKT 102), Jan. 21st (5:30-8:30 PM in SWKT 102) and Jan. 22nd (9 AM- 12 PM in SWKT 102). Your participation in this survey/exam will be worth 5% of your final grade.

Kennedy Center Lectures- Each semester the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies hosts a series of speakers and events with policymakers and academics from around the world. These events provide an opportunity for you to witness how many of the topics and concepts that we are discussing in class matter in the real world. Therefore, each student will be required to attend at least five (5) different events hosted by the Kennedy Center this semester. Following your attendance at an event, each of you will write a review describing how the event/topic discussed relates to some aspect of the course. Each of these reviews should be typed and two (2) pages in length and must be turned in no later than 48 hours after the event. Examples of what a review should consist of will be
distributed in class. Announcements regarding upcoming events will be made in class and can be found on the Kennedy Center’s website: [http://kennedy.byu.edu](http://kennedy.byu.edu) (10% of overall grade)

Exams- There will be two exams during the course of the semester; a mid-term (Feb. 8th) and a final (Apr. 19th). Each of these exams will consist of both identify/define and essay questions that will be drawn from the class readings and lectures. The mid-term exam will be worth 15% of your final grade and the final will be worth 20%.

Essay Question- There will also be a take-home essay exam (Mar. 15th). This essay will be distributed via e-mail and you will have 48 hours to complete it. It will be open-note and open-book and will require you to synthesize key concepts and ideas from the readings and lecture into a cohesive argument (The essays will be limited to 5 pages). More information on the exam and the expectations of your essay will be provided during the course of the semester. This exam will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Directed Research Paper- This assignment (12-15 pages) asks you to develop an interesting “puzzle” or research question that pairs a key concept or theme from comparative politics with a country/case that does not seem to fit the expectations of the theory. The country cannot be one of the countries that we have studied in-depth in the course (UK, Germany, Iran, China, Brazil or Nigeria). I will provide suggested topics that will help you identify a research question or “puzzle,” and you will be expected to expand your understanding of the political concept/principle and conduct research on the country of choice. An example of topics and ideas will be distributed in class. Final papers are due Tuesday, April 5th and will count for 20% of your total grade.

Class Participation- All assigned readings on the schedule are required and it is imperative that you come prepared to participate in each class session. Failure to adequately prepare or willingly contribute to our discussions will limit your ability to comprehend and synthesize the class materials effectively. Your attendance and willingness to participate in class discussions will count for 10% of your total grade.

**Grade Breakdown (Due Date):**

Department ETS Exam- 5%
Kennedy Center Lectures- 10%
Mid-Term Exam- 15%
Essay Question- 20%
Directed Research Paper- 20%
   - Description of Puzzle and Preliminary List of Sources (Due Feb. 17th)
   - Final Paper- (Due Apr. 5th)
Final Exam- 20%
Class Participation: 10%
Academic Integrity:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty are found at http://honorcode.byu.edu/content/academic-honesty-details.

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

All students in this class are expected to adhere to the University's Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy. The availability and convenience of accessing information electronically has transformed the study of political phenomena but also requires more diligence on the part of scholars/students producing such work. Therefore, I consider it important to clarify the course policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. Students must completely and unambiguously cite the sources that they use or draw upon in developing new ideas, theories and explanations that they present to their peers and the broader scholarly community (including this class). Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for the course and notification will be given to the University’s Honor Code Office. In addition, other forms of academic misconduct (cheating, fabrication of material, etc.) outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy will also result in a possible failing grade for the assignment or course. If you have any concerns or remaining doubts regarding the different forms of academic misconduct please come and discuss them with me.
Class Conduct:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to an administrative official and contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Special Assistance:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

Required Texts:

There are two required texts for this course (each of them are available at the BYU bookstore or available from online retailers).


All other texts listed will be available through databases located through the Library website (i.e. JSTOR, INFOTRAC, etc.) or via the class website on Blackboard.

All assigned readings listed on the schedule below are required. In order to effectively understand and synthesize the material in the course it is imperative that you come prepared to participate in each class session. You should review the material before you come to class. Most of the lectures will not always directly address the literature but rather use the analysis and information from the literature as a frame for our discussion. As a result, it is expected that everyone should be prepared to contribute and discuss the readings/topics each class. Class grades will be determined by a series of exams and research projects and your participation and attendance in class.
Reading and Assignment Schedule:

1/4- Class Introduction and Overview

1/6- Putting the Science in Political Science

Assigned Reading:


1/11- Concepts, Methods and Research Design in Comparative Politics

Assigned Reading:


1/13- Political Behavior

Assigned Reading:


1/18- Political Institutions

Assigned Reading:


1/20- Political Culture

Assigned Reading:


1/25- The Modern State

Assigned Reading:

1/27- State Success/Failure

**Assigned Reading:**


2/1- Nations and Society

**Assigned Reading:**


2/3- Nationalism and Civil War

**Assigned Reading:**


2/8- Mid-term Exam (in class)

2/10- Democratic Regimes

**Assigned Reading:**


2/15- Patterns of Democratization/United Kingdom

**Assigned Reading:**

Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*, Ch. 2; Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (New York: Beacon, 1966), Ch. 1

2/17- Advanced Democracies/Germany
*Description of Research Puzzle and Preliminary List of Sources (due in class)*

**Assigned Reading:**


2/22- No Class (Monday Instruction)

2/24- Non-Democratic Regimes

**Assigned Reading:**


3/1- Studying Non-Democracies/Iran

**Assigned Reading:**


3/3- Rise of New Authoritarianism and Hybrid Regimes

**Assigned Reading:**


3/8- Political Economy

**Assigned Reading:**

3/10- Political Economy (cont’d)

Assigned Reading:


3/15- No Class (Take Home Essay Distributed)

3/17- Communism and Post-Communism

Assigned Reading:


3/22- Communism and Post-Communism/China

Assigned Reading:


3/24- Less Developed Countries/Nigeria

Assigned Reading:


3/29- Newly Industrialized Countries/Brazil

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Assigned Reading:


3/31- No Class (Writing Day)

4/5- Political Violence
*Directed Research Papers Due in Class*

Assigned Reading:


4/7- Globalization

Assigned Reading:


4/12- Concluding Thoughts and Review for Final

4/19- Final Exam 7-10:00 AM