

CPO 2002 : Introduction to Comparative Politics

Fall 2008

PC-214, TR 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

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Office: DM 484 A

Office hours: TR 2:30 - 3:30 pm, or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course examines the government structures and political processes of countries other than the US. Students will learn about and analyze how others deal with both familiar and unfamiliar problems of political life, and will be encouraged to view their own politics and government from a broader and comparative perspective. The first part of the course is designed to discuss basic concepts, themes, and classification schemes used in comparative analysis. The second part of the course proceeds to analyze in a systematic way a pool of countries: Great Britain, France, Japan, Mexico, and Russia. This part is made to allow for exploring and comparing similarities and differences across countries which are usually grouped as "democratic" and "transitional", and "developed" and "developing". For each of these countries, the students should learn to explain what factors caused the political system to develop the way it did, and how its institutional components influenced the political outcomes.

Course Requirements and Rules:

Students will be expected to prepare regularly their *reading* assignment for the day and be ready to answer questions. Attendance/participation in class is required and will be counted for the final grade. Each student will be responsible for writing a *paper* analyzing the development and the performance of a political system in a country by choice. It is required that the country under study should not be one of those covered in the textbook. The choice will be agreed upon with the instructor beforehand. Students should start their research early in the term and are expected to be reading substantially for their papers along with preparing for the class meetings. Your completed written work (a hard copy of the paper) is expected to be submitted within the time limits established in this syllabus, i.e. by December 2nd. Late papers will be penalized 10% per calendar day; electronic versions will not be accepted. There will be one *mid-term exam* and a *final exam*. You need to notify me in advance in cases where you have serious reasons, such as illness or an unavoidable event, not to take the exam at the scheduled time.

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations with respect to testing and other aspects of their work for the course, should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Whatever is necessary will be done to provide opportunities for participation in class to all students.

Academic conduct

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Grading:

The final course grade will be assigned according to the following weights:

Mid-Term Exam	30%	90-100 = A
Final Exam	35%	80-89 = B
Written Assignment	25%	70-79 = C
Attendance/Participation	10%	60-69 = D

Required Text:

Your daily reading assignments are selected from the following books that are available for purchase at the FIU Bookstore:

Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strom eds. *Comparative Politics Today*. 9th edition. New York: Pearson Longman, 2008.

Students are also advised to read a reputable daily newspaper, because current events will be covered and discussed in class as well. Examples of such newspapers are *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, and *The Washington Post*.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments:

8/26	Syllabus Review and Introduction
8/28	Issues in Comparative Politics <i>Comparative Politics Today (CPT)</i> , Chapter 1
9/2	Comparing Political Systems <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 2
9/4	Political Culture <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 3
9/9	Interest Groups <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 4
9/11	Political Parties <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 5
9/16-18	Government Structures <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 6
9/23	Public Policy <i>CPT</i> , Chapter 7
9/25	Great Britain I <i>CPT</i> , pp. 152-164
9/30	Great Britain II <i>CPT</i> , pp. 164-183

10/2	Great Britain III <i>CPT</i> , pp. 183-201
10/7	France I <i>CPT</i> , pp. 202-210
10/9	France II <i>CPT</i> , pp. 210-239
10/14	France III <i>CPT</i> , pp. 239-255
10/16	East European Democratic Transitions
10/21	Processes of Integration: The European Union Midterm Review
10/23	<u>MIDTERM EXAM</u>
10/28	Japan I <i>CPT</i> , pp. 308-319
10/30	Japan II <i>CPT</i> , pp. 319-334
11/4	Japan III <i>CPT</i> , pp. 334-357
11/6	Russia I <i>CPT</i> , pp. 358-366
11/11	No class – Veterans' Day
11/13	Russia II <i>CPT</i> , pp. 366-378
11/18	Russia III <i>CPT</i> , pp. 378-393
11/20	Russia IV <i>CPT</i> , pp. 393-405
11/25	Mexico I <i>CPT</i> , pp. 454-473
11/27	No class – Thanksgiving Holiday
12/2	Mexico II

CPT, pp. 473-494
PAPERS DUE

12/4 Mexico III
CPT, pp. 494-505
Conclusions

TBA FINAL EXAM