INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT
PLSC 211
Winter 2018

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Office Hours: Mon/Wed 12:30PM –3:00 PM
or by appointment.
Location: 601-F Pray-Harrold Hall

Course Overview

From the fall of the Berlin Wall to the rise of ethnic and religious nationalisms to the new challenges of a global marketplace, the world’s politics are in transition. As people and events around the world become more interconnected, it is increasingly vital to understand the dramatic political changes going into the 21st century in order to gain global awareness and perspectives on the diverse world in which we live. This course offers an introduction to the study of politics and political issues in countries around the world, with particular focus on cases selected to reflect the diversity of societies and political systems. In comparing specific national responses to common problems, we will be learning not only about how governments work and how people change their form of government, but also about methods of comparative analysis (i.e., how to gain perspective through comparison); and about how the global context shapes and interacts with diverse peoples and governments. The course material is organized thematically; countries of diverse economic, social, and cultural types will be compared regarding a variety of topics (such as democracy, authoritarianism, capitalism, socialism, nationalism, development, and globalization).

This course is part of the General Education Program. Some of the objectives of this course are:-

- Explore specific global issues influencing diverse nations and/or cultures, along with their interrelations within the global community.
- Explore their own culture and cultural practices and how these relate to the cultures and cultural practices of others in the global community.
- Explore the social and historical dynamics that create and influence nations, governments, global alliances, and global conflicts.
- Explore the causes and consequences of social, cultural, and racial intolerance in the world.
- Analyze and synthesize information from diverse sources to make informed decisions regarding global issues.

Materials/Text

There is one required text available for purchase at campus bookstores or through any online vendor:

An important component in understanding the theories in comparative politics is being able to relate them to current political events happening across the world. Therefore in this class we will regularly be discussing world events and as students you should be aware of them. I would encourage that you should daily read a major newspaper (New York Times, US News etc). Another resource that you can use are websites of major news networks. (www.cnn.com, www.bbc.co.uk/news, abcnews.go.com etc.)

Course Requirements

The class will involve a combination of lectures, assignments, discussions and presentations. My expectations for a student taking this course are that you regularly attend class, stay current with the Reading Assignments, and regularly read news coverage of current events. The class also has an emuonline link and therefore you are encouraged to regularly check the link for assigned readings as well as other notes.

Grades, Assignments and Evaluation

The final grade in the class will be cumulative and will be calculated out of a total of 1000 points. The course letter grade assignment is mentioned below.

Course Letter Grades will be assigned as follows:

(200) – Cumulative Final Examination
(200) – Midterm Examination
(100) – Test 1
(100) – Test 2
(200) – Presentation by Groups
(200) – Online Class Assignments

A  = 93-100%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B  = 83-86%
B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%
C  = 73-76%
C- = 70-72%
D- = 55-59%
F  = below 55%

A  = 930-1000
A- = 900-929
B+ = 870-899
B  = 830-869
B- = 800-829
C+ = 770-799
C  = 730-769
C- = 700-729
D- = 550-599
F  = 549 & below
Exams (40% or 400 Points)

The mid-term exam will occur after the major theories of Comparative Politics have been taught and will consist of essay type, multiple choices, fill in the blanks and True/False answer questions in any or all combinations. The final exam will be cumulative and will have the same format as the mid-term exam. There will be no make-up examinations for the mid-term as well as the final, without medical documentation explaining the absence.

Group Presentation (20% or 200 Points)

As a part of this assignment all the students will be divided into groups. Each group will be assigned a country and will present a report on the social, economic and political conditions in that country. The group is also expected to analyze the foreign policy of the country on which they are presenting on, and evaluate the factors that have influenced the development of the foreign policy. The groups are also expected to present on what foreign policy that particular country has towards the United States, and what should be the US foreign policy when dealing with these states. The expected duration of the presentation will be approximately 40-45 minutes and the group will then be subject to questions from the class and the Instructor. These country presentations will also be used as case studies during the midterm as well as the final exams. The countries on which the students will be presenting on are:

1. Brazil
2. Russia
3. India
4. China
5. South Africa
6. Nigeria
7. Iran
8. South Korea

We will of course be discussing about the United States throughout the semester and hence I will not ask you to present on the U.S.

Tests (20% or 200 Points)

We will also have 1 quiz during the course of the semester and the quiz will be worth 100 points. The format of the quiz will be a combination of essay type, multiple choices, fill in the blanks and True/False answer questions in any or all combinations. The date of the quiz is mentioned in the course schedule and there will be no make-up of these quizzes without medical documentation explaining the absence.

Online Assignments (20% or 200 Points)

At the beginning of the semester, certain class sections will be taught online. As a result, you will have online assignments that will be identified in advance, and students will be informed about the same. The online assignment will involve students logging onto the canvas site and commenting
on a story/new report that is posted. Completion of all online assignments will result in full 200 points being awarded at the end of the semester. If a student fails to complete an online assignment, the student will be penalized points for every assignment missed.

Attendance and Class Participation Policy

You are expected to participate in class and interact with me as well as other students on topics that we discuss in class. I will also keep attendance records for the course and attendance will be taken regularly in class. If you have more than 3 unexcused absences during the semester you will be penalized on your class participation and attendance grades.

Absences will be excused only in case of illness, family emergency, or any legitimate academic or university obligation. In case of absence due to illness a doctor’s note from the University Health Center or your doctor would be required. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to let me know of the circumstances of your absence, prior to the class period if at all possible. Your class participations grades will be determined based on your attendance in class as well as the quality of the presentation made by your groups on the country of your choice.

Academic Honesty

I have a zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty and every student is expected to adhere to Eastern Michigan University’s policy on academic honesty. If caught cheating on exams, turning in someone else’s written work, or plagiarizing another’s work you will fail this course. Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating, falsification, and/or plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this course. Penalties for an act of academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade for a particular assignment to receiving a failing grade for the entire course. In addition, you may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal. The Student Conduct Code contains detailed definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty but if you are not sure about whether something you are doing would be considered academic dishonesty, consult with the course instructor. You may access the Code online at: www.emich.edu/student_conduct/.

I would like to emphasize that you should not assume what any of the policies imply. If you are in any doubt regarding any of the course policies I encourage you to come and talk to me. Furthermore, you should always check with me whether it is acceptable to work together with another student on a project or assignment; until so assigned to by the instructor.

Students with Special Needs

If you wish to be accommodated for your disability, EMU Board of Regents Policy 8.3 requires that you first register with the Students with Disabilities Office (SDO) in 240 EMU Student Center. You may contact SDO by telephone (734.487.2470). Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the SDO promptly as you will only be accommodated from the date you register with them forward. No retroactive accommodations are possible.
**Note on Grading Methods and Syllabus**

All tests and papers will be graded blind by the instructor. If a student would like to appeal the grading of a question, he or she should submit to the instructor his or her grievance in writing, explaining why he or she feels that the given response was inadequately assessed. The status of students’ scholarship, potential entrance into law school / grad school will not be taken into consideration in grading.

*In addition, this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Such changes will be announced in a fair and timely manner.*

**Course Schedule and Assigned Readings**

**Structure of Course:**

**Month 1:** The State - In the first month we will discuss about the modern state. i.e What is a state, what makes a state (Citizens) and who they are and finally how does a state develop its identity.

**Month 2:** Political Development - In the second month we will discuss about political development and the internal structures of a state, i.e. the institutions of a state. Some of the topics covered would be:

- The various theories on Political Development by Rustow, Lipset, Karl Deutsch, Almond and Coleman, Lucian Pye and David Apter.
- What is Political Culture? What is Culture? Does it Matter or not?
- What are the different types of governments, What is democracy, authoritarianism, how does democracy come about, what is a regime, how do coups take place, how does political development take place, is there a correlation between political and economic development.
- What is first world and third world? How did the third world come into existence etc.

**Month 3:** Economic Development and Globalization - In the third mon we will discuss about economic development, the role of globalization and what is the relationship if any between development and globalization as well as the various facets of development.

- During this week we will focus on topics such as what is capitalism, is capitalism good or bad, What is Marxism, Socialism, Dependency Theory, Role of MNC’s in global what is political economy.
- What is economic development, how does globalization promote economic development as well as what are the negative influences of globalization.
- Theories of Change in Latin America, India, Africa and East Asia
- Is there a global model of development? Does an indigenous model of development exist or not?
Month 4: The Future and Challenges to the Modern State - In the last few weeks of the semester we will discuss about the challenges to the state, as well as what can be considered as the future agenda of states and how they should deal with them.

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Week 1: Introduction

1/3 Wednesday: Syllabus presented to the class (Online)

Week 2: The State in International Politics

1/8 Monday: Online Class with Introduction to Topic

- Chapter 1: Introduction (D&S)
- Online Class

1/10 Wednesday: **Online Class Assignment 1**

Week 3: Political Development and Identity

1/15 Monday: No Class MLK Day

1/17 Wednesday: Political Development and Political Culture
- Chapter 3: States and Citizens (D&S)
- **Online Class Assignment 2**

Week 4: The Modern State

1/22 Monday:
- Chapter 2: The Modern State (D&S)

1/24 Wednesday:
- Chapter 4: State and Identity (D&S)

Week 5: State and Institutions

1/29 Monday:
- Chapter 6: Political Institutions: Governing (D&S)

1/31 Wednesday:
- Chapter 7: Political Institutions: Participation and Representation (D&S)
Week 6: States and Markets

2/5 Monday:
  - Chapter 5: States and Market (D&S)
  - Online Class Assignment 3

2/7 Wednesday:
  - Chapter 8: Authoritarian Institutions (D&S)

Week 7: State and Markets

2/12 Monday:
  - Test 1

2/14 Wednesday:
  - Group Presentations 1 and 2.
  - Online Assignment (3)

Week 8: Winter Recess (Feb 19 – 25) – NO CLASS

Week 9: Globalization

2/26 Monday:
  - Chapter 9: Regime Change: Coups, Revolutions and Democratization. (D&S)

2/28 Wednesday:
  - Chapter 10: Globalization, Deindustrialization and Development. (D&S)
  - Group Presentation 3

Week 10: Globalization Continued

3/5 Monday: Midterm Exam

3/7 Wednesday:
  - Political Globalization
  - Economic Globalization
  - Cultural Globalization

Week 11: Politics and Public Policies

3/12 Monday:
  - Chapter 11: Public Policy When Markets Fail: Welfare, Health and the Environment. (D&S)
  - Online Class Assignment 4
3/14 Wednesday:
- Marxism and Socialism – Readings to be assigned online.
- Dependency Theory – Readings to be assigned online.

**Week 12: Country Focus (India and China)**

3/19 Monday: China Country Profile
- **Group Presentation 4**

3/21 Wednesday: India Country Profile

**Week 13: Test and Cultural Values**

3/26 Monday:
- **Group Presentation 5 and 6**

3/28 Wednesday: **Test 2**
- Chapter 12: Policies and Politics of inclusion and Clashing Values. (D&S)

**Week 14: Models of Economic Development**

4/2 Monday:
- Theories of change in Latin America and India. Is there is global or an indigenous model of development

4/4 Wednesday: The Future
- Theories of change in East Asia and Africa. Is there is global or an indigenous model of development. – Readings to be assigned online

**Week 15: Class Presentations**

4/9 Monday:
- **Group Presentations 7 and 8.**

4/11 Wednesday: The Future
- **Group Presentations 9 and 10.**

**Week 16: Conclusion**

4/16 Monday: Conclusion
- Conclusion. Will tie in everything that we studied in the semester and how it relates to International Politics.
Week 17: Final Exams

Final Exams: TBD