

POL 130
Introduction to Comparative Politics
Davidson College

Spring 2006

TR 8:30-9:45
Chambers 2084

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And by appointment

Like—but oh how different!
William Wordsworth

Goals of the Course:

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the study of comparative politics. To that end, we will: (1) survey the politics of and recent trends in select countries and regions throughout the world; (2) examine the characteristics and effects of various types of contemporary political systems; (3) compare and assess the consequences of the diversity of policies states have adopted to address similar problems (e.g., poverty, education, economic growth, national security, etc.); (4) discuss some of the most important theories and methods used by political scientists to study politics. Students who successfully complete this course will not only improve their critical analytic skills, enabling them to make reasoned judgments about politics in a variety of national contexts, but they also will have a better understanding of how the American political system is similar to or distinct from other systems and what are its relative successes and failures.

Required Reading:

You may purchase the following books from the Davidson College bookstore or try to find less expensive copies on the internet:

- * John McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition* (New York: Wadsworth, 2004).
- * Derek Bok, *The State of the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).
- * Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003).
- * A number of readings on the syllabus are available on electronic reserve. Occasionally, I will place additional readings on reserve, especially articles about current events that relate to topics we will address in class. I will notify you both in class and on email when I make such additions. I also encourage you to bring relevant and interesting articles, political cartoons, and editorials to my attention, and I will put them on reserve for the class to read and discuss.

* You are also expected to be well informed about current international events and, therefore, are required to read *The New York Times*. You can subscribe to *The New York Times* at the Davidson College bookstore at a reduced price or read it online at www.nytimes.com (for free). Note that if you choose to read it online, you must be diligent; you will be required to purchase stories older than four or five days. While all students are expected to read *The New York Times* on a daily basis, you are also encouraged to read other news sources, such as *The Economist*, *Washington Post*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The National Interest*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Republic*, etc.

Course Requirements:

You are expected to attend class regularly, complete the readings before the class for which they were assigned, and participate in class discussions. Graded assignments include: five unannounced quizzes, which will test knowledge of current events in international affairs and comprehension of the readings, two in-class reviews, a final exam, and a 10-12 page research paper. The instructions for the paper are attached to this syllabus (see Appendix A). The reviews will test your ability to synthesize and think critically and creatively about course material. Study guides will be distributed one week before each review.

Grading:

Your participation in class discussions and performance on the quizzes, reviews, and research paper will determine your final grade. They are weighted as follows:

Participation and Quizzes: 15%
Review #1: 15%
Review #2: 20%
Final Exam: 20%
Research Paper: 30% (research proposal: 1%; annotated bibliography: 4%; paper: 25%)

Numeric grades translate into letter grades in the following manner:

100-94: A
93-90: A-
89-87: B+
86-84: B
83-80: B-, etc.

Late Assignments:

You are expected to take the reviews at the times indicated. Failure to take a review at the scheduled time will result in a zero for that review. If you have a legitimate reason to miss a review, you must notify me in advance so that arrangements can be made for a make-up. The research paper is due at 5:00 p.m. on May 2. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e., the grade for a paper that is one day late will be lowered, for example, from an A- to a B+).

Academic Honesty:

You are expected to adhere to the tenets of the Honor Code when completing course assignments; they will be strictly enforced. Accordingly, you are asked to pledge all work, including quizzes, reviews, and the research paper. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism (e.g., the rules for properly attributing cited material or how to paraphrase), please ask for clarification from me before handing in your paper.

Course Schedule

January 10: Introduction

January 12: The Comparative Method in the Social Sciences

- Readings:
- * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, introduction
 - * Robert Bates, "Area Studies and the Discipline: A Useful Controversy," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (1997). Electronic reserve.
 - * Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review* (1971). Electronic reserve.

PART I: The Politics of Liberal Democracies

January 17 and January 19: The United States and Political Culture

- Case Readings:
- * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 1.
 - * John Kingdon, *America the Unusual* (New York: Worth, 1999), excerpts. Electronic reserve.
 - * Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* (January 1995). Electronic reserve.
- Theoretical Readings:
- * Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1963), chs. 1-2. Electronic reserve.

January 24: The United Kingdom and Parliamentary Democracy

- Case Readings:
- * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 2.
- Theoretical Readings:
- * Juan Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy* (Winter 1990). Electronic reserve.

January 26: France, Voting Behavior, and Party Systems

- Case Readings:
- * Almond, et al., *Comparative Politics Today* (New York: Longman, 2004), ch. 9.
- Theoretical Readings:
- * Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavages Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments," in Mair, ed., *The West European Party System* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). Electronic reserve.
 - * William Riker, "Duverger's Law Revisited," in Lijphart and Grofman, eds., *Electoral Laws and Political Consequences* (New York: Agathon, 1986). Electronic reserve.

January 31: Germany and Federalism

- Case Readings:
- * Almond, et al., *Comparative Politics Today* (New York: Longman, 2004) ch. 10.
- Theoretical Readings:
- * Alfred Stepan, "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the US Model," *Journal of Democracy* (October 1999). Electronic reserve.

February 2: European Integration

- Case Readings:
- * Michael Teitelbaum and Philip Martin, "Is Turkey Ready for Europe?" *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2003). Electronic reserve.
 - * Jack Rakove, "Europe's Floundering Fathers," *Foreign Policy* (September/October 2003). Electronic reserve.

February 7: Japan and Party Organization

- Case Readings:
- * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 3.
- Theoretical Readings:
- * Richard Katz and Peter Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy," *Party Politics* (1995). Electronic reserve.

February 9: Review #1 (in class)

Part II: Comparative Public Policy

February 14: Comparative Economic and Labor Policy

- Readings:
- * Bok, *State of the Nation*, introduction and chs 1, 4, 13.

February 16: Comparative Education and Research Policy (Paper Proposal Due)

- Readings:
- * Bok, *State of the Nation*, chs 2-3, 10.

February 21: Library Session (meet at library at 8:30 am)

February 23: Quality of Life

- Readings:
- * Bok, *State of the Nation*, chs 5-9, 12.

February 24- March 6: Spring Break (no class)

March 7: Evaluating the *State of the Nation*

- Readings:
- * Bok, *State of the Nation*, chs 18-20.

March 9: Comparative Security Policy

- Readings:
- * Philip Gordon, "Bridging the Atlantic Divide," *Foreign Affairs* (January/ February 2003). Electronic reserve.
 - * Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review* (June 2002). Electronic reserve.

Part III: The Politics of Post-Communist and Developing Countries

March 14 and 16: China, Modernization, and Democratization (Annotated Bibliography Due 3/16)

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, pp. 171-183, and ch. 5.
- Theoretical Readings: * Seymour Martin Lipset, 'Economic Development and Democracy,' in *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1960). Electronic reserve.
* Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* (1993). Electronic reserve.

March 21: Russia and Democratic Consolidation

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 4.
- Theoretical Readings: * Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: South Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1996), chs. 2-3.

March 23: Review #2 (in class)

March 28 and 30: Egypt and the Problem of Illiberal Democracy

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 4.
- Theoretical Readings: * Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, all.

April 4: Mexico and the Challenges of Economic Development

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 6.
- Theoretical Readings: * Robin Broad, John Cavanaugh, and Walden Bello, "Development: The Market is Not Enough," *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1990/ 1991). Electronic reserve.
* Joseph Stiglitz and Lyn Squire, "International Development: Is it Possible?" *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1998). Electronic reserve.

April 6: India and Globalization

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 7
- Theoretical Readings: * Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), excerpts. Electronic reserve.
* "Dueling Globalizations," *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1999). Electronic reserve.

April 11: Nigeria and State-making

- Case Readings: * McCormick, *Comparative Politics in Transition*, ch. 8.
- Theoretical Readings: * Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), excerpts. Electronic reserve.
* Mohammed Ayoob, *Third World Security Predicament*, excerpts. Electronic reserve.

April 13: Somalia and State Failure

Case Readings: * Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* (March/ April 1996).

Theoretical Readings: * Robert Rotberg, ed., *Failed States, Collapsed States* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2003), excerpts. Electronic reserve.

April 17 - 18: Easter Break (no class)

April 20: Rwanda and the Causes of Ethnic Conflict

Case Readings: * Alan Kuperman, "Rwanda in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* (January/ February 2000).

Theoretical Readings: * Michael E. Brown, "Introduction," in Brown, ed., *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge: MIT, 1996). Electronic reserve.
* John Mueller, "The Banality of Ethnic War," *International Security* (Summer 2000). Electronic reserve.

April 25: Iraq: Designing a Democracy

Readings: * Daniel Byman, "Constructing a Democratic Iraq: Challenges and Opportunities," *International Security* (Summer 2003). Electronic reserve.
* Brendan O'Leary, "Knitter's Nightmare." Electronic reserve.

April 27 and May 2: Optional classes (if needed)

* *Research Paper Due at 5:00 p.m. on May 2*

May 4: Reading Day

May 5-10: Final Exam Week

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Appendix A: Research Paper Guidelines

Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret to style.

Matthew Arnold

A recurring question in the field of comparative politics is why states attempt to solve similar social, economic, or political problems in divergent ways. Although most governments hope to encourage sustained economic growth, for example, they may adopt markedly different strategies to accomplish this goal; some governments actively encourage the expansion of certain industries, while others avoid intervening in the market.

Your research paper, therefore, is to be a well-organized, carefully researched, thoughtful comparative analysis explaining why two countries responded to a common social, economic, or political challenge by adopting different policies.

In your paper, you are expected to:

1. Clearly identify the problem each government is attempting to address (e.g., health care, unemployment, education, economic growth, immigration, etc);
2. Identify how the policies the governments chose to implement differ (and are similar); and
3. Explain why the governments adopted different public policies in response to the same social/economic/political challenge.

You are being asked to think about whether/how the political institutions, political party systems, domestic interest groups, public's preferences, political culture, etc. differ in the countries you choose to study and whether/how these differences might have prompted their governments to adopt different policies. My advice is to emulate success: use Derek Bok's analysis as a guide for how to conduct a cogent analysis of variations in public policy across several states.

When selecting the countries or policies that you wish to study, be mindful of the fact that the information necessary to write a well-researched paper is not equally available for all countries/policies. A relatively brief time spent in the library will tell you whether you will be able to find sufficient sources to produce a quality piece of research—and it will save you countless hours of anxiety later in the semester.

Deadlines:

* Paper Proposal: Due February 16, in class.

Submit a brief description of your chosen paper topic, identifying which countries and policy you intend to study and how you intend to evaluate the relative success of that policy in each country. Justify your case selection, explaining why you think that the chosen countries are appropriate for a comparative study of the policy in which you are interested. You are welcome (encouraged) to show me outlines or partial drafts at any time during the semester to get further advice.

* Annotated Bibliography: Due March 16, in class.

Submit a bibliography that includes all of the sources you have found and intend to use to write your paper. It need not be a final bibliography, but it should be a thorough one; by this date, you should be close to completing your

research. You are asked to provide a brief explanation (a sentence or two) of how you think each source will help you conduct your research. Also, please include a description of your paper topic at the beginning of the bibliography.

* Research Paper: Due May 2 at 5:00 p.m.

Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e., the grade for a paper that is one day late will be lowered, for example, from an A- to a B+).

Evaluation:

Evaluation of the paper will be based on:

* Thoroughness of research

You should be drawing on and citing a wide range of the best and most reliable sources. Be sure to begin your research early. Relying exclusively on the library's search engine to locate articles or books is a mistake, as it usually identifies only a fraction of the available sources. Excellent research requires no small amount of detective work to find the most appropriate and up-to-date sources. If you find one particularly useful article, use its bibliography to track down other sources. Note that you are not only looking for relevant books. There are many potentially useful sources of information: academic (peer-reviewed) journals, policy journals (e.g. *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *National Interest*); chapters in edited books, reports from international and non-governmental organizations (e.g., IMF, UN, World Bank), and news and magazine periodicals. The excellent staff at the library will help you find ways to search these sources (e.g., Lexus-Nexus, JSTOR, etc.).

* Quality of Analysis

Make sure your paper is not merely descriptive, but rather engages in thoughtful and critical analysis. A simple description of the processes that produced the policies you are studying is inadequate. A successful paper will offer an insightful analysis of the central factor(s) and processes that resulted in the chosen policies, integrating relevant theories and concepts and a reasoned evaluation of their relative merits.

* Quality of Writing and Organization

Write with clarity: be concise and avoid jargon. Begin each paragraph with a thesis sentence and support your arguments with evidence. Pay particular attention to organization. The paper should be organized logically, so that ideas and arguments flow from one to the next. Proofread for misspellings, grammatical errors, awkward sentences, and so on. Remember that an excellent paper is usually the product of several redrafts. Even the most skilled writers need to polish their prose.

Length, format:

The paper should be 10-12 pages in length, not including the bibliography (which does not need to be annotated). It should be typed, double-spaced, and a standard 12 point font. Please number your pages and be certain that your paper is stapled before you hand it in. *No electronic copies will be accepted.*

Citations:

You must cite any information or ideas that you borrow from someone else's work (when in doubt, cite). Any social science citation style is acceptable as long as it is used correctly and consistently. Include a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You will be able to find a number of guides in the reference section of the library, describing how to correctly format footnotes and the bibliography. While I prefer footnotes to parenthetical notes, you may use the citation style with which you are the most familiar. If you have any questions about whether or how to properly cite material, please ask me for guidance.