Course Overview
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to major concepts and ideas in the field of comparative politics. To this end, the course takes a country-oriented approach whereby we will examine the many possibilities for governmental structure and political institutions. Because we simply cannot understand where we are without knowing from whence we come, the political histories and cultures of each country will be considered, as well. The course intends to draw a deeper understanding of the histories, cultures, and political institutions that shape the prominent actors on the world stage today.

Requirements
This course requires participation both in and out of the classroom. This means that students are expected to read the material prior to class and be able to contribute to class discussions with meaningful questions and serious inquiries. Participation will be tested periodically throughout the semester with random quizzes that will reflect the required readings for that day. Additionally, students are expected to contribute their ideas, perspectives, and opinions in order to create lively classroom discussions. Through the reading assignments and in-class discussion it is expected that students will learn not only the material at hand, but also how to discuss it in a dynamic setting with various viewpoints and considerations.

Students are expected to complete all of the required readings. It is suggested that if the material is not clear upon first reading that students address any particular areas of confusion with in-class questions and discussion. If the material is still unclear after lecture and discussion, students are strongly encouraged to reread the text. If the material is still unclear or students have any questions not covered in class, please make a point to contact me via email or during office hours. As the semester progresses, students will be expected to draw upon past readings in order to engage in comparative analysis. If there is not an adequate foundation of understanding, the semester will get increasingly burdensome.

There will be a mid-term and a final exam, each worth 30%. Both exams will be cumulative and will consist of multiple-choice questions and three short answer responses that will be completed in-class. In addition, one week prior to the date of the in-class exam students will receive two prompts, from which they will choose one, to write an out-of-class essay which will be due on the day of the in-class portion of the exam. The essay portion of the exams are designed to allow students to display in a comprehensive, thorough manner not only the material learned, but also the way in which the various ideas, concepts, and cases compare with one another. In this manner, the essay allows students to broaden the scope with which ideas are considered. The in-class portion of the exam is more general and broad, and is
intended to solidify a working knowledge of the important themes, concepts and ideas of comparative politics.

There will also be a current events project, worth 30% of the final grade. This is an opportunity to engage a particular current event that is interesting to you. In a nutshell, students will follow the event of their choice by collecting news articles from both domestic and international sources. From these sources, they will write weekly summaries and provide a critical analysis of their own. At the end of the semester they should have enough information collected to construct a timeline of events. Before choosing a topic, students must speak with me to ensure that what they propose is appropriate for the assignment. More details on this assignment will be provided on a separate handout.

Students should familiarize themselves with the university policies regarding cheating and plagiarism as they will be strictly enforced. Think for yourself and do it to the best of your ability.

**General Education Credit:**
This course can be applied towards completion of the General Education requirement for courses in the Social Sciences. The LSU catalogue describes General Education courses in the following way: “In courses designated as general education, students begin a process of developing competencies or essential learning outcomes which continues through their study in upper-level elective courses and courses in the major field of study.” Further, “in general education courses, students begin the development of the essential learning outcomes, which are refined and focused in disciplinary courses taken during the junior and senior years, with the intention that all graduates, regardless of major, will develop a set of intellectual abilities, a degree of sophistication, and a civic-minded perspective that correspond to the high level of functionality represented in the outcomes taken as a whole.” I encourage all students to keep these goals in mind throughout the course. Many of these thoughts form the basis for the study of comparative politics, and they are essential to a well-rounded education.

**Grades**
Class participation: 10%
Current Events Project: 30%
Midterm Exam: 30%
Final Exam: 30%

**Attendance**
According to the University’s Attendance Policy, students are expected to attend ALL classes barring exceptional cases and documented illness. In the event that a class is not attended it is the student’s responsibility to contact the professor via email on the day of the absence or as soon thereafter as possible. Absences are excused with documentation for serious illness, injury or critical personal problems. These must be addressed with the instructor at the time of occurrence. Excessive absence, defined as 4 or more absences without a satisfactory excuse, will result in the loss of 10 points, or one letter grade. Absences that are in excess of 7 will result in the loss of 20 points, or 2 letter grades. Any student who fails to attend 10 or more classes will automatically fail the course.

**Academic Integrity**
You are bound by the University’s statement on academic integrity. As per the university, “Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student... (Sec. 5.1, C. of the LSU Code of Student Conduct).”
For more specifics, see: http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/AI.htm
Disability Services
According to the University's General Catalogue, "The Office of Disability Services assists students in identifying and developing accommodations and services to help over-come barriers to the achievement of personal and academic goals. Services are provided for students with temporary or permanent disabilities. Accommodations and services are based on the individual student's disability-based need. Students must provide current documentation of their disabilities. Students should contact the office early so that necessary accommodations can be arranged."
For more specifics, see http://disability.lsu.edu/

Reading Material
There are two required texts for this course; both can be found at the university bookstore or online.

Charles Hauss and Melissa Haussman, Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges (8th Edition) (Hereafter, CP)


Additional readings will be provided for students and made available on Blackboard. All additional readings are marked by three asterisks (*** in the weekly calendar. Students are encouraged to print the readings, as they will be useful for in-class reference.

(Note: The following schedule is tentative. This means that certain topics may take more or less time to cover depending on the interests of the students. For this reason, please be sure to come to class and read any emails or Blackboard messages so that you can be sure of what we will be covering!)

Week 1: January 14 – 18
1. Introduction to the course, presentation of objectives and requirements
2. What is Comparative Politics?
   a. Chapter 1, CP
   b. "The Science In Social Science" by King, Keohane, and Verba***
   c. "Politics as Vocation" by Max Weber***

Week 2: January 21 – 25
1. The Industrialized Democracies
   a. Chapter 3, CP
   b. "What Democracy Is . . . And Is Not" by Schmitter and Karl***
2. The United States: History, Institutions, and Culture
   a. Chapter 3, CP
   b. Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights***

Week 3: January 28 – February 1
1. The United States: History, Institutions, and Culture, cont.
2. The United Kingdom: History, Institutions, and Culture
   a. Chapter 4, CP
   b. Magna Carta***
   c. Excerpts from "Patterns of Democracy" by Arend Lijphart***

Week 4: February 4 – 8
1. The United Kingdom: History, Institutions, and Culture, cont.
2. France: History and Institutions  
   a. Chapter 5, CP

**Week 5: February 11 - 15**
1. February 12 – No class due to Mardi Gras Holiday
2. February 14 – Class cancelled

**Week 6: February 18 - 22**
1. France: History and Institutions, cont,  
2. France: Political Culture  
   a. "The Other Side of the Veil: Muslim Women Respond to the Headscarf Affair"  
      by Caitlin Killian***
3. Germany: History, Institutions, and Culture  
   a. Chapter 6, CP

**Week 7: February 25 - March 1**
1. February 26 – Receive midterm exam essay prompts  
2. Germany: History, Institutions, and Culture, cont.  
3. February 28 – Midterm Review

**Week 8: March 4 – 8**
1. March 5 – Midterm Exam  
2. Communist Regimes  
   a. Chapter 8, CP

**Week 9: March 11 – 15**
1. Russia: History, Institutions, and Culture  
   a. Chapter 9, CP

**Week 10: March 18 – 22**
1. China: History, Institutions, and Culture  
   a. Chapter 10, CP  
2. Comparing Historical Revolutions  
   a. "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions" by Theda Skocpol***

**Week 11: March 25 – 29**
1. Politics in the Middle East  
   a. Introduction, GPME  
   b. “Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies” by Jack Goldstone***  
   c. “The Arab Spring in 2012” by Bauer and Schiller***  
   d. “After the Arab Spring” by Zahra Babar***

**Week 12: April 1 – 5**
No classes due to Spring Break

**Week 13: April 8 – 12**
1. Iran: History, Institutions, and Culture  
   a. Chapter 3, GPME  
   b. “What Happens When Islamists Take Power” by Elmer Swenson***
Week 14: April 15 – 19
1. Egypt: History, Institutions, and Culture
   a. Chapter 13, GPME
   b. “Suez: The Canal Before the Crisis” by Steve Morewood***
   c. “Revolutionary Egypt: Promises and Perils” by Ewan Stein***
   d. Letter from Egyptian Friend***

Week 15: April 22 – 26
1. Israel: History, Institutions, and Culture
   a. Chapter 11, GPME
   b. “Zionism Reconsidered” by Hannah Arendt***

Week 16: April 29 – May 3
1. April 30 – Israel, cont.
2. May 2 – Last day of class, Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 8, 12:30-2:30pm