Poli 2053-002  
Introduction to Comparative Politics  
Fall 2008  
Wednesday 5:00-8:00  241 Himes

Instructor: Dr. Harry M. Mokeba  
Office:  209 Stubbs Hall  
Phone:  578-2143  
Office Hours: MWF  9:30-10:30  
MWF  11:30-12:30  
MW  3:00-5:00

Objective: The course is designed to provide students with the tools necessary for examining politics across the countries of the world. In particular, we will provide a foundation for understanding the concepts on which political systems operate, the forces that account for change and continuity and the basis for comparing political performance in the first, second and third worlds.

It is expected that by the end of the semester, students must have developed the analytical skills for explaining the differences and similarities existing in the select countries discussed in class.

Books: There is one major text required for this course.

Almond and Powell: Comparative Politics Today: A Worldview  

You are also required to read assigned articles from the New York Times for the multiple choice tests and the two-country paper.

Student Responsibility: You are required to attend all class sessions and keep up with reading assignments in order to enhance your ability to participate in class discussions. There is a grade for class participation.

Examinations, Paper, and Grades: There will be an early take home exam, an in-class midterm exam, a brief comparative survey of recent events in TWO countries (not discussed in lectures) of your choice and a take-home final. Details of these assignments will be determined according to this formula.

Class Participation  10 pts.  
Early Exam (take home)  10 pts. (Sept. 10)  
Midterm Exam (in class) 20 pts. (Oct. 15)  
Two Country paper  10 pts. (Nov. 21)  
Multiple Choice Tests  10 pts. (Oct. 15 & Dec. 03)  
Final (take home)  40 pts. (Dec. 05: By NOON, 209 Stubbs Hall)  
100 pts.

A: 100-88  B: 87.9-78;  C: 77.9-68;  D: 67.9-60;  F: Below 60
Lecture Outline and Reading Assignments

Aug. 27
Course Intro: The Study of Politics
The Value of Comparative Politics
Comparative Methods and Problems; Almond & Powell, Chapter 1

Sept. 03
Characteristics of Political Systems:
Defined by their Context
Driven By Constitutions and Ideologies
Sustained by their Economies; Almond & Powell, Chapter 2 & 3

Sept. 10
Return Take Home
Institutional Approach
Legislature, Executive, Judiciary
Interest Groups, Political Parties and Individuals
Almond & Powell, Chapter 4, 5, 6, & 7

Sept. 17 – Oct. 08
Politics in Capitalist Democracies:
Their Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes
Great Britain - Chapter 8  France - Chapter 9
Germany - Chapter 10  Japan - Chapter 11

Oct. 15
Midterm Exam (In Class)
Also first NYT multiple choice test

Overview of Communism and the Third World

Oct. 22-27
Transition from Communism: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attributes
Russia: Chapter 12
China: Chapter 13

Nov. 05-19
Developing countries: Historical Basis and Contemporary Attribute
India: Chapter 17
Mexico: Chapter 14
Iran/Nigeria: Chapter 16 & 18

Nov. 21
Two-Country Survey of Recent Events Due!
Give Out Take Home Final

Dec. 03
Course Evaluation/initial NYT Multiple Choice Test
Review Session
Return Papers and Pre-Final Grades

Dec. 05
Return Take Home Final By NOON (209 Stubbs Hall)