
Political Science 2053
Introduction to Comparative Politics

Prof Wm A Clark
213 Stubbs Hall
poclark@lsu.edu

Summer 2009
103 Design

Course Description

This course is a lower-level undergraduate course that seeks to provide an introduction to that sub-field of political science referred to as comparative politics. This sub-field focuses much of its attention on the organization of domestic politics in comparative perspective, with special emphasis on comparative institutional arrangements.

Course Requirements

Students are required to attend all class sessions, to stay current on the assigned readings, to participate in class discussions, to sit for two examinations, and to write a short research paper. Each examination is equally weighted at 35 percent of the class grade, and will be based on a combination of the assigned readings and in-class lecture material. The paper is weighted at 25 percent of the course grade, and the final 5 percent of the grade will be determined by the students' contributions to in-class discussions.

Texts

The main text for the class is:

Kenneth Newton and Jan W. van Deth (2005). Foundations of Comparative Politics: Democracies of the Modern World (Cambridge University Press).

Paper

Each student should prepare a short research paper that investigates a particular political development in a country of interest. The specific topic should be approved in advance by the instructor. Papers should be 5-7 typed, double-spaced pages of text, using normal fonts and margins. Whatever materials that are used in the paper should be cited and all sources should be listed on a separate page at the end of the paper. Your textbook for the course should not be a major source for the paper. The USA may not be the geographical focus of the paper. E-mail to the instructor on or before Friday, July 31.

Syllabus of Topics & Readings

Day	Date	Class #	Topic	Readings
M	June 29	1	The State	1-16; 22-37
Tu	June 30	2	Constitutions 1	39-53
W	July 1	3	Constitutions 2	
Th	July 2	4	Presidential Regimes 1	61-63; 66-71
F	July 3	--	no class – holiday	
M	July 6	5	Presidential Regimes 2	
Tu	July 7	6	Parliamentary Regimes 1	63-65; 66-71
W	July 8	7	Parliamentary Regimes 2	
Th	July 9	8	Semi-Presidential Regimes 1	65-66; 66-71
F	July 9	9	Semi-Presidential Regimes 2	
M	July 13	10	Unitary Systems	72-78
Tu	July 14	11	Federal Systems	78-86
W	July 15	12	Confederacies	74-76; 92-94
Th	July 16	13	Examination #1	
F	July 17	14	Executive & Cabinets 1	100-106
M	July 20	15	Executives & Cabinets 2	
Tu	July 21	16	Legislatures 1	106-111
W	July 22	17	Legislatures 2	
Th	July 23	18	Voters & Elections 1	200-220
F	July 24	19	Voters & Elections 2	
M	July 27	20	Political Party Systems 1	221-237
Tu	July 28	21	Political Party Systems 2	
W	July 29	22	Ideologies 1	241-256; 259-26
Th	July 30	23	Ideologies 2	
F	July 31	24	Review – Papers Due	
S	Aug 1	25	Examination #2	