

GOVERNMENT 280—Introduction to Comparative Politics

Winter Semester 2009

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Office Hours Before classes from 08:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. ...and anytime else I'm around			

Course Goals and Format

This introductory course in comparative politics will introduce students to the evaluation of institutions, regimes and major actors' norms, values and behaviors in a variety of societies. Through comparing and contrasting these factors in western, communist and post-communist, and developing states, the course will help students derive standards of analysis, evaluation and explanation that enhance their descriptive and predictive capabilities. By employing critical research, analytical and writing skills, students will have opportunities for self expression in a variety of venues from writing formal papers to discussing scholarly themes and views during class discussions.

Course Texts:

Dahl, Robert *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, 1972.
Huntington, Samuel. *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 2006.
O'Neil, Fields and Share, *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 2006.
Aron, Raymond, *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, vols. 1 and 2 (also on electronic reserve at McKeldin).

There will be additional readings available electronically through the University of Maryland Research Port, the McKeldin Library course reserves, and Blackboard <http://elms.umd.edu>.

Requirements and Grading

The quizzes, exams and written assignments for the course, due dates, and their proportion of the final course grade are as follows:

- 1. Daily quizzes** – 20%. I will be giving quizzes at the beginning of class meetings on 8 out of 11 of our class sessions. (I will not give the quizzes on the first class session and the dates

of the mid-term and final exams.) I will allow you to drop the two lowest scores of the 8 for a composite score of six quizzes.

2. A research paper (about 5-8 pages, double-spaced, 12-point) essay on a topic chosen for the class by the instructor (20%). A one page statement of your paper topic and a preliminary bibliography are due no later than Thursday, January 8th. The papers will be due no later than Wednesday, January 21.

3. A mid-term exam – 20% - January 13. I encourage you to form a study group to prepare for the mid-term and final exam.

4. A final exam – 20 % -- January 22.

5. Movie Reviews – 20%. We will be viewing two movies that illustrate key concepts of this course– *Indochine* and *Kolya*, You will be given two written assignments related to these movies; each assignment will be worth 10%. The first assignment will be a review of the movie *Indochine*, which we will see on the first day of class. The second assignment will be a comparison of the two revolutions portrayed in these movies.

Your grade will be computed as follows:

90-100: A

80-89: B

70-79: C

60-69: D

<60: F

Course Responsibilities and Expectations

I provide this list of responsibilities and expectations to students in all my courses. **In this compressed winter semester when time is not our ally, I encourage absolute discipline in meeting the attendance and deadlines imposed in this syllabus.** I have found that it is helpful to be clear about these matters at the beginning of a course in order to avoid misunderstandings later on. If you have any questions about any of these points, I'd be happy to talk with you.

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected of all students enrolled in this course. The nature of the winter semester where we will be covering a week's worth of reading in one day demands an accelerated reading schedule. I am aware that illnesses due occur so I have embedded flexibility into the pop quizzes by only counting six of the eight you will be taking. In other words, you will get a free pass on two of the quizzes. Be advised that the quizzes are intended to facilitate your pacing yourselves through this large volume of material as well as prepare you for the exams. It will be in your interest to take all of the quizzes.

Inclement Weather It is expected that students will allow for the vagaries of inclement weather in this compressed winter schedule by being as disciplined as possible in completing their course requirements and anticipating disruptions due to the weather. In the event of inclement weather, the University will announce closings and delays at the campus website (<http://www.umd.edu>) and over the snow phone line (301-405-SNOW). In the event that this class is cancelled due to the closure of the university or the inability of the instructor to make it to class, instructions for rescheduling the class, completing make-up assignments or taking exams will be transmitted via e-mail. **It is incumbent upon every student to supply me with an up-to-date e-mail address; this e-mail address will be solicited on the first day of class.**

Physical accommodations: Please inform the instructor within the first week of the course of any physical or mental learning style that warrants accommodation.

Arrivals and Departures: I will be giving the quizzes at the beginning of each class session. Please arrive on time for class. If you are repeatedly late, I will ask you to withdraw from the course. If you have to leave class early for any reason other than an emergency (i. e. sudden illness), please let me know in advance that you will be leaving. Otherwise, I expect everyone to stay for the full time of the class meeting.

Reading Assignments: It is my expectation that students will do all of the assigned readings unless I explicitly mention in class that a particular reading is no longer required. All of the assigned reading is "fair game" for exams and quizzes, even if a particular reading is not discussed in class, although it is fair to assume that readings that are both assigned and discussed are particularly important.

Late Papers: Papers or other assignments handed in after the due date will be penalized as specified on the assignment instructions.

Cell Phones: PLEASE BE SURE TO TURN THEM OFF BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS.

Plagiarism: Avoid plagiarism in completing your assignments. Be sure that you are familiar with and understand University expectations and rules concerning the proper use of sources. Familiarize yourself with the University of Maryland Student Honor Council's Code of Academic Integrity <http://studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html>. Please pay close attention definitions of 'academic dishonesty', 'responsibilities to report academic dishonesty', and the 'honor pledge'.

Please pay particular attention to proper versus improper *paraphrasing* of material that you consult--even when you cite the source. If you have any questions about how to note or utilize your sources, please see me. I highly recommend the following book: *Doing Honest Work in College* (University of Chicago Press, 2004). You might consider buying a copy (it's only \$8.43); since I think you would find it useful throughout your college career.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND READING SCHEDULE

(All reading assignments will be testable material on the days they are listed)

1/5: INTRODUCTION – WHY STUDY COMPARATIVE POLITICS, ESSENTIAL MARX

Aron, volume I, sections I-IV on Karl Marx (also on McKeldin electronic reserve under ‘Karl Marx’).

1/6 – MARX’S LEGACY AND ESSENTIAL WEBER

Aron, Main Currents in Sociological Thought, volume I sections V-VI on Marx and volume II on Max Weber (also on McKeldin electronic reserve).

The Economist, Cultural Explanations: The Man in the Baghdad Café,”

<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.umresearchport.umd.edu/>

1/7 – INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF THE STATE; DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

O’Neil et. al. pp. 2-11.

Dahl, Polyarchy 1-47.

Gabriel Almond. “Capitalism and Democracy,” *Political Science and Politics*. September 1991

Fukayama, Francis. “The Imperative of State Building,” *Journal of Democracy*, April 2004. at

<http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu>

Hamilton and Madison. Federalist Papers nos. 10 and 51. Available online at Yale Law School Avalon Project or through the University of Virginia ebooks.

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/fed.asp

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ebooks/pdf/HMJFedr.pdf>

King, “*Ideas, Institutions and the Policies of Governments: a Comparative Analysis*,” British Journal of Political Science. Parts 1 &2 (Vol. 3) pp 291-313. and Part 3 (Vol. 3), pp 409-423. (Electronic Reserve or JSTOR).

1/8 LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES COMPARED – BRITAIN AND FRANCE

Title for Research Paper Due

O’Neil, et. al. on UK. Ch. 2 (up to p. 96), United States ch 3 (up to 96), and France, ch 4 (up to p. 136).

Studlar. “Unwritten Rules, Britain’s Constitutional Revolution” Harvard International Review,

21:2 (1999) at <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.um.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx>

“Why the System Favours Labour,” *The Economist*, April 9, 2005.

Andrews, John. “A Divided Self: A Survey of France,” The Economist November 16, 2002.

Ford, Peter. “French Inch Toward Social Reform,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 27, 2005.

1/12 COMMUNISM AND POST-COMMUNIST WORLDS

Feedback on Research Paper Topics

O’Neil, et. al. on Russia, Ch. 6 (up to p. 203).

O’Neil, et. al. on China, Ch. 7 (up to p. 243).

Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?"

Malia, - *THE SOVIET TRAGEDY – A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991. The Perverse Logic of Utopia* (pp 491-520).

Moser, Robert G. "Electoral Systems and the Number of Parties in Postcommunist States" *World Politics* 51.3 (1999) 359-384. Available through Muse – http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/world_politics/v051/51.3moser.html

1/13 – MID-TERM EXAM

1/14 REFORMING SOCIALISM WITHOUT REVOLUTION, CHINA; THE SECOND RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Guthrie, Doug. "China: The Quiet Revolution," *Harvard International Review*, Summer, 2003. O'Neil, et. al. on Russia. Ch. 6 (pp. 203-229).

Tismaneanu, ed. *BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE, The Revolutions of 1989 and Their Aftermath*. Chapter 8 Postsocialisms, and Chapter 9, Fighting for the Public Sphere: Democratic Intellectuals under Postcommunism.

Fogelson, David and Gordon M. Hahan. "10 Myths About Russia." *Problems of Post Communism*. Nov-Dec. 2002.

Colton, Timothy, and Michael McFaul. "Russian Democracy Under Putin", *Problems of Post Communism* July/August 2003.

"Putin's Way," *The Economist* December 13, 2003.

Henry Chu, "In March Toward Capitalism, China Has Avoided Russia's Path." *Los Angeles Times*. September 16, 1998.

Knox, Zoe and Pete Lentini and Brad Williams. "Parties of Power, Russian Politics: A Victory of the State over Civil Society" *Problems of Post Communism*. Jan-Feb 2006.

Movie: The Movie KOLYA

Homework Assignment – Write an analytical paper comparing the movies *INDOCHINE* and *KOLYA*

1/15 DOES MODERNITY EQUAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT?

Huntington – *Political Order in Changing Societies* pp. 1092; 140-147; 177-198 and 264-308; 344-369; 397-438.

Carothers, "Democracy's Sobering State." *Current History*. December, 2004.

Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, "Middle East Democracy," *Foreign Policy*. November-December 2004.

Collier, *THE BOTTOM BILLION, Chapter 1*.

1/19-1/20 NO CLASSES – FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

1/21 – THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN AFRICA – MEXICO AND THE EVOLUTION OF A ONE-PARTY DOMINANT STATE

O'Neil et. al. on Nigeria, Ch. 13.

Okonta, Ike. "Nigeria: Chronicle of a Dying State." Current History, May 2005.

Junger, Sebastian. "Blood Oil" Vanity Fair. January, 2007.

Baer, M. Delal "Mexico at an Impasse," Foreign Affairs - January-February 2004.

Dresser, Denise. "Fox's Mexico: Democracy Paralyzed," Current History. February, 2005.

1/22 FINAL EXAM