

Political Science 11
T Th 11:00 - 1:50
Professor Kaare W. Strøm
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Summer Session II, 2013
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INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Objectives and Approach

This course is an introduction to comparative politics, a field of political science that involves cross-national analysis and area studies of politics in other countries. The course is designed around the issues of democracy and political development. It has two major objectives: (1) to teach students to think about politics in systematic and comparative terms, and (2) to foster some knowledge and understanding of the politics of three selected countries: Great Britain, Russia, and Nigeria. The readings, lectures, and sections will in large part focus on these countries. We shall examine each country's social background and political history, the behavior of citizens and groups, how political institutions operate, and the policy challenges each nation faces.

Course Assignments and Grading

Assignments include an in-class quiz with short identification questions, a midterm examination, and a comprehensive final examination. Class attendance is required, and you will be responsible for all lecture materials. The in-class exams will include both objective and essay questions. For students whose midterm grade is better than their quiz grade, the quiz grade will be dropped, and the midterm grade will count for 50%, before any adjustment for participation (see below). In the opposite case, the distribution will be: quiz 25%, midterm 25%, and final exam 50%. Finally, course grades may be adjusted up to 10%, *upward or downward*, for class participation and contributions. Students who fail to complete the midterm and/or the final examination will not pass the course. Extensions, incompletes, or make-up exams will be given only in *exceptionally pressing cases* and in accordance with UCSD policy. Petitions must be *timely and properly documented*.

Academic Honesty

Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any violation is a very serious matter. UCSD rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Note especially the strict prohibition against plagiarism, i.e., submitting as your own or without proper attribution work done wholly or in part by another person. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments, as well as borrowing without proper attribution from published or unpublished sources (including papers you have prepared for other courses). Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person is permitted. In-class tests will be *closed-book*, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced. Any academic dishonesty will without exception be reported to the UCSD Office of Academic Integrity.

Books and Materials

The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore. Avoid old and out-of-date editions. All readings below are required and will be placed on Library reserve.

- G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strøm, eds., *Comparative Politics Today*. 10th edition. New York: Longman, 2012 (hereafter: Powell).
- Claire Berlinski, "*There is No Alternative*": *Why Margaret Thatcher Matters*. New York: Basic Books, 2008.
- Steven Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*. Updated edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Robert Guest, *The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption, and African Lives*. Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2010.

Calendar

Generally, there will be two class meetings per week. Attendance is required and you should be prepared to discuss the materials assigned up through that date. The quiz will be administered in class on August 15 and the midterm has been tentatively scheduled for August 22. The final exam will be given on Saturday, September 7, between 11:30 and 2:29, location TBA. All dates and assignments are subject to change, as announced in class.

COURSE OUTLINE

August 6-13: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICS

Readings: Powell, chs. 1-7.

Class Schedule:

August 6: What Is Comparative Politics? States, Nations, and Governments (Powell, chs. 1-2)
August 8: How Public Policy Is Made and How Political Institutions Shape It (Powell, chs. 6-7)
August 13: Making a Difference: Citizens, Parties and Interest Groups (Powell, chs. 3-5)

August 15-22: THE UNITED KINGDOM

Readings: Powell, ch. 8; Berlinski, chs. 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, and Conclusion.

Class Schedule:

August 15: **QUIZ**; The Old-Fashioned British; Majority Rule (Powell, pp. 151-62; Berlinski, ch. 1)
August 20: Class or Identity Politics? (Powell, pp. 162-81; Berlinski, chs. 3, 5, and 7)
August 22: Britain from Thatcher to Cameron (Powell, pp. 181-95; Berlinski, ch. 10 and Conclusion);
MIDTERM EXAM

August 27-29: RUSSIA

Readings: Powell, ch. 12.; Kotkin, entire; Berlinski, ch. 9.

Class Schedule:

August 27: The Life and Death of Soviet Communism (Powell, pp. 335-342; Kotkin, chs. 1-4; Berlinski, ch. 9)
August 29: Yeltsin to Putin: A New Russian State (Powell, pp. 342-79; Kotkin, chs. 5-7 and Epilogue)

September 3-5: NIGERIA

Readings: Powell, ch. 18; Guest, Introduction, chs. 2-8, and Conclusion.

Class Schedule:

September 3: Nigeria: A Fractured Giant (Powell, pp. 617-37; Guest, Introduction, chs. 2 and 4-5)
September 5: The Trouble with Nigeria (Powell, pp. 637-63; Guest, chs. 3, 6-8, and Conclusion)

September 7: **FINAL EXAMINATION** 11:30 – 2:29 (Location TBA)