

Political Science 11

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Winter Quarter 2011

MW 9:00 - 9:50, plus sections

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INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Objectives and Approach

This course is an introduction to comparative politics, which involves the study of politics in other countries as well as cross-national comparisons. The course will examine issues of democracy and political development and has two major objectives: (1) promoting systematic and comparative thinking about politics, and (2) fostering knowledge and understanding of the politics of three 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, the impact of political institutions, and public policy challenges.

Course Assignments and Grading

Assignments include a brief quiz, an in-class midterm, a relatively short paper on a topic given by the instructor (you will have some choice), and a comprehensive final examination. Class and section attendance is required, and you will be responsible for all lecture materials. In-class tests will include both objective and essay questions. For students whose final exam grades are better than their average for the midterm and paper, the final will count 50% and each of the other two assignments 25%, before adjustment for participation (see below). In the opposite case, each major assignment will count one-third. The quiz will count as part of the midterm. Finally, grades may be adjusted, upward or downward, for section participation and contributions (up to 10% of the final course grade). Students who fail to complete the midterm, the paper, and/or the final examination will not pass the course. Late papers will be penalized. Incompletes or special exams will be given only in situations of *emergency or recognized disability* in accordance with UCSD policy. Petitions must be *timely and properly documented*.

Academic Honesty

Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, which is a fundamental norm in the learning process. UCSD rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Note the strict prohibition against plagiarism: submitting as your own or without proper attribution work done wholly or in part by another person. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course will be *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person permitted. In-class tests will be *closed-book*, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced, and any case of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office.

Books and Materials

The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore. All readings are required and will be placed on Library reserve. Avoid old editions of Almond or Kotkin.

Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strøm, eds., *Comparative Politics Today*. Updated 9th edition. Pearson Longman, 2010 (hereafter: Almond).

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, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004.

Sections

Generally, you will be expected to attend two lectures per week and one section, led by one of the teaching assistants: Chris Dawes (W 10 and 12), Matt Kearney (Th 11 and F 9), and Adam Tyner (F 11 and 1). The TAs will announce their office hours and contact information. **Please make sure to attend the section for which you are registered.**

Calendar

Tentatively, the quiz has been scheduled for January 17, the midterm for February 7, and the paper is due on February 25. The **final exam will be given between 8:00 and 10:59 am on Wednesday, March 16**. All dates and assignments are subject to change by announcement in class.

COURSE OUTLINE

January 3 – 19: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICS

Readings: Almond, chs. 1-7.

Class Schedule:

January 3: Comparative Politics: What and Why? (Almond, chs. 1-2)
January 5: Governments, States and Nations (Almond, chs. 1 and 3)
January 10: Government: Blessing or Pest? Public Policy (Almond, ch. 7)
January 12: Crafting the Ideal Government? Constitutions and Political Institutions (Almond, ch. 6)
January 19: Elections, Political Parties, and Interest Groups (Almond, chs. 4-5); **QUIZ**

January 24 – February 7: THE UNITED KINGDOM

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

Class Schedule:

January 24: The Old-Fashioned British (Almond, pp. 152-63)
January 26: The Westminster Model: Winner Takes All (Almond, pp. 164-82; Berlinski, ch. 1)
January 31: The Politics of Class and Beyond (Almond, pp. 182-93; Berlinski, chs. 3, 5, 7)
February 2: Britain from Thatcher to Cameron (Almond, pp. 193-99; Berlinski, chs. 10 and Conclusion)

February 7: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

February 9 - 23: RUSSIA

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

Class Schedule:

February 9: Russia and the Totalitarian Experience (Almond, pp. 354-60; Kotkin, Introduction and ch. 1)
February 14: How Soviet Communism Died (Almond, pp. 360-62; Kotkin, chs. 2-4; Berlinski, ch. 9)
February 16: Yeltsin: Democracy and Crony Capitalism (Almond, pp. 362-86; Kotkin, chs. 5-7 and Epilogue)
February 23: Putin and Medvedev: Nationalism and a Return to Autocracy? (Almond, pp. 386-99)

February 25: PAPER DUE

February 28 – March 9: NIGERIA

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

Class Schedule:

February 28: Nigeria: An African Giant (Almond, pp. 654-65; Guest, Introduction)
March 2: Social Fractures and the Resource Curse (Almond, pp. 666-76; Guest, ch. 5)
March 7: Between Military Rule and a Fragile Democracy (Almond, pp. 676-93; Guest, chs. 2, 6, and 7)
March 9: The Trouble with Nigeria (Almond, pp. 693-705; Guest, chs. 3-4, 8, and Conclusion)

March 16: FINAL EXAMINATION