

POL 103 COMPARATIVE POLITICS
Fall 2004
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:20-3:40 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Course Description

Most of us are familiar with American politics, but how typical is American Politics? Politics can work in different ways, and to understand what is exceptional and what is general about politics requires a comparative perspective. This course is designed to show students that there are other ways of running politics besides the American way. We will be looking closely at the governments of Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Russia, China and Mexico, examining parliamentary systems, multi-party systems, one-party dominant systems, communist party dominated systems, and systems seeking to establish themselves.

Readings

Required readings for this course are contained in the following book, available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore and at Stony Books.

- Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Jr. Kaare Strom and Russell J. Dalton. 2004. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. 8th Edition. New York: Longman.

It is very important that students stay current with contemporary events and therefore I expect that students read a daily newspaper, preferably *The New York Times*.

Course Requirements

- Required readings, as listed in the schedule below. Key material from readings will be reviewed and elaborated in class.
- Regular attendance. Students who fail to attend lectures regularly **cannot** expect to do well in class. Keep in mind that the lectures do not replicate the textbook readings, but complement them.
- Class participation. Students are expected to actively participate in occasional class discussions. Asking questions and offering informed comments during lectures are also strongly encouraged.
- There will be two midterm exams, and a **cumulative** final exam.

Grades and Evaluation

- Grades will be assigned on the basis of the following: Attendance and participation (10%), two midterm exams (25% each), and a cumulative final exam (40%).

Tentative Reading and Lecture Schedule

August 31: Welcome and Introduction

September 2: I will be in Chicago for American Political Science Association Meetings. No class.

September 7, 9, 14: Great Britain

- Richard Rose. "Politics in England." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 8.

September 16: Rosh Hashanah. No class.

September 21: Great Britain, continued.

September 23, 28, 30, October 5: Germany

- Russell J. Dalton. "Politics in Germany." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 10.

October 7: 1st Midterm Exam: Closed book exam covering Great Britain and Germany.

October 12, 14, 19, 21: Japan

- Frances Rosenbluth and Michael F. Thies. "Politics in Japan." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 11.

October 26, 28, November 2, 4: Russia

- Thomas F. Remington. "Politics in Russia." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 12.

November 9: 2nd Midterm Exam: Closed book exam covering Japan and Russia.

November 11, 16, 18, 23: China

- Melanie Manion. "Politics in China." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 13.

November 25: Happy Thanksgiving!

November 30, December 2, 7: Mexico

- Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon. "Politics in Mexico." Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today*, Chapter 14.

December 9: Catch-up and Final Review.

As scheduled: Cumulative, closed book final exam, covering all the material studied during the semester.

Important Notes:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students requiring emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information <http://www.ehs.sunysb.edu/fire/disabilities.asp>

Make-up exams will only be allowed under very limited and precise conditions of a medical emergency or equivalent documented catastrophes. The student must notify me in advance in writing. If a student cannot do so because of a last-minute emergency, then he/she must notify me or leave a message for me before the end of the exam period. Every student who misses an exam must provide a properly documented, acceptable excuse. Except for special circumstances, this means that there are medical reasons for missing the exam. I will be forced to assign a score of zero for the exam to any student who fails to conform to those rules.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Representing someone else's work as their own or to cheat in any other manner on an exam will be pursued with disciplinary action and will result in an "F" grade for the class.