

PSC 123.001
COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC POLICY (HONORS)
Spring 2002

Class Time: T & Th 1:00-2:20 p.m.
Classroom: 304C Bowne
Office Hrs: T 9-11 a.m.
mboroujerdi@maxwell.syr.edu

Prof. Mehrzad Boroujerdi
Office: 517 Eggers Hall
Office Phone: 443-5877
<http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/mborouje/>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to acquaint you with the different forms of political organization, culture, order, and change around the world. The course structure reflects my belief that studying the contours of nations and states is the most efficacious way to learn about global politics. As such, we will analyze both the normative (value-centered) and empirical (fact-based) aspects of policies and politics prevalent around the globe.

The end of the Cold War has rendered many of our conceptual frameworks obsolete. The common practice of dividing our world into the First World (the Western democracies of Europe, North America, Oceania, and Japan), the Second World (the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China), and the Third World (the "developing" countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America) no longer makes much analytical sense. Since language should not lag behind history, this course adopts a regional approach to the study of comparative politics. Such an approach can more adequately account for the historical, cultural, linguistic, and religious commonalities often found among people inhabiting the same geographical region. As such, to expose you to the whole tapestry of politics in the world today, we will examine a wide spectrum of political and socioeconomic patterns in six major world regions (Western Europe, Slavic Europe, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa).

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

A sage (Karl Jaspers) once said: "University life is no less dependent on students than on professors. The best professors flounder helplessly at a school where the student body is unfit. Hence, it is all up to the young people who are supposedly entitled to study. They must show themselves worthy of this privilege to the best of their ability".

This course has been organized on the premise that you are worthy of this privilege. The success of this course depends entirely on your continued and sustained participation. Therefore, I ask that you be agile participants and intervene as often as possible in class discussion by posing questions and comments or even disagreements (based on additional or alternative readings or personal experiences).

In this course, you will be exposed to a wide range of ideas, norms, preferences, and values different from your own. This exposure may force you to question, rethink (and, if necessary, abandon) your

present "understanding" of global politics. Who knows, by the end of the course you might feel that you have taken part in a serendipitous voyage of discovery!

Please do not hesitate to drop by my office should you have problems with the course, or just want to talk. My office hours provide us with an opportunity to get to know each other better. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you to take advantage of my office hours to pursue interests and concerns not raised in class. Students who may need special consideration because of any sort of disability should make an appointment to see me in private.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Given the fact that my presentations will complement rather than reiterate the assigned readings, it is expected that you attend *all* class meetings. You will be held responsible for the readings as well as lectures on all assignments and examinations. Attendance is also mandatory for all exams, and make-ups will be given only for bona fide emergencies (severe illness documented by a physician).

Participation: In addition to being physically present, I expect you to be mentally present as well! As such, you should complete all assigned readings *before* each class meeting so that you are familiar with the concepts, facts, theories, and controversies with which we are dealing.

Quizzes: To assess your understanding of the course material and ensure that you are keeping up with the readings, we will administer weekly quizzes consisting of True/False and multiple-choice questions.

Research/Reflection Paper: You are expected to write an 8-10 page, typed, and double-spaced research/reflection paper on a topic of your choice. General topics can be approached from a comparative perspective (two or more cases) or as a case study of one national or regional instance of interest to you. You are also encouraged to explore the historical dimensions of the topic of your choice, if appropriate. But, the emphasis should be on an analysis of the contemporary importance of your topic as well as a prospective assessment of the future. Alternatively, you can write a critical and comparative analysis of two or more scholarly articles, films, or novels. Your paper should clearly indicate that you have done the assigned readings. However, keep in mind that I am not impressed by a constellation of footnotes or virtuous quotations revealing nothing of your own thought. In short, your ideas count! Thus, pay attention to contemplation and use your ingenuity. A sample list of possible paper topics, films, or novels can be provided for those who may need help in developing their own research topics. You must hand in an outline and prospective bibliography to me by *March 19*. I will review the outline and return it to you with comments and suggestions by *March 26*. The final papers are due in class on *April 30*. Late papers will be substantially penalized (one letter grade for each day late). No incomplete will be allowed. Guidelines on how to write the papers will be provided in class.

Exams: You will have two in-class exams in this course.

Living Up the Course: You will be expected to monitor international developments as they occur. Significant problems and events that occur internationally will provide a living laboratory for students of comparative politics. Since these events will help stimulate debate and reflections, they will form an integral part of our lectures, discussions, and exams. To keep abreast of these developments, I recommend that you try to read *The New York Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, or the *Economist* on a regular basis for the duration of the course.

COURSE GRADE

Attendance, Participation, Quizzes	25%
First Exam (Feb. 21)	25%
Second Exam (April 2)	25%
Research/Position Paper (April 30)	25%

REQUIRED TEXTS: (available in Follett's Orange Bookstore in the Marshall Square Mall).

Thomas M. Magstadt, *Nations and Governments: Comparative Politics in Regional Perspective*, 4th edition (New York: Wadsworth, 2001).

Christian S e, *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 01/02*, 19th edition (Guilford, Connecticut: McGraw-Hill, 2001).

Next time use Jennifer Holmes (ed.), *New Approaches to Comparative Politics: Insights from Political Theory*.

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Bob Sutcliffe, *100 Ways of Seeing an Unequal World* (New York: Zed Books, 2001).

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes."

Marcel Proust

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 15: **Introduction - The Nature and Structure of the Course**

Course introduction ; Syllabus Review; Questionnaire; Orientation quiz.

- Jan. 17: **Why, How, and What to Compare? (I)**
Magstadt, ch. 1
- Jan. 22: **Why, How, and What to Compare? (II)**
Magstadt, ch. 2
- Jan. 24: **Democracy and Representation**
AE, articles 23-30
- Jan. 29: **The Lineage of Western Democracies**
Magstadt, ch. 3
- Jan. 31: **The Triumph of Parliaments and Pluralism**
Magstadt, ch. 4 (pp. 112-140)
- Feb. 5: **French and German Political Systems**
Magstadt, ch. 4 (pp. 140-165)
AE, articles 6, 8, 9, 10, 12
- Feb. 7: **European Political Culture and Institutions**
AE, articles 1, 3-4, 14-15
- Feb. 12: **Problems and Prospects for a United Europe**
Magstadt, ch. 4 (pp. 165-172)
AE, articles 18-21, 31-34
- Feb. 14: **Russia and Slavic Europe: The Political Heritage**
Magstadt, ch. 5
- Feb. 19: **From Soviet Union to Russia**
Magstadt, ch. 6 (pp. 219-246)
AE, articles 37-39
- Feb. 21: ***FIRST EXAM***
- Feb. 26: **Central & Eastern Europe**
Magstadt, ch. 6 (pp. 247-274)
AE, articles 35-36
- Feb. 28: **Asia: Civilizations and Empires**
Magstadt, ch. 7

Mar. 5: China's Role in Asia

Magstadt, ch. 8 (pp. 307-334)
AE, articles 45-47

Mar. 7: Two Other Asian Powerhouses: Japan and India

Magstadt, ch. 8 (pp. 334-364)
AE, articles 16-17
Note: Paper outlines are due

Mar. 12 & 14: No classes (*Spring Break*)

Mar. 19: Latin America: The Spanish Conquest and Its Aftermath

Magstadt, ch. 9

Mar. 21: Caudillos, Coups, and Constitutions

Magstadt, ch. 10 (pp. 399-425)
AE, articles 41-42

Mar. 26: Brazil and Economic Crisis in Latin America

Video: Continent on the Move
Magstadt, ch. 10 (pp. 425-441)

Mar. 28: The Population Factor

Video: The Urban Explosion (VC 8581)

Apr. 2: ***SECOND EXAM***

Apr. 4: Middle East: The Imprint of History

Magstadt, ch. 11
Video: Islam: Empire of Faith

Apr. 9: Monarchs, Marshals, and Mullahs as State Builders

Magstadt, ch. 12 (pp. 478-502)

Apr. 11: Egypt and Saudi Arabia

Magstadt, ch. 12 (pp. 503-517)
AE, article 48

Apr. 16: Africa: The Legacy of Colonialism

Magstadt, ch. 13

Apr. 18: Africa and the Economics of Despair

Magstadt, ch. 14 (pp. 548-577)
AE, article 43
Video: *Chiefs and Strongmen* (VC6794)

Apr. 23: Nigeria and South Africa

Magstadt, ch. 14 (pp. 577-597)
AE, article 44

Apr. 25: The Triumph of Democracy or Ethnicity?

AE, articles 49-51
Video: Triumph of Evil

Apr. 30: Cultural Identity and Globalization

AE, articles 22, 40, 52-54
Note: Research/Reflection Papers are due