

**POL 103.02**  
**INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS**  
**Tu – Th 3.50-5.10 pm**  
**Harriman Hall 104**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1.30-2.30 pm, or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the theoretical approaches and problems in the comparative study of politics and government. Specifically, we will study different paths to political development taken by various nations and explore the question of why some nations have experienced democracy, communism or alternative paths to development. We will adopt the problematic but still useful "Three Worlds" classification and survey some of the representative cases of the First World (Britain, Germany, France, Japan), the Second World (Russia and China) and the Third World (Mexico and India) to study the variety of ways that different countries have chosen to shape their political institutions. We will also study how different countries respond to some of the common problems and challenges. We will accomplish this by comparing diverse political ideologies, cultures, institutions, leadership and public policies and how they affect political development and political change. Hopefully, by the end of this course you will have some grounding in:

- 1 Terms and concepts used in comparative political studies.
- 2 Questions that motivate research in the field.
- 3 Methods used to conduct research in comparative politics.
- 4 Theories used to understand and explain the politics of countries around the world.
- 5 The political history, key institutions, political cultures, political parties, interest groups, political issues, public policies, and the major political conflicts of eight political systems: Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Russia, China, India and Mexico.

**Textbook**

Charles Hauss, *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Thompson Wadsworth, 2006).

The book is available for purchase at the University Bookstore and Stony Books.

Our class discussions and lectures will incorporate some of the contemporary developments in world politics. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you stay current with contemporary events and read a daily newspaper. Some suggested web links are:

The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>  
The Financial Times, <http://www.financialtimes.com>  
The Economist, <http://www.economist.com>  
The Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com>  
BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk>  
The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk>

**Course Requirements and Grading**

Your final grades will be based on:

Pop quizzes	10%
2 Midterms	25% each
Final	40%

*Quizzes:* We will have three or four unannounced quizzes (multiple-choice questions). The questions in the quiz will cover the material discussed in the previous classes and will not be a surprise for those who are keeping up to date. I will drop your lowest grade. The best two grades achieved in these quizzes will count for 10% of your final grade (5% each)

*Midterms:* We will have two midterms (multiple-choice) Midterms are not cumulative: The first midterm covers issues from 01/23-02/27, and the second midterm will cover issues from 03/06-04/17. Each midterm will count for 25% of your final grade.

*Final:* We will have a comprehensive, multiple-choice final exam on the date and time announced by the Registrar. The final covers ALL the material covered in the class throughout the semester.

Midterms and the final exam will cover material from readings, lectures, class discussions and film screenings.

### **Extra Credit**

Attendance and participation is essential to your success in this course. I will not be taking any attendance throughout the semester, but I will reward those students who actively participate in class discussions by giving them up to 4 bonus points (to be added to their final grade).

You can also earn 2 extra credits by participating in the experiments conducted in the Political Science department (further information will be given during the semester)

There will be no other extra credit assignments!

### **Make-up Policy**

Make-up exams will only be allowed under very limited conditions of a medical emergency or equivalent. The student must notify me in advance. If a student cannot do so because of a last-minute emergency, he/she must notify me or leave a message for me before the end of the exam period. Students who miss an exam should provide a properly documented, acceptable excuse and contact me to schedule the make-up exam. I will be forced to assign a score of zero for the missed exam if the student fails to conform those rules.

Also note that no "incomplete"s will be given unless you have a properly documented, acceptable excuse.

### **Blackboard**

Our course will extensively make use of the Blackboard system. Course documents, external links, grades as well as announcements about the course will be posted in the Blackboard site.

You can access class information on-line at: <http://blackboard.sunysb.edu>. If you have used Stony Brook's Blackboard system previously, your login information (Username and Password) has not changed. If you have never used Stony Brook's Blackboard system, your initial password is your SOLAR ID# and your username is the same as your Stony Brook (sparky) username, which is generally your first initial and the first 7 letters of your last name. For help or more information see: <http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/helpdesk/docs/blackboard/bbstudent.php>

For problems logging in, go to the helpdesk in the Main Library SINC Site or the Union SINC Site, you can also call: 631-632-9602 or e-mail: [helpme@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:helpme@ic.sunysb.edu)

### **Disability Policy**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, 128 ECC Building (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following web site: <http://www.ehs.sunysb.edu> and search Fire safety and Evacuation and Disabilities

**PRELIMINARY CLASS SCHEDULE**  
(Subject to modifications. Be alert!!!)

January 23 – Introduction: What is comparative politics?

January 25 – The Comparative Method: Why do we compare? How do we compare?  
Hauss, Chapter 1

**PART I: INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRACIES**

January 30, February 1, 6 – Comparing Industrialized Democracies: Institutions, Political Culture and Public Policy  
Hauss, Chapter 2

February 8, 13, 15 – Great Britain  
Hauss, Chapter 4

February 20, 22, 27 – France  
Hauss, Chapter 5

**March 1 – 1st Midterm**

March 6, 8 – Germany  
Hauss, Chapter 6

March 13, 15 - Japan  
Online Chapter: Download from Book Companion Site at  
<http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com/hauss05/>

**PART II: COMMUNIST AND POST-COMMUNIST WORLD**

March 20, 22 – Comparing Communist and Post-Communist Countries: Origins of communism, command economy, and transition to market economics  
Hauss, Chapter 8

March 27, 29 – Russia  
Hauss, Chapter 9

April 10, 12 – China  
Hauss, Chapter 10

**April 17 – 2nd Midterm**

**PART III: DEVELOPING WORLD**

April 19, 24 – Comparing the Developing World: Political economy of development, and democratic transitions  
Hauss, Chapter 11

April 26 – India  
Hauss, Chapter 12

May 1- Mexico  
Hauss, Chapter 16

May 3 – Conclusion  
Hauss, Chapter 17

TBA – Final