

Introduction to Comparative and International Politics (GO 103-001)—Spring 2012

Prof. Ginsberg--TT 9:40-11:00 am—Ladd 307--go103-001-list@skidmore.edu

Office Hours (Ladd 314) M 5:30-7:00 pm, TT 9:00-9:30 am, Tu 11:00 am-noon, W 12:00-2:00 pm,
and by appointment; phone x5245 (rginsber@skidmore.edu)

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Four Quotes Germane to the Course

de Tocqueville: “Without comparison, the mind does not know how to proceed.”

Sodaro: In studying comparative politics, “you truly study yourself in relation to the rest of humanity.”

Confucius: “To learn without thinking is in vain; to think without learning is dangerous.”

Nau: “Learning or knowing anything requires thought and investigation, theory and fact.”

Six Course Objectives

- introduce students to the conceptual foundations and methods of inquiry in two related political science subfields—comparative government and international politics
- enhance student knowledge of different nation-states with focus on political development, political culture, and political institutions
- advance student knowledge of the evolving international order and its major players, issues, and dynamics
- investigate the intersection of comparative and international politics to achieve a more rounded and complete understanding of international affairs
- develop and improve critical thinking, analytical, and writing skills
- prepare students for advanced coursework in government and international affairs

Three Course Requirements

- two exams (20 percent each);
- two five-page think pieces—hard copy only (25 percent each); and
- active participation (10 percent) in discussion of readings; classroom/written exercises; responses to study questions; definitions of key concepts; and strict adherence to class attendance policy

Two Required Texts

Michael J. Sodaro, *Comparative Politics: A Global Introduction*

Henry R. Nau, *Perspectives on International Relations*

Schedule of Lectures, Reading Assignments, and Exams

Part One: Introduction to Comparative Politics (Sodaro Text)

1-24	Introduction to Comparative Politics. Ch. 1
1-26	Major Topics and Methods. Chs. 2-3
1-31	Power and States. Chs. 4-5
2-2	The Problem of Matching Nations with States. Ch. 6
2-7	Values, Institutions, and Electoral Systems in Democracies. Chs. 7-8
2-9	Conditions of Democracy: Afghanistan and Iraq. Chs. 9-10
2-14	Political Participation and Political Culture. Chs. 11-12
2-16	Political Ideology. Ch. 13
2-21	Britain, Ch. 16
2-23	France, Ch. 17
2-28	Germany, Ch. 18

- 3-1 Russia, Ch. 20
- 3-6 China, Ch. 2. First think piece due at start of class.
- 3-8 First Exam

Part Two: Introduction to International Politics (Nau Text)

- 3-20 Theory and History. Intro. and Ch. 1
- 3-22 Theory and History continued. Ch. 2
- 3-27 World War I. Ch. 3
- 3-29 World War II. Ch. 4
- 4-3 Before and During the Cold War. Ch. 5
- 4-5 After the Cold War. Ch. 6
- 4-10 Terrorism. Ch. 7
- 4-12 Globalization in Theory and History. Ch. 8
- 4-17 Globalization in Practice. Ch. 9
- 4-19 Non-State Actors. Ch. 15.
- 4-24 Global Governance. Ch. 16. Second think piece due at start of class.
- 4-26 Conclusions, pp. 514-524
- 5-1 Review Session for Second Exam

Instructions for Assignments

Student Participation

Students are expected to bring the relevant reading to class each day, arrive on time to discuss reading and other assignments, and submit responses to study questions and key concepts as assigned. No unexcused absences are permitted. Missing class before/after Spring break is not an excused absence. Each unexcused absence beyond the first instance will result in a full letter drop in the participation grade. Three or more unexcused absences will result in failure in the course. If students cannot make class, for whatever reason, they are required to let Dr. G. know before the start of class by phone. Since late arrivals to class are disruptive, students must arrive on time. For each late arrival beyond the first two, the student will suffer a half-letter grade drop in the participation grade. Due dates for assignments and scheduled exams, which are detailed in the syllabus, are fixed and cannot be changed. No late submissions of work will be accepted. To anticipate last minute hitches, do not wait until it is too late to print out a document. Students are asked not to send the professor written work by electronic mail.

Exercises

Study Questions. Study questions lend focus to each of the readings. When responding, explain what you mean and use examples to be concrete. Dr. G. may require students either to submit their written responses for evaluation or to come to class prepared to discuss them. Study questions are included in the exams.

Key Concepts. Key concepts are building blocks in students' understanding of comparative and international politics. Dr. G. assigns key concepts for each chapter. For each key concept students should provide a brief definition, offer a date and an example when appropriate, and explain how the concept is relevant to the study of either comparative or international politics. For some key concepts, students will need to distinguish among different categories or types for definition (e.g., nationalism includes such variants as patriotism, chauvinism, and irredentism). Students are more apt to learn, define, and remember key concepts if they first understand the context and significance of those concepts. Students may wish to reserve a section in their notebooks for a glossary or use note cards. Students should find their definitions only in the assigned text or in the lectures (and **not** other non-course sources). Dr. G. may require students either to submit their key concepts for evaluation or to come to class prepared to define key concepts in the course of discussion. Knowledge of key concepts is tested in the exams.

Think pieces offer students an opportunity to write creatively, critically, and analytically about what they have learned. Thus, think pieces entail even more in-depth thought and elucidation of ideas than the study questions found at the end of the chapters. A think piece is not a research paper, but rather a thought-provoking essay that revolves around the support of creative and original ideas. Therefore, citations (numbered endnotes on the sixth page entitled “Endnotes”) should be limited to necessary support of the student’s original ideas. In order to get feedback, students should consult with Dr. G. when selecting a think piece and structuring an argument. Dr. G. makes available for examination excellent think pieces of students from previous years. The Writing Center is a good place to go for critiques of draft papers. Criteria for evaluating excellence in student think pieces include

- cover page (creative title/subtitle to lend focus, garner interest)
- clear introduction that features a provocative argument or theme with a description of the main points around which the piece revolves (to lend focus/clarify structure)
- effective delivery and overall quality of presentation (good transitions/parts relate to whole)
- support of argument in body of piece with illustrative examples
- originality, creativity, and persuasiveness
- spelling and grammar
- page numbers, margins, and paragraphs; stapled paper
- response to query
- accuracy of content
- clear conclusion that links back to the theme and purpose of the piece (for closure)
- adherence to five-page length
- citation page as needed with correct citation format (see Government Dept. writing guide)
- consultation with Dr. G.

First Think Piece Options (due at start of class on 3-6)

- (1) What is an electoral system and why is it important to study in comparative government? What are proportional representation, winner-take-all single member district, and mixed electoral systems and their variants? How do they compare and differ? What are their relative virtues and pitfalls? Which electoral system do you favor and why?
- (2) What model of government would be most appropriate for post-conflict Libya or Egypt in 2012 and why? Be specific and offer explanations as you propose key elements of a draft constitution.
- (3) The syllabus and course began with two germane quotes: de Tocqueville’s “without comparison, the mind does not know how to proceed” and Sodaro’s in studying comparative politics, “you truly study yourself in relation to the rest of humanity.” Interpret the quotes as they relate to the study of comparative politics and make concrete what you write by use of illustrations/examples.

Second Think Piece Options (due at start of class on 4-24)

- (1) In the second half of the course, we focus on how political scientists explain international politics. In consultation with Dr. G., choose any historical or contemporary international political development or event and explain its causes, using together appropriate levels of analysis and theoretical perspectives. Do not choose WWI, WWII, or the Cold War since we are already focusing a lot on the causes of these conflicts.
- (2) We have spent the past fourteen weeks studying the basic concepts, methods, and content of two subfields of political science: comparative politics and international politics. Define these subfields and explain how they together provide a useful framework for understanding a specific topic of international politics of your choice.

Sodaro Key Concepts and Study Questions by Chapter

Concepts (use examples to make concrete what you explain; include types/categories)

Chapters One and Two—comparative and international politics, globalization, democratization, NGOs, democracy, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, theocracy, political ideology, political left and right (include origin)

Chapters Three and Four—comparative method, normative and scientific approach to comparative politics, independent and dependent variables, theory, hypothesis, model

Chapters Five and Six—a state and a sovereign state, a nation and a nation-state, nationalism, failed state, monarchies and republics, unitary, federal and confederal systems, judicial review, heads of government and state

Chapters Eight and Nine—presidential, parliamentary, and mixed political systems, single-member, PR, and mixed electoral systems, coalition government, vote of no confidence, coalition government, democratic transition and consolidation, civil society

Chapters Eleven and Twelve—political party and party system, interest group, political culture, political socialization, social movement

Study Questions (explain your responses and use examples)

Chapter One

- What did Mark Twain mean when he wrote, “The ancients stole our best ideas”?
- Why study CP? What are five advantages of studying comparative politics and why?

Chapter Two

- What are three major differences between democratic and authoritarian regimes?
- What are five major sources of political conflict? Explain each.
- What is the difference between political ideology and theory?

Chapter Three

- What five steps are used to test/verify a hypothesis? Explain each step.
- What are the benefits and pitfalls of a scientific approach to studying comparative politics?
- What did Dr. Sodaro mean when he wrote: “More than anything else, political science is a mode of thinking about politics. It is an academic *discipline* in that it disciplines our minds to think in certain ways, in accordance with a specified logic and systematic methods of analysis?”

Chapter Four

- What is political power?
- What is the difference between dominance and influence?
- Why is the rule of law so important in a democracy?

Chapters Five and Six

- Why in comparative and international politics is it so important to distinguish between a state and a sovereign state and a state and a nation?
- What did Sodaro mean when he wrote, “...sovereignty isn’t what it used to be”?
- What are the distinguishing characteristics of a people that define their identity as a nation?

- What is a nation-state and why did it gain traction in the late 18th and through the 19th and 20th centuries?
- For minority nations that are within states but retain a strong sense of national identity, what are the choices they have (or do not have) to constitute themselves as a distinct entity? Cover the entire spectrum of options.
- Why is statehood so elusive for the Kurds?
- Why has it been so difficult to date to establish a Palestinian state? What are the prospects for an independent Palestine?
- Why did Yugoslavia disintegrate in the 1990s? What are the lessons learned?

Chapter Seven

- Why are democratic values and the rule of law so fundamental to liberal democracies?
- Why are popular sovereignty, rights and liberties, and economic well-being essential components of liberal democracies?
- Should a democracy based on freedom of expression and a free press permit or not permit publication of depictions of the Prophet Muhammad (which Islamic law forbids)?
- Should democracies encourage the development of democracy in countries where antidemocratic and militantly anti-western parties enjoy significant popularity? Or should they support semi-authoritarian or authoritarian regimes that keep these parties under control while limiting democracy for everyone else as well?
- What did Dr. Sodaro mean when he wrote “elections are by no means sufficient to establish a full-fledged democracy”?

Chapters Nine and Ten

- What are ten conditions that help explain why and how democracies get established and endure?
- How do our conditions for democracy help us to explain democracy’s past failures in and potential for Afghanistan and Iraq?

Chapter Eleven

- Why are political parties and interest groups such important forms of mass participation in a democracy? What are their chief functions?
- What are five important features or forms of mass participation in nondemocratic regimes?

Chapters Twelve and Thirteen

- Why is political culture so central to the study of comparative government?
- Why is studying political socialization important for understanding political culture?
- What does human development theory posit about the relationship of socioeconomic development to democratic institutions?
- What did Dr. Sodaro mean when he wrote: “Any attempt to understand CP... must explore the ideological sources of political life”?
- What are the origins, main tenets, and variants of liberalism, socialism, social democracy, fascism, and political Islam?

Study Guide for the Country Studies in Sodaro (chapters 16-18, 20-21)

--POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION
 --TYPE OF POLITICAL SYSTEM AND DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL POWER
 --ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEMS
 --EXECUTIVE POWER
 --LEGISLATIVE POWER

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TIMELINES

British Political Development Timeline

1066	Norman Conquest (established a single feudal order in England)
1215	<i>Magna Carta</i>
1504-1547	Rule of Henry VIII (split with Rome, establishment of Church of England)
1542	Wales joined with England
1640s	Civil War, establishment of Republic by Oliver Cromwell
1658	Restoration of Stuart Monarchy under Charles II
1688	Glorious Revolution (bloodless)
1689	Parliament selects and asks William and Mary to rule as joint sovereigns. Birth of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary supremacy
1707	Scottish union with Britain
1921	Irish Independence

German Political Development Timeline

Pre-1648	Holy Roman Empire (First Reich)
1648-1815	300 Germanic states under Austrian influence
1815-1870	German Confederation of 38 states
1830s-1870s	<i>Zollverein</i>
1871-1918	German Empire (Second Reich)
1919-1933	Weimar Republic
1933-1945	Third Reich
1945-1948	Occupation and Berlin Blockade (1948)
1949-1989	German Democratic Republic
1949-	Federal Republic of Germany
1961	Construction of Berlin Wall
1989	Fall of the Berlin wall
1990	German Unification

French Political Development Timeline

1789	French Revolution
1792	Abolition of the monarchy, end of Bourbon Dynasty (<i>Ancien Regime</i>)
1789-1792	French First Republic
1799	Coup d'etat led by Napoleon
1804-1814	Napoleonic Empire
1815-1830	Bourbon Restoration
1830-1848	Louis Philippe monarchy (House of Orleans)
1848-1851	French Second Republic
1851-1870	Second Empire
1871	Paris Commune
1875-1940	French Third Republic
1940-1944	Occupation and Vichy Government
1944-1946	Provisional Government
1946-1958	French Fourth Republic
1958-	French Fifth Republic

Russian Political Development Timeline

1300s-1613	development and territorial expansion of Tsarist Russia
1613-1917	Russian Empire ruled by the Romanov Dynasty
1862	emancipation of the serfs (end to slavery)
1904-1905	popular uprising; Russo-Japanese War lost by Russia
1914-1918	Russia entered war on side of Britain/France; withdrew Nov. 1917
March 1917	social democratic revolution; creation of Provisional Government
November 1917	communist revolution; overthrow of Provisional Government
1917-1920	Civil War between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks

1921-1991	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; Vladimir Ilyich Lenin head of CPSU in 1921
1921-1924	creation of centralized state controlled by CPSU until Lenin's death in 1924
1924-1953	CPSU leader Josef Stalin—collectivization; creation of CPE; purges
1953-1964	CPSU leader Nikita Khrushchev—de-Stalinization reforms
1956	Hungarian Revolution
1964-1982	CPSU leader Leonid Brezhnev
1968	Prague Spring
1979	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
1985-1991	CPSU leader Mikhail Gorbachev—instituted economic/political reforms
1985	Mikhail Gorbachev became head of CPSU
1991	Russian President Yeltsin foiled coup d'état against Gorbachev designed to save USSR
1992	end of USSR: creation of Russian Republic under President Boris Yeltsin with constitution based on French Fifth Republic; democratic transition commenced
1993	establishment of new constitution for a mixed presidential-parliamentary system
1990s	Chechnya conflict
2000s	end of democratic transition: semi-authoritarianism; murders of journalists, other assaults on freedom of the press, restrictions on regional autonomy; invasion of Georgia

Chinese Political Development Timeline

206 BCE-	Ch'in Dynasty, followed by Han Dynasty (206 BCE-AD 200) & other imperial dynasties
1644	Qing or Manchu Dynasty
1839-42	Opium War (forced cession of Hong Kong to Britain)
1894-1895	Sino-Japanese War (Japan took over Taiwan)
1911	Revolution ending imperial rule; creation of Republic of China under President Sun Yat-Sen and his successor, Chiang Kai-Shek, both of the Nationalists (Kuomintang Party)
1921	founding of the Chinese Community Party (CCP)
1930s	Civil War between the Communists under Mao Zedong and Nationalists under Chiang; Long March
1930s	Japanese invasion of Manchuria and plunder-occupation of parts of China
1945	end of Japanese occupation; resumption of Chinese civil war
1949	end of civil war with creation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the defeat of the Nationalists, who fled to Taiwan (ROC)
1950s	U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty
1950s	forced collectivism of industry and agriculture in PRC
1958-59	Great Leap Forward and death of approx. 30 million due to starvation
1966-69	Cultural Revolution
1971	expulsion ROC from UN followed by admission of PRC to UN
1976	death of Mao
1978	Deng Xiaoping named CCP chairman until death in 1997; CCP abandonment of class struggle as main task
1978-present	era of economic liberalization but not political reform
1979	abrogation of U.S. defense treaty with ROC and severance of diplomatic relations in favor of recognition of the PRC
1989	Tiananmen Square student protest and repression by CCP; imposition of martial law

Nau Key Concepts and Study Questions --Use examples to make concrete your response

Introduction and Chapter 1: See below list of key concepts by theory and levels of analysis

Realist Perspective

anarchy	primacy of the state
zero sum game	hard power
international system	balance of power
hegemony and hegemonic stability	deterrence
collective self-defense	security dilemma
preemptive and preventive war	rational actor

asymmetric threat	cyber warfare
Liberal Perspective	
positive sum game	international organization
collective security	international interdependence
multilateralism	soft power
international law	nongovernmental organization
collective goods	international regime
global governance	human security
Identity Perspective	
social constructivism	identity
belief, value, and norm	international society
civil society	democratic peace
Critical Theory Perspective	
feminism	Marxism
post-modernism	environmentalism

Levels of Analysis

Levels of Analysis	
individual	domestic
foreign policy	systemic
global	

Ch. 2
Peace of Westphalia; Congress of Vienna; Concert of Europe; Versailles Treaty. No questions.

Ch. 3
hypernationalism (include its variants), Schlieffen Plan, Triple Alliance and Triple Entente. Answer questions #1-2, 4-7

Ch. 4
appeasement, genocide, League of Nations. Answer questions #2-3

Ch. 5
Yalta Conference, Potsdam Conference, spheres of influence, Berlin Blockade, nuclear deterrence theory, Cold War origins, Long Telegram, containment, Marshall Plan, Truman Doctrine, NATO and Warsaw Pact, Korean War, Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam War, decolonization, nonaligned movement, Hungarian Revolution, Prague Spring, Helsinki Accords. Answer question #3

Chs. 6-7
clash of civilization, end of history, arms control accords, peacekeeping, jihad, terrorism, ethnic cleansing, ethnic groups, global war on terror. Answer Ch. 7 questions #1-2 and #7-8

Chs. 8-9
economic nationalism, beggar-thy-neighbor policies, trade liberalization, Bretton Woods system, globalization 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0, Pax-Britannica and Pax Americana. Answer question #1 in Ch. 9

Chs. 15-16 and Conclusions
international and regional organizations, United Nations, European Union, functionalism, democratic peace. Question #5 in the conclusions.