# **IS 230 Comparative Politics**

VMI Department of International Studies and Political Science Section 1 MWF 0800-0850, SS 449 Section 2 MWF 0900-0950, SS 449

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### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- ➤ Comparative Governance: Political Structure and Diversity across the Globe W. Phillips Shively
- Essential Readings in Comparative Politics Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski
- ➤ Additional readings available on Angel.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course provides an introduction to comparative politics. Comparative is a subfield of political science focused on uncovering the similarities and differences across political systems through the comparison of cases. The purpose of this comparison is the development of generalizable, cross-national knowledge of international and domestic political institutions. With this goal in mind, we will review broad theoretical concerns dominant in the comparative politics literature, such as democratization or development, nested within the context of ongoing, real-world comparison. A few questions we will seek to answer are: Why are some countries democracies while others are autocracies? Why are some countries developed while others are not? How do political parties function within different types of democracies? What are the similarities and differences between how interest groups, elites, political institutions, and militaries function across different national contexts?

To answer these questions, the course is designed to integrate theoretical material with factual knowledge about relevant national settings. We will focus specifically on the **United States**, the **United Kingdom**, **South Africa**, **India**, **Mexico**, **Nigeria**, **Brazil**, **Iran**, and **China**. Furthermore, we will also discuss the European Union in depth as an international institution with sophisticated political institutions, as well as a select few of its members. Building on the factional knowledge you develop on these nations during the semester, there will be simulations, homework, and exams designed to test the student's ability to apply this factual knowledge to theoretical concerns in the comparative politics literature.

### **STUDENT OBJECTIVES:**

- ➤ Gain a general understanding of the comparative politics subfield in political science, including theoretical debates, methodological choices, and central research programs.
- > Develop analytical tools to understand, evaluate, and compare political and economic institutions across states.
- > Critically evaluate arguments in the comparative politics literature
- Formulate original arguments relevant to comparative politics and communicate those arguments effectively.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

Course requirements will be weighted in the following manner:

| Participation          | 10% |
|------------------------|-----|
| Midterm Exam           | 20% |
| Homework Assignments   | 20% |
| Comparative Case Study | 20% |
| Final Exam             | 30% |

**Participation.** Students are expected to participate in class discussions throughout the semester. In order to participate effectively, students will need to complete the readings before their assigned class sessions. Because topics may be controversial and/or complex, students are expected to be civil in their discussion and respectful toward viewpoints other than their own.

**Homework Assignments.** There will four homework assignments (worth 5% each) throughout the semester designed for the student to reflect on factual and theoretical material from the readings and class. These assignments will be coupled with classroom exercises. Students will be graded on both the quality of their written work and engagement in the classroom activity.

Comparative Case Study. Building on their homework material from the semester, the student will develop a theory regarding a single country's political or economic structure and attempt to prove that theory through comparative case study. In the paper, the student will (1) provide relevant factual information on the country, including the structure of political institutions, historical and cultural information, and economic details, (2) compare that state with a similar state, (3) compare that state with a dissimilar state, and (4) provide generalizable conclusions based upon the provided cases.

**Exams.** There will be a midterm (20%) and a final exam (30%). Each exam will cover material from lectures, readings, and classroom discussion, requiring the retention and application of course material. The midterm will consist of 2-3 short answer questions and an essay. The final exam is cumulative, following a similar format as the semester exams. It will include 5-7 short answer questions and two essays.

A Note on Grading: If you receive a grade on an exam or assignment that you think should be re-evaluated, you may request, within a week of when I hand it back, that it be re-graded. You must provide a written explanation of why you believe your grade should be changed in your request.

#### **News Sources:**

To be successful in the classroom, on exams, and in their papers, students are expected to maintain an awareness of ongoing developments in international politics and should regularly review some portion of the following news sources.

**BBC Online**: http://www.bbc.co.uk/ **New York Times:** http://www.nyt.com **Al Jazeera:** http://www.aljazeera.com/ **Reuters:** http://www.reuters.com

# **Introduction: What is Comparative Politics?**

# January 16

• Introduction to the Course

#### January 18

• "Chapter 1 - What is Comparative Politics?" in O'Neil and Rogowski

# January 21 – No Class, Inauguration

#### January 23

• "Chapter i - Why (and How) Should We Compare?" in Shively

### January 25

- "Chapter 16 Comparing Similar Countries" and "Chapter 17 Comparing Similar Countries" in *How to Compare Nations* Mattei Dogan and Dominique Pelassy (Angel)
- Homework 1 Due

# The State

# January 28

• "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." – Charles Tilly in *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds.

# January 30

• "Preface" and "Chapter 1 - Hills, Valleys, and States: An Introduction to Zomia" in *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* – James C. Scott (Angel)

# February 1

• "Chapter 1 - Holding the State Together" in Shively

# February 4

• "Chapter 2 - Decision Making in the State" in Shively

# February 6

• "Chapter 3 – Political Conflict" in Shively

# February 8

• "Chapter 5 - The Setting of Power: The State" in Shively

# February 11

- "War and the State in Africa" by Jeffrey Herbst and "The New Nature of Nation-State Failure" by Robert I. Rotberg on pages 28-50 in O'Neil and Rogowski
- "Sovereignty" by Stephen D. Krasner and "The New Religious State" by Mark Juergensmeyer on pages 51-66 in O'Neil and Rogowski
- Homework 2 Due

# **Nations and Culture**

# February 12 – Evening Makeup Class

• "Chapter 3 - Nations and Society" in O'Neil and Rogowski

### February 13

• "On Culture, Thick and Thin: Toward a Neo-Cultural Synthesis" – William Mishler and Detlef Pollack in Detlef Pollack and Jorg Jacobs, eds., *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe* (Angel)

#### February 15

• "Chapter 7 - Britain: Modern Politics in a Very Old State" in Shively

# **Democracies**

# February 18

- "The Number of Parties from *Political Parties*" by Maurice Duverger on pages 282-286 in O'Neil and Rogowski
- Federalist 10 Alexander Hamilton (Angel)

### February 20

• "Democratic Regimes", "A Brief History of Human Liberty from *The Future of* Freedom" by Fareed Zakaria, and "What Democracy is and is Not" by Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl on pages 133-160 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# February 22

 "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies" by Arend Lijphart and "Economic Development and Democracy" Seymour Martin Lipset on pages 161-169, 268-281 in O'Neil and Rogowski

### February 25

• "Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More than Others" by Torben Iverson and David Soskice, "The Myth of the Rational Voter" by Bryan Caplan, and "Is Government Disappearing" from *The Economist* on pages 287-295, 198-204, 296-302 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# February 27

• "Chapter 11 - Mexico's Democratic Transformation" by Roderic Ai Camp in Shively

#### March 1

• "Chapter 10 - India: The Struggle to Regenerate Democracy" by James Manor in Shively

#### March 4

• "Chapter 6 – The Political System of the United States" by Nancy H. Zingale in Shively

#### March 6

• Midterm Examination

#### March 7

• Required Dean's Evening Lecture Period: "Major Power Status and the Role of India and Brazil in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" by Thomas J. Volgy

#### March 8

• "Author's Introduction from *Democracy* in America" by Alexis de Tocqueville, and "Tuning in, Tuning out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America" by Robert D. Putnam on pages 260-267, 282-286, 170-197 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# March 11 - No Class, Spring Furlough

*March 13* – No Class, Spring Furlough

*March 15* – No Class, Spring Furlough

# **Non-Democracies**

#### March 18

• "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes from *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*" by Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan and "Islam, Democracy, and Constitutional Liberalism" by Fareed Zakaria on pages 206-234 in O'Neil and Rogowski

#### March 20

• "Chapter 14 - Iran" by Mohsen M. Milani in Shively

#### March 22

 "The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State" by Larry Diamond and "Combating the Resource Curse: An Alternative Solution to Managing Mineral Wealth" by Erika Weinthal and Pauline Jones Luong on pages 235-257 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# March 25

- "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers" by Azar Gat on pages 376-382 of O'Neil and Rogowski
- Homework 3 Due

# **Political Economy**

# March 27

• "Chapter 4 – The State and the Economy" in Shively

#### March 29

• "Chapter 4 - Political Economy" in O'Neil and Rogowski

# April 1 – No Class, Easter Furlough

April 3 – No Class, International Studies Association Conference

April 4 – No Class, International Studies Association Conference

April 5 – No Class, International Studies Association Conference

# April 8 – No Class, Spring FTX

### April 10

 Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and "Rethinknig Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Post-Communist Experience" on pages 323-345 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# **April 11 - Evening Makeup Class**

• "Chapter 13 – The Political Economy of Regional Integration" in *Global Political Economy* by Robert Gilpin (Angel)

### April 12

• "The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse" by Keith Darden and Anna Grzymala-Busse and "Transitions from Postcommunism" by Michael McFaul on pages 346-375 in O'Neil and Rogowski

### April 15

• "Chapter 13 – Politics in Brazil" by Barry Ames in Shively

#### April 17

- "Chapter 8 The European Union: A United States of Europe" by Matthew Gabel in Shively
- Homework 4 Due

# **Development and Globalization**

# April 19

• "To Help the Poor from *The Elusive Quest for Growth*" by William Easterly, "Divergence, Big Time" by Lant Pritchett, and "Population-Weighted Inequality between Nations: Decreasing in the Past Twenty Years from *Worlds Apart*" by Branko Milanovic on pages 385-410 in O'Neil and Rogowski

#### April 22

"Why Has Africa Grown Slowly?" by Paul Collier and Jan Willem Gunning,
 "Democracy: A Recipe for Growth?" by Robert J. Barro, and "Political Regimes and Economic Growth from *Democracy and Development*" on pages 411-440 in O'Neil and Rogowski

#### April 24

• "Chapter 11 – Globalization" in O'Neil and Rogowski

#### April 26

• "Chapter 15 – China: From State Socialist to Capitalist Iconoclast" by Marc Blecher in Shively

# **Political Violence**

# April 29

- "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions" by Theda Skocpol on pages 442-459 in O'Neil and Rogowski
- "The Causes of Terrorism" by Martha Crenshaw and "Occidentalism" by Avishai Margalit and Ian Buruma" on pages 460-484 in O'Neil and Rogowski

# May 1

- "Islamism, Revolution, and Civil Society" on pages 485-507 in O'Neil and Rogowski
- Comparative Case Study Due

### May 3

• "Chapter 12 – Nigeria: Ethnic Conflict and the Search for Viable Democracy in a Corrupt Oil Economy" by Rotimi Suberu and Larry Diamond in Shively

## **Disabilities and Accommodations:**

If you are a cadet with a documented disability, who will be requesting accommodations in my class, please make sure you are registered with the Office of Disabilities Services, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Post Infirmary, 464-7667, and provide me with an Accommodations letter outlining your accommodations. I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your needs.

#### **Classroom Rules:**

No tobacco products, food, beverages beyond water in a closed container, or gum are allowed. Profanity and racial or gender slurs will not be tolerated. Use of personal electronic devises during class is prohibited – unauthorized devices will be confiscated.

#### **Work for Grade Policy:**

The below work for grade policy is taken directly from "Part IV: Academic Regulations" of *Regulations for the Virginia Military Institute*, under "Cadets' Responsibilities":

"Work for grade" is defined as any work presented to an instructor for a formal grade or undertaken in satisfaction of a requirement for successful completion of a course or degree requirement. All work submitted for grade is considered the cadet's own work. "Cadet's own work" means that he or she has composed the work from his or her general accumulation of knowledge and skill except as clearly and fully documented and that it has been composed especially for the current assignment. No work previously submitted in any course at VMI or elsewhere will be resubmitted or reformatted for submission in a current course without the specific approval of the instructor.

In all work for grade, failure to distinguish between the cadet's own work and ideas and the work and ideas of others is known as plagiarism. Proper documentation clearly and fully identifies the source of all borrowed ideas, quotations, or other assistance. The cadet is referred to the VMI-authorized handbook for rules concerning quotations, paraphrases and documentation.

In all written work for grade, the cadet must include the words "HELP RECEIVED" conspicuously on the document, and he or she must then do one of two things: (1) state "none," meaning that no help was received except as documented in the work; or (2) explain in detail the nature of the help received. In oral work for grade, the cadet must make the same declaration before beginning the presentation. Admission of help received may result in a lower grade but will not result in prosecution for an honor violation.

Cadets are prohibited from discussing the contents of a quiz/exam until it is returned to them or final course grades are posted. This enjoinder does not imply that any inadvertent expression or behavior that might indicate one's feeling about the test should be considered a breach of honor. The real issue is whether cadets received information, not available to everyone else in the class, which would give them an unfair advantage. If a cadet inadvertently gives or receives information, the incident must be reported to the professor and the Honor Court.

Each cadet bears the responsibility for familiarizing himself or herself thoroughly with the policies states in this section, with any supplementary statement regarding work for grade expressed by the academic department in which he or she is taking a course, and with any special conditions provided in writing by the professor for a given assignment. If there is any doubt or uncertainty about the correct interpretation of a policy, the cadet should consult the instructor of the course. There should be no confusion, however, on the basic principle that it is never acceptable to submit someone else's work, written or otherwise, formally graded or not, as one's own.

The violation by a cadet of any of these policies will, if he or she is found guilty by the Honor Court, result in his or her being dismissed from VMI. Neither ignorance nor professed confusion about the correct interpretation of these policies is an excuse.

#### **Department of International Studies Work for Grade Policy:**

Work for Grade in this department is generally of the following types.

- 1. Written guizzes, tests, or examinations
- 2. Book reviews
- 3. Research papers, policy memoranda, briefing papers, and discourse analysis identification and analysis of the critical difference is in the findings and opinions of scholars on issues of interest to the discipline.

Cadets are permitted and encouraged to study with their peers to prepare for quizzes, tests and exams. However, when a cadet takes either written or oral quizzes, tests, and examinations, answers must be his/her own work without help from any other source including notes or consultation with others.

In the case of book reviews, research and other papers, as described in "2" and "3" above, research and composing of such works must be done by the cadet alone. Cadets are permitted to use spell and grammar-checking facilities.

IS cadets are encouraged to make use of all VMI tutoring services to receive critical comments.<sup>1</sup> Cadets who do so and mark "Help Received" will not receive a lower grade on an assignment. Cadets are also permitted to seek critical comments on their written work from their peers. However, proof-reading and editing<sup>2</sup> of a cadet's written work is not permitted.

Any exceptions to these rules, including the use of tutors, collaboration among cadets, and the use of computer style, spell and grammar checkers; must be explained in writing by the course instructor. Instructors are at liberty to stipulate exceptions only with the written approval of their department head.

If you have any questions about the application of these rules, consult your instructor. Do not leave anything to chance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As defined on page 27 of the academic regulations, critical comments are "general advice given on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> As defined on page 27 of the academic regulations, "proofreading means correcting errors (e.g., in spelling, grammar, punctuation). It is the last step taken by the writer in the editing process. In addition to the corrections made in proofreading, editing includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words. A cadet may not have his or her work proofread or edited by someone other than the instructor."