

January 27, 2012

POL 103, Introduction to Comparative Politics

Spring 2012

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:20 am-12:40 pm, Humanities 1006

Martin C. Steinwand

Assistant Professor

martin.steinwand@stonybrook.edu

SBS N-721

(631)632-6488

Office Hours:

Mo, 2-4 pm

Purpose

This class is an introduction to the study of politics in cross-national perspective. Our central focus will be how political institutions in democracies and non-democracies structure how people can express their preferences (economic, ideational, etc.), how decisions about policy are made and implemented, and what the policy outcomes are (rule of law, individual freedoms, economic growth, etc.). The goal is to better understand the political underpinnings of real world phenomena such as the sources of corruption, the preconditions for economic growth, and why some countries become democracies while others do not.

Required Readings

Book

- Powell, G. Bingham; Dalton, Russell J. & Strom, Kaare, *Comparative Politics Today: A World view*, 10th edition, 2011.

Newspapers

It is important not to fall behind on world events. I expect that you read the international section of at least one of the following newspapers: the *New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *Wall Street Journal*. The library holds online subscriptions to each of these newspapers.

Other Required Readings

I will post other required readings on Blackboard and in the class's Sugarsync folder.

Address: <https://www.sugarsync.com/share/bn0v5hhrgrwxy>

Password: !POL103

Course Requirements

- Midterm exam – 25%

- Final exam – 40%
- Unannounced quizzes (at least 5) – 25%
- Attendance – 10%

Unannounced Quizzes, 25% A series of unannounced quizzes on the day's assigned readings; at least 5 quizzes altogether. I will automatically drop your lowest quiz score. If you miss a quiz, this will automatically count as your lowest score and it will be dropped. Quizzes cannot be made up, without exception. If you miss more than one quiz, the first quiz you miss will count as your lowest score and be dropped. Each additional missed quiz will receive an 'F' grade.

Midterm Exam, 25% The midterm exam will take place on March 13 in class. The exam will cover all class material up to that date, including assigned readings and material covered in the lectures.

Final Exam, 40% The final exam will take place during the official exam period, date t.b.a. It will cover all class material up to that date, including assigned readings and material covered in the lectures. There will be an emphasis on material covered after the midterm exam, but everything from before the midterm is fair game.

Attendance & Participation, 10% Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings. Doing the readings in advance and partaking in class discussion are important prerequisites to successfully complete the class.

The teaching assistants will take attendance starting 10 minutes before class. Do not be late, or you will not be able to be marked as present.

Absence & Makeup Exams

Absences can only be excused if you inform me beforehand in writing, and there is a valid, documented reasons. If you are ill, you will need a medical professional's written excuse for two or more consecutive absences. If you are absent because of a University approved function, you will need a written statement. ***Merely informing me of your absence does not make it excused.***

There will be ***no make-up exams*** and ***no incompletes***. If you miss an unannounced quiz, excused or unexcused, this will count as your lowest grade, and the grade will be dropped (see policy above). If you miss a midterm exam or final exam, you will automatically receive the grade 'F'. If you have a medical emergency, you need to supply me with a

written excuse from a medical professional prior to the missed exam.

Electronic Devices & Computer Policy

Making calls, taking calls, texting, twittering, posting to social media websites, and any other form of accessing the internet are disruptive to the learning experience of you and others. They are strictly prohibited in class. The only acceptable use of personal electronic devices in class is for note-taking during the lecture. I reserve the right to confiscate electronic devices for the duration of the class if they are used in violation of this policy.

Academic Integrity

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary>.

Americans with Disabilities Act

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

Critical Incident Management

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

Course Outline

This course outline *is subject to change*. Changes will be announced in class.

Week 1

January 24 – Introduction

January 26 – Issues and Methods

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 1.
- King et.al. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Pages 3-12. (Blackboard)

Week 2

January 31 – Issues and Methods, cont.

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 2.
- Van Evera. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Pages 17-21, 27-40. (Blackboard)

February 2 – Political Culture

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 3.
- Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Pages 83-99. (Blackboard)

Week 3

February 7 – Political Institutions in Democracies

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 6.

February 9 – Germany: History of Democratization

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 10, pages 245-252.
- Berman. 1997. “Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic”. *World Politics*. 49:3. Pages 401-429. (Blackboard)

Week 4

February 14 – *Germany: Parliamentary System, Economic Performance*

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 10, pages 252-293.

February 16 – *Parties and Interest Groups in Democracies*

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 5.
- Powell. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*. Pages 3-17. (Blackboard)

Week 5

February 21 – *Britain: Two Party System*

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 8.

February 23 – *Economic Performance over Time*

- Studlar. 1996. *Great Britain: Decline or Renewal?*. Chapter 6. (Blackboard)

Week 6

February 28 – *No Class, Away to Conference*

March 1 – *France*

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 9.

Week 7

March 6 – *Post-Election Simulation, Group I*

March 8 – *Post-Election Simulation, Group II*

Week 8

March 13 – **MIDTERM EXAM**

March 15 – *European Union: Development and Goals*

- Ginsberg. 2010. *Demystifying the European Union*. Pages 36-56, 59-88. (Blackboard)

Week 9

March 20 – European Union: Outcomes and Future

- Ginsberg. 2010. *Demystifying the European Union*. Pages 293-315. (Blackboard)
- Economist. 11/10/2011. *Charlemagne's Notebook*. "Two-speed Europe, or two Europes?". (Blackboard)

March 22 – Political Institutions in Non-Democracies

- de Mesquita & Smith. 2011. *The Dictator's Handbook*. Chapter 1. (Blackboard)
- McFaul. "Transitions from Postcommunism". *Journal of Democracy*. 16(3). Pages 5-19. (Blackboard)

Week 10

March 27 – Russia: Soviet Era and Political Reforms

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 12.

March 29 – Russia: Political System, Economic Performance

- Newnham. 2011. "Oil, Carrots, and Sticks: Russia's Energy Resources as a Foreign Policy Tool". *Journal of Eurasian Studies*. 2. Pages 134-143. (Blackboard)
- Ross. 2012. "The Oil Curse". Chapter 3.

SPRING BREAK**Week 11**

April 10 China: Communist Era and Economic Reforms

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 13.

April 12 – No Class, Away to Conference

Week 12

April 17 – China: Economic Performance

- Montinola et.al. 1995. “Federalism, Chinese Style”. *World Politics*. 48(1). Pages 50-81. (Blackboard)
- Economist. 3/8/2007. “China’s Next Revolution”. (Blackboard)

April 19 – Economic Development: Foreign Aid and Domestic Factors

- Easterly. 2001. “The Elusive Quest for Growth”. Chapter 2.
- Acemoglu & Robinson. 2008. “The Role of Institutions in Growth and Development”. *Commission on Growth and Development Working Paper*. 10. Pages 1-26.

Week 13

April 24 – India: Political System Since Independence

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 17.

April 26 – India: Economic Development

- Financial Times. 5/27/2009. “Land of Opportunity”.
- Financial times. 1/27/2011. “Strong Growth Yet to Improve Lives of Poor”.

Week 14

May 1 – Nigeria

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 18.

May 3 – Iran

- Powell et.al. *Comparative Politics Today*. Chapter 16.