COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to introduce students generally to the study of comparative politics. This course not only covers major concepts and theories in the study of comparative politics, but also offers empirical analyses of the government and politics in a select group of countries. The course covers a wide range of issues, including the formation of the nation-state, democratisation, authoritarianism, political culture, political development, comparative political economy, nationalism, ethnic politics, politics of religion, and political institutions. The course will also discuss some debates in comparative politics that have been important in the policy-making community in recent decades, such as state-building, role of the state in economy, the concept of social capital, and the effort to promote democracy around the world. Although paying attention to countries in Asia, Middle East, and Africa, a select group of Western countries will also be studied in a comparative format.

As such, several objectives and learning outcomes of the course become clear:

• Knowledge of the major theories and approaches in the discipline of Comparative Politics
• Ability to critically evaluate and apply such theories and approaches
• Knowledge of major substantive themes in Comparative Politics
• Ability to think critically about the relevance of mainstream theories of Comparative Politics and their relevance to experience and interests of actors in Asia, Africa and the Middle East
• Ability to analyse world politics from a variety of perspectives
• Ability to apply theories to case studies

N.B. For repeating students, please read the following carefully, as this agreement has changed.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (10%)

The first step to success in this course is attendance, and each student is expected to attend all classes. Obviously things come up—whether sickness, personal issues, or something else. As such, you are allowed in accordance with Registrar policy, the equivalence of three weeks of absences from our sessions though I encourage you to minimise the number as much as possible. Please note that any absence counts towards this three-week limit, meaning that university-sanctioned activities (e.g MUN/MAL), sickness with medical clinic documentation, and any other such absence counts. Without documentation that I approve, missed assignments are calculated as zero toward the final course mark. Any student missing more than the equivalent of three weeks starting 9 September (six sessions in a normal semester) will automatically fail the course with no exceptions. After all, I am sure we can agree that missing that much time would call into question what you are able to get out of this course.

By far the easiest way to guarantee a strong participation assessment is with substantive contribution to class discussion in our weekly meetings; that means quality takes precedence over quantity. However, I understand that in a class of over 30 people, some students may not feel comfortable speaking in a crowd. I suggest trying to overcome that reticence, but because personalities vary, participation can also be maintained with visits to my office hours and e-mail contact which directly discuss the course readings, topics, concepts and the like. In short: make your contributions count whichever way you feel most comfortable; the point is to engage with the class and its material and to demonstrate clearly that you are doing so. As promised, the 20% participation mark will be distributed even between the first and second parts of the course.
ASSIGNMENTS & PRESENTATIONS/MODERATIONS (40%)

There will be three assignments throughout the term, and each one will count toward the final grade. As such, each Reaction Paper will consist of 15% while each Presentation/Moderation is 10% in total (with 5% for presentation and 5% for moderation of the discussion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Due by October 19, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Due by November 30, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation/Moderation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Varies per student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXAMS (50%)

There will be two exams, each one counting 25% of the final grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>October 23-26, 2016 (two parts, 15% and 10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>December 18, 2016 (8:30-10:30AM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There will be no extra credit assignments under any circumstance. The only possible way of improving your final grade beyond the assignments and exams listed is by attending ALL of the lectures; you will receive an additional 1% for not missing any classes.

Finally in terms of your time in this course, please note that plagiarism is not acceptable in any form, and it will result in immediate failure of the entire course and my submitting the case to all relevant administrative bodies: the Department, HUSS Dean, and Academic Integrity Committee. If you are unsure about citations or what constitutes plagiarism, refer to the AUC policies on Academic Integrity, visit the Writing Centre, and definitely feel free to ask.

And lastly, a note about Office Hours: come to see me. You will do better in this course, and getting into the habit of engaging and talking with your professors on a regular basis will lead you to do better in your academic career. With added individual attention, I can provide you with readings on various topics, clarify things that might not be clear to you, and overall help you to do well.
READINGS FOR THE COURSE

On the general course page (website to be e-mailed out), you will find the general schedule we will follow throughout the term. For the readings themselves, everything is made available electronically via the course website, which requires you to log in with your AUC e-mail credentials:

In addition to the Required Readings listed for each week, it is highly recommended to familiarise yourselves with the additional resources (Further Readings) under each listing as they can help you to build your foundation in comparative politics by topic and theme. The ‘further’ readings can be accessed from the course website; only the ‘required’ readings are listed on this version of the syllabus.

For those students wanting to purchase or borrow the texts, they are:

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Please note well that ALL of the following readings are required for the course. Additional ‘further readings’ can be found under the lecture topic for each week on the course website.

PART I: GETTING STARTED

Week 1 (A). September 4, 2016

PREAMBLE TO THE COURSE (INTRODUCTION)

Week 1 (B). September 7, 2016

WHAT IS COMPARATIVE POLITICS?

Guiding questions:
- What is comparative politics?
- What are the various trajectories and research traditions in this subfield?

Required Reading

Week 2 (A). September 18, 2016

APPROACHES I

Guiding questions:
- Compare and contrast Rational Choice and Structuralist approaches.

Required Reading

Week 2 (B). September 21, 2016

**APPROACHES II**

*Guiding questions:*
- Compare and contrast Comparative Political Economy and Cultural approaches.
- When and how are these approaches used?

**Required Reading**

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**PART II: FROM ABOVE: THE STATE**

Week 3 (A). September 25, 2016

**THE STATE**

*Guiding questions:*
- What is the state? And how is this concept useful for comparative politics?
- Is the concept of the 'state' inescapable in the study of politics?
- How can our understanding of the state enhance our understanding of how politics is performed? Of state-society relations?
- What are the difficulties in researching the state?

**Required Reading**

Week 3 (B). September 28, 2016

**THE STATE: DISCUSSION**

*Guiding questions:*
- How can a conceptualisation of the state allow us to investigate state-society relations in varying contexts?
- How do state-society relations vary according to different understandings of the state?

**Required Reading**
WEEK 4 (A). October 2, 2016

REGIME TYPES

Guiding questions:
• Compare and contrast state and regime.
• What are the various types of regimes? And how are they approached?
• Does regime matter?
• What are the differences between regime/citizenry and state/society relations?
• How are regimes approached within comparative politics?

Required Reading

Week 4 (B). October 5, 2016

REGIME TYPES: DISCUSSION

Guiding questions:
• How are regimes compared?
• What are the pros and cons about the application of regime type (read: classifications) within different case studies?
• How can we best approach the complexities of investigating regime type?

Required Reading

Week 5 (A). October 9, 2016

THE BRANCHES

Guiding Questions:
• What is the separation of powers? And how can we use this 'idea' to study various regimes?
• What are the historical roots of power-sharing and the institutionalisation of a separation of powers?
• How does the relationship between branches vary according to regime type, and why?
• What distinguishes the functions of different branches?

Required Reading

Week 5 (B). October 12, 2016

THE BRANCHES: DISCUSSION

Guiding questions:
• How does the separation of powers factor in with a study of Latin America?
• Describe the relationship(s) between the various branches in a given case study.

Required Reading

**Week 6 (A). October 16, 2016**

**POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTORAL SYSTEMS**

**Required Reading**


**Week 6 (B). October 19, 2016**

**POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTORAL SYSTEMS: DISCUSSION**

**Required Reading**


**Week 7 (A). October 23, 2016**

**EXAM 1: PART A (CONCEPTUAL)**

**Week 7 (B). October 26, 2016**

**EXAM 1: PART B (EMPIRICAL)**

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**PART III: FROM BELOW: SOCIETY**

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**Week 8 (A). October 30, 2016**

**POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR & PARTICIPATION**

**Required Reading**


**Week 8 (B). November 2, 2016**

**POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR & PARTICIPATION: DISCUSSION**

**Required Reading**

Week 9 (A), November 6, 2016

POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Guiding questions:
• What relationship do ideologies have to truth?
• Will there ever be a time when there are no ideologies?
• What is the relationship between ideologies and political activity?
• Are ideologies really just the ideas of ideologues?

Required Reading

Week 9 (B), November 9, 2016

POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES: DISCUSSION

Required Reading

Week 10 (A), November 13, 2016

CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

Guiding questions:
• Do social movements that do not target the state fall outside the range of contentious politics?
• Are the major outcomes of contentious politics limited to the policy terrain, or do they also involve cultural change and biographical impacts?
• Do new forms of collective action—particularly Internet-based campaigns—challenge existing approaches to contentious politics, or will they eventually be absorbed into the repertoire of contention, much as the newspaper and television were?
• Does globalisation shift the targets of contention from national states to something beyond the state, or does it simply add the possibility of ‘forum shopping’ to claim-making strategies?

Required Reading

Week 10 (B), November 16, 2016

CONTENTIOUS POLITICS: DISCUSSION

Required Reading
Week 11 (A). November 20, 2016

NATIONS & NATIONALISM

Required Reading


Week 11 (B). November 23, 2016

NATIONS & NATIONALISM: DISCUSSION

Required Reading


PART IV: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Week 12 (A). November 27, 2016

CLASS & CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

Required Reading


Week 12 (B). November 30, 2016

CLASS & CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS: DISCUSSION

Required Reading

FEMINIST & CRITICAL APPROACHES

Required Reading

FEMINIST & CRITICAL APPROACHES: DISCUSSION

Required Material

Review Session

Week 14 (A), December 11, 2016

Week 14 (B), December 14, 2016

Exam 3