

**POL S 2200**  
**INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS**  
**SPRING 2006**  
**M/W 8:05-9:25**  
**MBH 302**

Instructor: Joana Odencrantz

Office: OSH 323

Office Hours: M: 10-11, T: 9-10 A.M., and by prior appointment

Office Phone: 581-4262

Email: [joana.odencrantz@poli-sci.utah.edu](mailto:joana.odencrantz@poli-sci.utah.edu)

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

Comparative Politics constitutes one of the sub-fields of Political Science. The comparative method is used to examine particular political phenomena in a systematic manner. Consequently comparative politics is both a field and a method of study. The comparative method evaluates various political phenomena cross-nationally in order to better understand how people act under similar conditions. Political Scientists rely on the comparative method as observation alone does not tell us much about how diverse human populations will behave and the experimental method is, generally speaking not an option. Comparison is accomplished in a methodical manner that indicates probabilities. Complete predictability is not possible in Political Science as it is concerned with human behavior under certain structural constraints (domestic political systems and institutions) and humans do not, necessarily, behave in an entirely predictive manner.

This course surveys the major questions studied in the field of Comparative Politics. We will examine several topics addressed by Comparative politics—both classic questions and new ones. We will examine such questions as: why are some states democracies, while others have authoritarian political systems? What conditions might be necessary for democratization? What is the role of the state in the economy? How has globalization changed the role of the state? How can we explain political violence and terrorism? Why are some countries rich, while others are so poor?

Our reading are arranged thematically and draw from classic pieces of comparative politics literature as well as new and important pieces. We will use the concepts and theories from our reading to better understand how particular states function. As a class, we will use Egypt as a case study. Other states will be covered through class presentations.

COURSE TEXTS:

Patrick O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, eds. *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*.

Eberhard Kienle, *A Grand Delusion: Democracy and Economic Reform in Egypt*

Both texts are available for purchase at the University Book Store

I will take the time to send you newspaper articles for discussion. You are required to take the time to read them.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Presentations	50 pts.
Take-home Midterm (Mar. 22)	50 pts.
In-Class Exam (April 10)	30 pts.
Final Paper (May 3)	100 pts.
Participation	30 pts.
Total:	260 pts.

#### **Discussion/Participation:**

Discussion is intended to promote understanding of the applicability of the concepts and method of comparative politics to current events. You are not expected to become an instant expert on every country. Small group discussion will rely on newspaper articles that I will send to you and concepts from our text. Reliance on concepts and methods is how we form educated opinions as it is impossible to know everything about every country. Discussion is a part of your grade and you will need to keep up with the assigned reading, read the newspaper articles I send, and contribute to discussions in a thoughtful relevant manner. I will give you discussion questions each week for you to discuss in small groups in class. Lack of participation will count against you. You are also expected to pay attention to group presentations and ask relevant questions of presenters. Failure to attend and participate will impact your grade.

#### **Take-Home Midterm:**

You will be given a midterm to take home on March 8. It is due back on March 22. This midterm will consist of questions that require you to write typed, double-spaced essays in response.

#### **In-Class Exam:**

We will have one in-class exam on April 10. The exam may include material from readings and lectures.

#### **Class Presentations:**

Group Presentations will occur between April 12-24. I will bring in a sign-up sheet the second week of February and you are expected to sign up for a group as well as make contact with your group members. Country case studies may be done on one of the following: China, Great Britain, Iran, France, Nigeria, Mexico, Turkey, or Malaysia. Your group should answer the following questions: what type of political system does your country have (democratic, authoritarian, communist, etc.). How does the nature of the political system effect the state's policy in at least two of the following areas: economic liberalization, political liberalization, civil society, nationalism and ethnic conflict, and globalization. Is a democratic transition occurring? What are the prospects

for democratization? Your group should put together an outline to hand out to others in the class concerning your group's country—it's political system, institutions, and questions you address. Use academic or government webresources, academic journals and books. Do not rely completely on any one source. Your group must provide a bibliography along with your outline.

### **Final Paper:**

Answer the following question on Kienle's *A Grand Delusion: Democracy and Economic Reform in Egypt* in a typed, double-spaced, 7-8 page essay.

Kienle argues that contrary to the expectations of many economic liberalism has not led to greater political liberalism and democratization. What does Kienle mean by positive and negative liberties? What role has economic reform played in deliberalizing Egypt? Is there a civil society in Egypt? If so, what role does civil society play in promoting or inhibiting liberalization? How does the governing regime seek to control civil actors? Finally, the banned opposition movement, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, won approximately 1/3 of parliamentary seats in the 2005 elections. Does this portend greater democratization in Egypt? Why or why not?

You need not consult outside sources for this paper.

### Persons with Disabilities:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. In order to establish the existence of a disability and/or request reasonable accommodation for this class, you should contact the Center for Disabled Student Services (in Olpin Union Building at 581-5020, voice or TDD). Accommodations can then be made with reasonable prior notice to the instructor.

### **Plagiarism Policy:**

Cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported to relevant university authorities and may result in severe consequences. If you are concerned about unintended plagiarism and would like to avoid it, please consult to various sources that describe how to cite references. There are also good online resources that describe ways to avoid internet plagiarism. If you have any further questions, please see me for clarification

### CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Jan. 9, 11: Introduction

**NO CLASS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11**

WEEK 2: Jan. 16,18: Comparative Politics: Field and Method

Read ch. 1 in O'Neil

**No class on Monday, Jan. 16: Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

WEEK 3: Jan. 23,25: The State

Read ch.2 in O'Neil

WEEK 4: Jan 30, Feb. 1: Nations and Society  
Read ch. 3 in O'Neil

WEEK 5: Feb. 6, 8: Political Economy  
Read. Ch. 4 in O'Neil

WEEK 6: Feb. 13, 15: Authoritarianism  
Read ch. 5 in O'Neil

WEEK 7: Feb. 20, 22: Democracy  
Read ch. 6 in O'Neill  
**No class on Monday, Feb. 20: President's Day**

WEEK 8: Feb. 27, Mar. 1: Advanced Democracies  
Read ch. 7 in O' Neill

WEEK 9: Mar. 6, 8: Communism and Post-Communism  
Read ch. 8 in O'Neil  
**Take-home midterm handed out on March 8**

WEEK 10: **SPRING BREAK. NO CLASS**

WEEK 11: Mar. 20, 22: LDCs and NICs  
Read ch. 9 in O'Neill  
**Take-home midterm due March 22**

WEEK 12: Mar. 27, 29: Globalization  
Read ch. 10 in O'Neil

WEEK 13: Apr. 3, 5: Political Violence  
Read: ch. 11 in O'Neil

Week 14: CLASS PRESENTATIONS BEGIN APRIL 12  
Apr. 10: In Class Exam  
Apr. 12: Groups 1 & 2

WEEK 15: CLASS PRESENTATIONS  
Apr. 17: Groups 3 & 4  
Apr. 19: Groups 5 & 6

WEEK 16: CLASS PRESENTATIONS  
Apr. 24: Groups 7 & 8  
Apr. 26: Democratization in Egypt?  
Read Kienle (all)

**FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 3 AT 4:00 P.M. IN OSH 252. NO LATE PAPERS  
ACCEPTED!**