

# PO102, R: Introduction to Comparative Politics

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Section 52

## Contents:

[Office Hours](#) / [Description and Goals](#) / [Texts](#) / [Course Requirements](#) / [Grading](#) / [Topics by Week](#)

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## Course Description:

This course introduces the interested undergraduate to the study of comparative politics. Comparative politics is a field of political science that seeks to understand and explain politics through the examination and comparison of political institutions, ideology, behavior, and policy issues among societies around the world.

In this course, we will study basic concepts essential to the comparison and explanation of politics. Through the use of lecture, classroom discussion, and articles located at the Blackboard site for this course, we apply these concepts toward an understanding of politics in countries throughout the world including the United States. Though all countries and regions are part of our pool for illustration and comparison, our class will focus on seven countries: one in the Shively text—the U.S.—

and six in the Kopstein text: two of the “early developers”—Britain and France; one of the “middle developers”—Japan (with some discussion of Germany); one of the “late developers”—China (which includes Taiwan as well as the PRC); and one of the “experimental developers”—Mexico. (Practice quizzes and other material related to these countries can be found at [www.cambridge.org/kopstein](http://www.cambridge.org/kopstein).)

### **Goals:**

In addition to providing students with a basic conceptual vocabulary and "facts" relevant to the description of politics, an important goal of this course is to demonstrate the methodology of the field and to involve students in the art and argument of comparative politics.

Students should understand that "facts" do not stand or appear on their own. They are derived from the interaction of concepts derived from and applied to historical (or empirical) reality. Students will often be called on in class to explain or apply a concept to a particular situation. These "situations" are provided by the course texts, the daily edition of the *New York Times* (or its website), and other news sources such as those listed at the course Blackboard site. **The major goal of this method of teaching is to enhance the student's analytical skill.**

### **Required Text, Other Readings, and Web Sites with required material:**

1. Kopstein, Jeffrey and Mark Lichbach (editors). 2008 (Third Edition). *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*. Cambridge University Press.
2. <http://www.cambridge.org/kopstein>. Use this site for access to practice quizzes on country chapters in Kopstein text.
3. Shively, W. Phillips (editor and author). 2013 (Custom edition). *Comparative Governance: Political Structure and Diversity Across the Globe*. McGraw-Hill Primis. (this is a “custom edition” with chapters on U.S., “Decision Making in the State,” and “The State and the Economy” )
4. *The New York Times*. Read on a daily basis either the hardcopy or at the [Times website](#).
5. Articles posted at the [Blackboard site](#) for this class.

### **Recommended reading and information sources:**

6. Web sites listed in the “Web Links” section of the Blackboard site for this class.

## Course Requirements (Graded Assignments): [TOP](#)

**Quizzes.** There will be three quizzes composed of short-answer questions and/or multiple-choice. (12.33% each for total of 35% of semester grade)

**Midterm.** One midterm exam composed of four or five short essay questions--questions that require explanatory responses--and, possibly, some brief identification questions. (27%)

**Final Exam.** Format is similar to that of the midterm. (28%)

**Oral Participation.** The class emphasizes student participation. Students should demonstrate engagement with the course material—including daily reading of the *New York Times*—through discussion of the text material and ongoing political events in the world. Students should be prepared each session to engage in discussion of concepts from the course and their application to events in the world with emphasis on the U.S., Britain, France, Japan, China, and Mexico. { 10% of semester grade }

### **Attendance.**

Students are to attend each session prepared to participate in thoughtful discussion relevant to the reading for that session, events covered in the *New York Times*, and previous classroom discussions. Excused absences should be arranged with the professor in advance whenever possible. Students with unexcused absences will not earn a high participation grade. Furthermore, it is highly improbable that they will do well on the quizzes and exams.

An attendance sheet will be distributed at most class sessions. Students are responsible for making sure that they have signed the attendance sheet at each session.

## **Other Course Policies:**

### **Academic Honesty**

The Undergraduate Bulletin states: “Academic honesty, expected of every student, is essential to the process of education and to upholding high ethical standards. Cheating, including plagiarism, inappropriate use of technology, or any other kind of unethical behavior, may subject the student to severe academic penalties, including dismissal. All work submitted for evaluation in a course, including tests, term papers, and computer programs, must represent only the work of the student unless indicated otherwise.

### **Disability Statement**

In accordance with federal law, if you have a documented disability (Learning, Psychological, Sensory, Physical, or Medical) you may be eligible to request accommodations from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please contact the Director, Allison West at (216) 397-4967 or come to the office located in room 7A, in the Garden Level of the Administration Building. Please keep in

mind that accommodations are not retroactive so it is best to register at the beginning of each semester. Only accommodations approved by SSD will be recognized in the classroom. Please contact SSD if you have further questions.

**Statement on Campus Climate & Diversity**

At JCU, we are committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive campus community. Incidents of bias which are intentional or unintentional actions against someone on the basis of an actual or perceived aspect of their identity, including actions that occur in classrooms, can and should be reported on the Bias Incident Reporting Form, accessible at <http://sites.jcu.edu/bias/>. Questions about bias can be directed to members of the Bias Response Team: Lauren Bowen, Associate Academic Vice President ([bowen@jcu.edu](mailto:bowen@jcu.edu)), Bud Stuppy, Director of Human Resources ([cstuppy@jcu.edu](mailto:cstuppy@jcu.edu)) or Danielle Carter, Director of the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion ([dcarter@jcu.edu](mailto:dcarter@jcu.edu)).

**Grading:**

Course grade is based on percentage of weighted total. (Record of grades on each assignment can be viewed at Blackboard; calculation of course grade is based on weight for each assignment.)

- A = 93% or better of total, A- = 90% - 93%, B+ = 87% - 90%,
- B = 83% - 87%, B- = 80% - 83%, C+ = 77% - 80%, C = 73% - 77%, C- = 70% - 73%,
- D+ = 67% - 70%, D = 60% - 67%, F = <60%

**Course Topics and Readings by Week:** [TOP](#)

(Subject to modification.)

#	Week	Reading:	Topics, tasks, and questions for discussion:
1	1/14-1/16	T: Overview of the Course R: Kopstein, Chs.1-2	Introduction to the course; Blackboard. Start daily reading of the <i>New York Times</i> . What is comparative politics? “The Framework of Analysis”: Global Context; Domestic Interests, Identities, and Institutions.
2	1/21-1/23	T: Zingale (in Shively) on U.S.(pp. 25-43, focus on Interest Groups and structure of Congress) R: Zingale on U.S. history and identity, “political culture” (pp. 2-19)	The State; Strong vs. weak (autonomy and capacity as dimensions of strength). What kind of state does the U.S. have? Strong interest groups and weak parties. Plus political history and “identity” of U.S.

3	1/28-1/30	T: Finish and review U.S. politics R: Shively, Ch.5, and Handout on parliamentary/presidential forms of governance (at Blackboard);	Parliamentary systems versus presidential systems. First-past-the-post (or SMDP) versus PR electoral method. Institutions and interests in Britain. How do "governments" end up being so strong in Britain? What happens to interest groups?
4	2/4-2/6	T: Rutland in Kop, Ch.3 (pp.54-85—institutions and interests in Britain) R: Rutland in Kop, Ch.3 (Britain; pp.40-54)	What makes for democracy? Which is better at democracy parliamentary or presidential? SMDP or PR? What makes for coalition government?
5	2/11-2/13	T: Finish Britain; see Cambridge website on Britain R: <b>Take first quiz</b>	Review for quiz
6	2/18-2/20	T: McFalls in Kop, Ch.4 (pp.86-112); See questions/review on France in Blackboard folder  R: McFalls in Kop, Ch.4 (pp.112-133).	The 5 <sup>th</sup> Republic and the ability to switch from behaving as a presidential to a parliamentary form of governance; Confrontation between president and parliament resolved through shift in source of executive power. The evolution of a two party system?
7	2/25-2/27	T: Kop, Stop and Compare (pp.135-138) Review for...  R: <b>Midterm</b>	Points from “Stop and Compare” and Review for Midterm  Spring Break is first week of March
8	3/11-3/13	T: Shively, Ch.5 (State and Economy); Handout and articles at Blackboard  R: Schreurs in Kop, Ch.6 (Japan; pp.180-192) Gould in Kop, Ch. 5 (Germany; pp. 140-153)	Political Economy—basic concepts. What is a “middle developer”? What causes Japan to create a “modern state” and begin industrialization (how and when)? “Revolution from above” in Germany as well as in Japan. Similar broad paths of political and economic development from the 1870s into 1940s (and beyond). Japan today: move from state-centered model to market-driven model of development?

9	3/18-3/20	T: Schreurs in Kop, Ch.6 (Japan; pp.192-209); Articles on Japan at Blackboard R: Stop and Compare in Kop, pp.211-216; Review for...	The Revolution from above and the present political economy; Review for second quiz
10	3/25-3/27	T: <b>Second Quiz</b> R: Wu in Kop, China, pp.270-287	What is a “late developer”? Communist revolution as revolution from below in response to challenge from the West. Revolutions in Russia and China
11	4/1-4/3	T: Wu, pp. 287-310 R: Articles at Blackboard and Stop and Compare in Kop, pp.311-315	China: from Maoism and Command Economy to economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping. Contrast reaction of Chinese political elite to that of Japanese elite to Western intrusion/challenge. Contrast the “authoritarian model” of development (of Japan and Taiwan) to the “totalitarian model” of development (of Stalin and Mao)
12	4/8-4/10	T: Finish China and Review for... R: <b>Third Quiz</b>	Democratization in China?
13	4/15	T: Gill in Kop, Ch.9 (Mexico; pp.318-336) R: no class—Easter Break	Political and economic development among the “experimental developers”; Mexican history: indigenous heritage, late creation of national identity; Revolution, corporatism, clientelism and ISI
14	4/22-4/24	T: No class—Monday Schedule at JCU R: Gill in Kop, Ch.9 (Mexico, pp.336-364)	Economic crisis; economic liberalization; end of corporatist control by PRI and democratization of Mexico
15	4/29-5/1	T: articles at Blackboard; finish Mexico R: Review for Final Exam; Course Evaluation	Review for Final Exam
16	<b>Final Exam</b>		<b>Take final exam on day and time slotted in JCU Fall Semester Schedule of Classes.</b>