UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
Department of Political Science

POL 202C: Introduction to Comparative Politics    Instructor: Dr. Alexander R. Arifianto  
Whitten Learning Center (WLC), Room #190    Spring 2013 Semester  
Class meeting: Mondays Wednesdays & Fridays 10:10 – 11:00 AM

Contact Information:  
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Course Description:  
This is an introductory course in comparative politics, broadly defined as the comparative study of 
political and government of different societies in the world and how their respective culture, history, 
socio-economic conditions, and ethnic makeup, are shaping these societies’ political systems and 
stitutions. As our world has become more integrated and intertwined with one another within the past 
three decades, it becomes more important than ever for students to gain an understanding of the history, 
political culture, and political institutions of other countries in the world, both advanced developed 
nations (primarily countries located in Western Europe and North America) as well as developing 
nations (including the “rising” stars of today’s contemporary geo-politics such as China and India).

While we will cover the politics of advanced industrial nations (the United Kingdom, France, and 
Russia), we will spend a significant period of our class studying politics and government of the 
developing world. There are several reasons for this: 1) Today, at least two-thirds of all independent 
nations in the world are still considered as developing nations, and 85 percent of the world’s population 
are living in the developing world; 2) The developing world is attributed (often unfairly) as the source 
of many of the socio-economic problems facing the world today, from chronic poverty, weak political 
institutions, authoritarian rule, corruption, ethno-religious conflict, and terrorism/counter-insurgency; 
3) However, there is a growing number of developing countries that have managed to successfully 
resolve these problems and has made significant progress in transforming their economics and 
generating massive economic growth and wealth for its citizens. Some (but not all) of these countries 
also have made transition to democratic political system and institutions within the last two decades or 
so. This course will highlight some of the countries that have accomplished this economic and political 
transformation (e.g., China, Brazil, India, Turkey, and Nigeria), with reference to several advanced 
industrial countries/early developers that underwent a similar transformation more than a century ago 
(e.g., Great Britain, France, and Russia).

In order to promote your understanding of comparative politics, this course includes three components:  
1) an introduction to the major theoretical frameworks used by scholars studying comparative politics 
today; 2) an introduction to the general problems faced by each countries in the world and how they 
help to shape their political culture and institutions; these problems include, but not limited to: state 
builtling, cohesion, and fragmentation; economic development, poverty, and aid dependence; and the 
comparison between authoritarian and democratic political systems within a particular country; 3) an
in-depth application of the theoretical tools and problems learned in this course to analyze contemporary politics of several major countries: United Kingdom, France, Russia China, Brazil, India, Turkey, and Nigeria.

Course Objectives/Goals:
By the end of this course, students are expected to:

- Understand how the study of comparative politics could enrich our knowledge about other countries and societies other than our own.
- Understand how the globalization process affects the politics of developing nations and in turn, how their economic and political accomplishments have affected our political economy as well.
- Gain an appreciation of the numerous social science theories used to analyze comparative political culture and institutions, particularly those in the developing world.
- Gain an appreciation on the various socio-political problems facing developing nations (e.g., poverty, weak political institutions, corruption, ethnic conflict, etc.) as well as how some countries are able to successfully overcome these problems.
- Able to express these newly acquired knowledge and understanding via written hour examinations as well as essays and other assignments that will be used to evaluate their performance in this course.

Course Requirements:
Students' performances in this course will be measured using the following evaluation methods:

- Three hour exams (25% each): 75 percent
- Thought essay: 15 percent
- Class attendance and participation: 10 percent

Detailed explanations of each evaluation schemes are provided below:

A. Hour Exams (25% of final grade each, for a total of 75% of final grade)
There are three hour exams in this course. Exam #1 is scheduled on **Wednesday, February 13.** Exam #2 is scheduled on **Wednesday, March 20.** The final exam is scheduled on **Friday, May 3,** from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM during the final examination week. All exams will be held in our regular classroom (Whitten Learning Center, Room #182). Please make a note on these exam dates in your calendar ASAP, as these are the ONLY dates the exams could be taken, unless in cases of pre-approved emergencies (see below).

Each exam is worth 25 percent of your final grade, for a total of 75 percent. All exams will be in multiple choice format. Each exams will cover all materials taught during the previous four/five weeks of the semester and will be non-cumulative. NO makeup exams will be given by the instructor unless they are requested far in advance with a legitimate emergency (e.g., illnesses, participating in sports or ROTC activities) and with appropriate documentation provided to the instructor (e.g., doctor’s note, letter from sport coach/ROTC officer/job supervisor, etc.).
B. **Thought Essay** (15% of final grade)
This is a short essay assignment based on class readings, lectures, and discussion and should not require any outside research. You will be asked to compare the politics and government of two countries we will cover in the class. You have the options of writing Essay #1 (comparing two advanced industrialized nations - Britain, France, Russia, or China) or Essay #2 (comparing two developing nations - India, Brazil, or Nigeria). **You must write EITHER Essay #1 or Essay #2, but you are required to hand in only ONE essay.** You must choose which essay you will write by **Friday, February 8** in a signup sheet that will be passed on to you that day. If you fail to indicate your choice to me on the sheet, you will be expected to write Essay #1, **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**Essay #1 is due at the beginning of class on Friday, March 8, and Essay #2 is due at the beginning of class on Monday, April 22.** They are due both on soft copy (Safe Assign) as well as hard copy forms. The essay should be between **5 to 6 pages double-spaced** (excluding the title page and bibliography). Please DO NOT write more than the maximum required page length (5 pages). Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in a 1/3 downgrade of your grade in this assignment (e.g., from an A- to a B+).

In compliance with the university’s honor code, the title page of your essay must bear the following statement: “I pledge that this work is entirely my own and that I have abided by the conventions of the University of Miami Honor Code,” followed by a line with the student’s full name and signature. Your essay will NOT be read and graded by the instructor if it does not include this statement. In addition, all students are also required to post a soft copy of the final version of their essay on the Safe Assign link on the course Blackboard so that it could be scanned by the Safe Assign academic integrity software. The instructor will NOT read and grade your papers as long he does not receive the soft file of your essays. All students also need to turn in a hard copy of essay at the beginning of the class on the day it is due (see above).

NO extensions will be accepted unless in cases of excused absences and extreme emergencies, and they will only be granted after appropriate documentation (doctor’s letter, coach’s letter, etc.) has been received by the instructor. If an essay is submitted after the final deadline, they will be automatically downgraded by the instructor by 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., from an A- to a B+) for each day it is late.

C. **Class Attendance and Participation** (10% of final grade)
Regular class attendance and participation is necessary in order for you to successfully complete this course. Together, they count towards 5 percent of your final grade. The primary way to measure your attendance is through an attendance sheet during the last few minutes of EACH class, starting on our second class (Wednesday, January 16). You must sign the sheet, otherwise your attendance will not be recorded and you will be considered as not present/absent by the instructor. This sheet is the only official record for your attendance in the class – NO other forms of records, both verbal or written, are acceptable. In addition to your attendance and participation grade, the instructor will use the attendance sheets to help determine your final grade, especially in borderline cases (e.g., a grade of C+ could be adjusted be a 1/3 letter grade to a B-, if you have a perfect/near perfect attendance record).
**Excessive** number of absences (more than 6 unexcused absences) will result in an unsatisfactory class attendance & participation grade, which in turn can adversely affect your final grade in the course. Excused absence in this course will only be granted for **three** reasons: 1) Participation in an academic activity (field trip, ROTC, athletic trip, and other academic-related activities) – documented by a letter from the sponsoring person/institution of the activity, 2) Illnesses – documented by a letter from a physician, preferably one associated with the University of Miami health center, and 3) Observance of a major religious holy day. Any other absences will be considered as unexcused absences.

In addition to regular class attendance, your participation will also be measured by submitting short analyses of newspaper or magazine articles, regarding the various topics that we will cover each week in this course. The weekly topics and questions that you need to answer will be announced by the instructor on Blackboard by the beginning of Monday’s class. Your analysis of the newspaper or magazine article should fully address each of the questions that are being asked for that week’s analysis. The assignment is due at **the end of Friday’s class**, it should be 1 to 2 double-spaced pages long and should be **typewritten** in a word processor program (a grade penalty will be applied for any news analyses that are not typewritten). You are expected to write these short analyses **each week**, beginning on week #2, with exceptions on the weeks that there is an hour exam scheduled for the class (week #5 and week #9).

**Policy on Plagiarism, Academic Honesty and Academic Integrity:**
Students should be aware that **presenting the work of others so that it appears to be their own work is a violation of moral and professional standards**, one that the Department of Political Science and the university treat very seriously. As prescribed by the university’s honor code, all students are forewarned that the department and the university have a **zero tolerance** policy toward any acts of plagiarism and cheating. Any students that are found guilty of committing plagiarism, cheating, and other acts academic dishonesty will face **strict sanctions** in the form of an **automatic failure** by academic dishonesty (XE) in the **entire** course AND a formal report to the university’s Honor Council. The Honor Council could issue additional sanctions, including but not limited to the **dismissal** of the student from the university. For further information on the university’s academic integrity policy, please visit:

**Classroom Etiquette:**
Please come to the class several minutes before lecture/discussion starts and **do not** leave the classroom before the class has adjourned. If you know that you will have to be elsewhere during the significant portion of a class period, please request an excused leave from the instructor in advance rather than sneaking in or out of the classroom and disrupt the instructor and your classmates in the process.

As a courtesy to the instructor and to your classmates, please **refrain** from using your laptops, cell phones, Blackberrys, I-pods, or other electronic devices **throughout** the class period. Unless you have a medical condition or other documented rationale for using these devices to take your notes, please take your notes the old-fashioned way (using pen and paper). Failure to comply with this policy might result in either the confiscation of your devices by the instructor for the duration of a class session and/or the dismissal of the students from the class.
Please create an atmosphere of civility mutual respect during the class time. The use of profanity, foul language, name-calling, and any obscene gestures during class lectures and discussions are strictly prohibited. The instructor reserves the right to ask any violators of this policy to leave the classroom should there be any serious violations to this policy.

**Required Readings/Textbooks:**
There are two required textbooks in this course. They all have been ordered from and are available at the University of Miami Bookstore. Be sure to buy ONLY the edition of the texts specified below. You are welcome to purchase the texts from Internet providers such as Amazon.com if you want to acquire them at a fraction of the price charged by the bookstore. A copy of the second textbook (Lim) is also available on 3-hour reserve at the Richter Library.


**Journal Articles**
In addition to the above textbooks, some the assigned readings in this course are drawn from various articles in peer-reviewed academic journals. The instructor will make post these articles on the course Blackboard.

**WEEKLY OUTLINE OF TOPICS, READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**

**PLEASE NOTE:**
1) You are expected to read all readings for the upcoming week’s topic approximately one week before they are discussed in class (e.g., read week #2 readings during week #1).

2) The instructor reserves the right to change any of the readings listed below and/or add new reading assignments into the course schedule at anytime during the semester.

3) Unless otherwise noted, Mondays and Wednesdays are generally lecture days, while Fridays are class discussion days. Lecture notes will be posted after Wednesday’s class.

4) In addition to lectures, the instructor will occasionally show DVDs and YouTube clips during class sections. The titles of these videos will be announced later.

**Module I: Theories & Themes of Comparative Politics**

Week #1 (January 14, 16 & 18): Why Should We Study Comparative Politics? Methods of Doing Comparative Politics (no discussion this week)

**Readings:**
Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph (later abbreviated as KKJ), chapter 1 (“Introducing Comparative Politics”).

Lim, chapter 1 (pp. 1-28) & chapter 2 (pp. 31-65).
Week #2 (January 21, 23 & 25): Theories of Comparative Politics  
Reading: Lim, chapter 3 (pp. 67-101).

Week #3 (January 28, 30 & Feb 1): Democracy and Democratic Transitions  
Reading: Lim, chapter 6 (pp. 179-220).

Week #4 (February 4, 6 & 8): Political Economy of Development  
Thought Essay choice is due on Friday, February 8  
Reading: Lim, chapter 4 (pp. 105-137) & chapter 5 (pp. 139-178).

Week #5  
February 11: Exam #1 Review Session (in class)  
February 13: EXAM #1 in our regular classroom (WLC, Room #190), 10:10-11:10 AM  
February 15: Class on how to conduct Library Research and write Research Paper for those writing Essay #1 (taught by Library Staff)

Module II: Politics and Government of Advanced Industrialized Nations

Weeks 6 (February 18, 20 & 22): U.K. (British) Politics  
Readings: KKJ, chapter 2 (by Joel Krieger).

Posted on Blackboard.

Week #7 (February 25, 27 & March 1): French Politics  
Readings: KKJ, chapter 3 (by Mark Kesselman).

Posted on Blackboard

Week #8 (March 4, 6 & 8): Russian Politics  
Readings: KKJ, chapter 8 (by Joan Debardeleben).

Posted on Blackboard.
ESSAY #1 is due on Friday, March 8 at the beginning of class

SPRING RECESS (March 9 – 17)

Week #9
March 18: Exam #2 Review Session (in class)

March 20: EXAM #2 in our regular classroom (WLC, Room #190), 10:10-11:10 AM

March 22: Class on how to conduct Library Research and write Research Paper for those writing Essay #2 (taught by Library Staff)

Module III: Politics of Developing Countries

Weeks #10 & 11 (March 27, 29, April 1, 3 & 5): Chinese Politics
NO CLASS on March 25

Readings:
KKJ, chapter 14 (by William A. Joseph).


Week 12 (April 8, 10 & 12): Indian Politics

Readings:
KKJ, chapter 6 (by Atul Kohli & Amrita Basu)


Weeks #13 (April 15, 17 & 19): Brazilian Politics

Readings:
KKJ, chapter 9 (by Alfred P. Moreno).

Week #14 (April 22, 24): Nigerian Politics

Readings:
KKJ, chapter 8 (by Darren Kew & Peter Lewis).

ESSAY #2 is due on Monday, April 22

April 26: Course wrap-up, review for final exam.

FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, MAY 3, in our regular classroom (WLC, Room #190), from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM