

AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Syllabus 3

This course is designed to provide students with the conceptual tools necessary to develop an understanding of some of the world's diverse political structures and practices. We will examine six countries in detail: Great Britain, Russia, China, Mexico, Nigeria, and Iran. These countries are taught because they are excellent examples of the six core topics of a comparative course. These topics include methodology, power, institutional structure, civil society, political/economic change and public policy.

Course Materials

Assigned Textbook: Hauss, Charles. *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning, 2006.

Instructor assigned articles from: the **BBC, the *Economist*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Foreign Policy*, *Foreign Affairs***, and others as appropriate. [CR16]

CR16—The course includes supplemental readings, including primary source materials and contemporary news analyses, that strengthen student understanding of the curriculum.

Course Outline

The following is a listing of topics/sample readings. Please consult your assignment calendar for specific due dates of actual assignments.

I. Introduction to Comparative Politics (Weeks 1–2)

- A. Reasons for Comparison
- B. Methods of Comparison

- 1) Normative/empirical, direct/inverse relationships, correlation/causation [CR14]
- 2) Issues to Compare [CR1]
- 3) Democracy/authoritarian, unitary/federal, presidential/parliamentary,
- 4) SMD/proportional, pluralism/corporatism, merit/patronage, OECD/LDC, modernization/globalization/fragmentation, judicial autonomy
- 5) Sources of Authority and Power [CR2]

CR14—The course introduces students to the analysis and interpretation of data relevant to comparative government and politics.

CR1— The course provides instruction in introducing students to comparative politics.

CR2— The course provides instruction in the topics of sovereignty, authority, and power.

Readings

- Hauss: Chapter 1: *Seeking New Lands, Seeing with New Eyes* (voc)
Chapter 2: *Industrialized Democracies* (voc)
Democratization Briefing Paper with questions
Comparison/Democracy Reading Packet with questions
“The Mountain Man and the Surgeon”, *Economist* 12/20/05
“Democracy as a Universal Value”, *Journal of Democracy*, 7/99

Activities

1. Using CIA World Factbook, Freedom House Web site, the *Economist* Web site,

Construct comparison chart featuring population, territory, HDI, GDP, PPP, Economic, Political/Civil Liberty Freedom figures. Analyze relationships using methods. [CR14]

2. Using textbook, complete chart comparing six countries and United States on issues.

CR14—The course introduces students to the analysis and interpretation of data relevant to comparative government and politics.

CR15—The course requires students to write analytical and interpretive essays frequently.

Assessment

Test: 50 multiple-choice questions, short answers, and interpretive essay [CR15]

CR8—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying Great Britain.

II. Democratic v. Authoritarian Regimes (Weeks 3-6)

A. Great Britain [CR8]

1. Historical Foundations: Constitutionalism, Legitimacy, [CR2] Nation/State, Liberal Democracy [CR2]
2. British Citizens, Society, and the State: Demographics, Cleavages, Civil Society [CR4]
3. Political Institutions: Political Parties/Elections, Westminster Model [CR3]
4. Role of EU: Sovereignty [CR2]
5. Public Policy: Thatcherism, N. Ireland, Role of NHS, Immigration, Terrorism

CR2—The course provides instruction in the topics of sovereignty, authority, and power.

CR4—The course provides instruction in the topics of citizens, society, and the state.

CR3—The course provides instruction in political institutions.

CR2—The course provides instruction in the topics of sovereignty, authority, and power.

CR16—The course includes supplemental readings, including primary source materials and contemporary news analyses, that strengthen student understanding of the curriculum.

Readings

- Hauss: Chapter 4: *Great Britain* (voc)
British Election of 2005 briefing paper with questions
Great Britain reading packet with questions
“Brown Speech Promotes Britishness,” BBC 1/19/06
“Blair to Push Ahead With Reforms”, BBC 2/1/06 [CR16]

Activities:

1. Watch current Prime Minister’s Question Hour (from CSPAN)
2. PM Question Time Simulation: Party and Topic to be assigned.
3. Analyze recent election returns for trends. [CR14]

CR14—The course introduces students to the analysis and interpretation of data relevant to comparative government and politics.

Assessment:

Test: 50 multiple-choice questions and short-answer (ID and interpretive essay) [CR15]

CR15—The course requires students to write analytical and interpretive essays frequently.

B. Iran [CR9]

1. Historical Foundations: Revolution (Political Change) [CR5]
2. Iranian Citizens, Society, and the State: Globalization/Fragmentation [CR4]
3. Political Institutions: Role of Islam, Theocracy [CR3]
4. Policy: Petropolitics, Nuclear Weapons, Iraq

CR9—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying Iran.

CR5—The course provides instruction in political and economic change.

CR4—The course provides instruction in the topics of citizens, society, and the state.

CR3—The course provides instruction in political institutions.

Readings:

Hauss: Chapter 13: *Iran* (voc)

Iran briefing paper with questions

Globalization briefing paper with questions

Iran reading packet with questions

“Victory for a Religious Hardliner in Iran,” *Economist* 6/27/05

“As Iran Presses Its Ambitions, Its Young See Theirs Denied,” *Washington Post* 4/24/06

Activities:

1. Watch movie on Iranian Revolution (PBS)
2. Complete comparison chart for Great Britain and Iran.
3. Class Debate: “Should Iran develop nuclear weapons?”
4. Analyze recent election returns for trends.
5. Evaluate economic indicators.

Assessment:

Test: 60 multiple-choice questions and short answer (ID and essay)

CR12—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying Russia.

CR5—The course provides instruction in political and economic change.

CR4—The course provides instruction in the topics of citizens, society, and the state.

CR3—The course provides instruction in political institutions.

III. The Crisis of Communism (Week 6–10)

A. Russia [CR12]

1. Historical Foundations: Soviet Union/Russia, glasnost, post-Cold War [CR5]
2. Russian Citizens, Society, and the State [CR4]
3. Political Institutions: President/PM, Illiberal Democracy [CR3]
4. Policy: G8, Chechnya

Readings

Hauss: Chapter 8: *Current and Former Communist Regimes* (voc)

Chapter 9: *Russia* (voc)

Russia’s Elections Briefing Paper with questions

Illiberal Democracy and Russia Briefing paper with questions

Russia Reading Packet with questions
 "Still Calling for Help (Chechnya)", *Economist* 1/13/05
 "The Shock of the Old", *Economist* 1/20/05
 "The Kremlin's Control Freak", *Economist* 9/16/04
 "Vladimir Who?", *Economist* 2/9/06

Activities:

1. Watch movie on Russian Revolution. (People's Century).
2. Watch movie on Gorbachev coup attempt (ABC special).
3. Complete comparison chart of institutions/policies between USSR/Russia.
4. Complete comparison chart of Russia/Iran/Great Britain.
5. Class Debate: "Should Russia be in the G8?"
6. Analyze recent election results for trends.
7. Evaluate economic indicators.

Assessment:

Test: 60 multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions (ID and interpretive essay) [CR15]

CR15—The course requires students to write analytical and interpretive essays frequently.

B. China [CR7]

1. Historical Foundations: Revolution, Cultural Revolution, Economic Modernization [CR5]
2. Chinese Society: Rich/Poor Cleavages
3. Political Institutions: Guanxi, Corruption, Mass Line, Democratic Centralism
4. Policy: Privatization, Google, Falun Gong, Taiwan and Tibet [CR6]

CR7—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying China.

CR5—The course provides instruction in political and economic change.

CR6—The course provides instruction in public policy.

Readings

Haus: Chapter 10: *China* (voc)
 Briefing Paper on China with questions
 China Reading Packet with questions
 "Country Profile: China." BBC
 "China's Intolerance of Dissent," BBC 3/8/05
 "Worried in Beijing", *Economist* 8/5/99
 "Great Leap Forward," *Economist* 9/30/04

Activities

1. Watch movie on Chinese Revolution (People's Century)
2. Watch movie on Tiananmen Square (ABC special)
3. Watch movie on China's economy (*Wall Street Journal*)
4. Create comparison chart for China/Russia/Iran/GB
5. Class Simulation: CCP leading small group economic proposals
6. Analyze and evaluate economic indicator data [CR14]

CR14—The course introduces students to the analysis and interpretation of data relevant to comparative government and politics.

Assessment

Test: 60 multiple-choice and short-answer questions (ID and essay)

CR10—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying Mexico.

CR6—The course provides instruction in public policy.

IV Emerging Economies (Weeks 11-14)

A. Mexico [CR10]

1. Historical Foundations
2. Mexican Citizens, Society, and the State
3. Political Institutions: Camarilla, Corporatism, Legitimate Elections
4. Public Policy: NAFTA, Chiapas, Immigration, Structural Adjustment [CR6]

Readings

Hauss: Chapter 11: *The Third World* (voc)
Chapter 16: *Mexico* (voc)
Briefing paper on Mexico with questions
Mexico reading Packet with questions
“Redrawing the Federal Map”, *Economist* 3/27/03
“Putting The Brakes on Change”, *Economist* 7/10/03
“At Least I’m No Dictator, says Mr. Fox”, *Economist* 9/8/05
“The Sinking of a Flagship”, *Economist* 2/23/06
“The War on the Border Streets,” *Economist* 6/30/05
“A Few Shots at Power”, *Economist* 9/18/03

Activities

1. Watch movie on Mexican economy (*Wall Street Journal*).
2. Create comparison chart for Mexico/China/Russia/Iran/Great Britain.
3. Simulation: Brown Choices Exercise: Mexico at the Crossroads.
4. Analyze recent political election data for trends. [CR14]
5. Evaluate economic indicator data. [CR5]

CR14—The course introduces students to the analysis and interpretation of data relevant to comparative government and politics.

CR5—The course provides instruction in political and economic change.

Assessment

Test: 60 multiple-choice with short answers (ID and essay)

CR11—The course uses concrete examples and discusses contemporary political changes in studying Nigeria.

B. Nigeria [CR11]

1. Historical Foundations: Colonialism, Military Coups, Authority
2. Nigerian Citizens, Society, and the State
3. Political Institutions
4. Public Policy: Corruption, Terrorism, Poverty, Oil [CR6]

CR6—The course provides instruction in public policy.

Readings

- Hauss: Chapter 15: *Nigeria* (voc)
- Briefing paper on Nigeria with questions
- Nigeria reading packet with questions
- “Nigeria’s Country Controversy”, BBC 4/5/06
- “The Bumpy Road to Democracy”, *Economist* 4/23/03
- “Reforming the Nearly Unreformable”, *Economist* 8/5/04
- “Guns, Boats, and Oil”, *Economist* 5/12/05
- “When the Cops Are Robbers”, *Economist* 8/18/05
- “The Fat of the Land”, *Economist* 8/27/05
- “A Spectre of Turmoil and Conflict”, *Economist* 2/23/06

Activities

1. Create comparison chart with Mexico/China/Russia/Iran/Great Britain.
2. Class Debate: “Future of Nigeria.”
3. Analyze recent political election data.
4. Evaluate economic indicator trends.

Assessment

Test: 60 multiple-Choice questions and short answers (ID and essay)

V. Final Comparisons (Weeks 15–16)

- A. Compare six comparative government countries and United States to review for AP Exam **[CR13]**

Activities

1. Country Group presentations/discussion
2. Complete final comparison charts **[CR13]**

Assessment

Final Exam: To be taken before the national AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam scheduled for May 7.

CR13—The course teaches students to compare and contrast political institutions and processes across countries and to derive generalizations.

VI. Country Updates and Cultural Nights

You will be assigned to a country group. As a group, you are responsible for filing weekly article summaries for the six countries that we are studying. These will be distributed to each student and will form the basis for the current events discussion each Friday. In addition, your group will provide the refreshments for the night school session on your country. You may either provide the appropriate items (such as tea and scones for Great Britain) or schedule a dinner meeting at an appropriate restaurant (Chinese or Mexican food are the easiest for this). Use your imagination—it makes it more enjoyable for all of us. We will then celebrate the completion of the AP Exam with International Night at my house—potluck ethnic dishes—more information later.

VII. Night School (7–9 p.m. Wednesday Nights—Second Semester)

“Night school” is offered during the second semester as a way to review major concepts in American and comparative government. Each session will offer an opportunity to discuss in-depth the challenges facing the governments that we are studying. We will also use this time to practice essay reading/writing in a small-group setting. I will alternate Wednesday evening session between American and comparative topics. Please see the calendar for exact dates and topics.