

PSC101 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor: Bing Powell (gb.powell@rochester.edu)
MWF 1:00-1:50

Fall 2006
Lattimore 201

Objective. This course is an introduction to the study of political science and comparative politics. We focus on how citizens may be able to control public policies in different modern democracies. We begin by briefly applying some of these ideas to the American political system. We then turn explicitly to the politics of contemporary Britain, Russia and Germany. We shall be comparing these systems with each other, with the United States and, occasionally, with other democracies.

Organization. The course meets three times a week. Mondays and Wednesdays will be devoted primarily to lectures and Friday to discussion--of both lectures and reading. You should sign up for a specific Friday discussion section. The syllabus indicates the main themes of the two lectures each week and the required readings for that week. It will be easier to follow the lectures, if you do the assigned reading first. **A midterm examination on Oct. 20 covers lectures and required reading to that point, including all of Britain and Northern Ireland.** In the period after the midterm we shall turn to Russia and Germany. **There is an optional quiz after the six lectures on each of these countries.** The final examination covers all lectures and required reading; it is scheduled by the Registrar on Tuesday Dec 19 at 19:15 pm. This date and time cannot be changed. Do not arrange to leave for Christmas vacation before taking the examination on this date.

Grades. Grades will be based on the midterm examination (20%), two brief optional quizzes (10 % each,) discussion in Friday sessions (10%,) and the final examination (50%). Skipping a quiz increases the midterm and final weights by 5% each. Students interested in writing an optional paper (for 25% of final course grade), about ten pages in length, applying the concept of citizen control/influence on policymaking in democracies to another country, should talk with the instructor. Only papers on this topic are acceptable. Papers are due on the last day of classes, December 13.

Assigned Readings: The assigned readings are important part of the course and will be discussed in the Friday conversations.

Purchase: Most of the required readings in the course are from Gabriel A. Almond, Russell Dalton, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Kaare Strom, Comparative Politics Today: A World View. 8th Update ed., 2006, Ch. 1-8, 10, 12, 19. (The text is called Almond in the syllabus.) The readings each week are not long, but they are dense. They repay careful rereading and the syllabus is designed to allow for rereading and comparison.

ALSO: Various websites are shown in the syllabus; these may be altered in lecture.

Reserve: Optional: if you wish to learn more about Britain, Northern Ireland, Germany and Russia, it may be helpful to supplement the Almond chapters by reading Ian Budge, et al., *The New British Politics* on Britain; O'Leary and McGarry, The Politics of Antagonism or McKittrick and McVae, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, on Northern Ireland; David Conradt, The German Polity; Thomas Remington, Politics in Russia. All of these are on Reserve in Rush Rhees Library.

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<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Themes</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Sept. 6	Democratic Systems Today	Syllabus; Almond, Ch.1 all; (Skim Ch. 2, esp. 37-44;)
Sept. 8	No Class Today - Convocation	Ch. 3, esp. 46-52.
Sept.11	Comparing Democracies	Almond Ch. 6, pp. 101-111.
Sept 13	U.S.A. in Comparative Perspective	Almond Ch. 19: Ranney: "US", esp 744-51, 760-70, 765-77
Sept 15	<u>Section meetings begin.</u>	Discuss: why gov?, concepts, citizen control, US democracy
Sept 18	Britain as Majorit- arian Democracy	Almond, Ch. 8: Rose, England, esp. 167-77.
Sept 20	British Political Culture	Almond, Ch. 8, esp. 177-80, 183-86.
Sept 22	Discuss: British political system (Compare to US)	
Sept 25	Britain: Party Competition	Almond, Ch. 8, "England" esp. 180-83, 190-94.
Sept 27	Britain: Issues, Voters, 1983, 1997, 2005 elections	Almond, Ch. 5, 84-926.
Sept 29	Discuss: British party competition; interest aggregation & competitive parties	
Oct. 2	Britain: Consensual Style --Majoritarian System	Almond, Ch. 8, "England," esp.172-77, 186-89,194-204.
Oct 4	Britain & US: Elections and Policy Control	Ch. 4, 65-73; Ch. 7,129-40.
Oct 6	Discuss: Interest groups; policymaking and citizen control-US and Britain	
Oct 9	Majoritarian Failure Tragedy in N. Ireland	Website: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ 1 st 3 "Background" essays
Oct. 11	N. Ireland: Search for Accommodation	(Darby, Darby, Fitzduff)
Oct. 13	Discuss: Northern Ireland	
Oct 16	FALL BREAK: NO CLASS	No Additional Reading
Oct. 18	Review for Midterm	
Oct. 20	MIDTERM EXAMINATION	Exam covers all lectures and required reading.

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<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Themes</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Oct. 23	Russia: Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy?	Almond, Ch. 12: Remington, "Russia" 365-72.
Oct. 25	Russia: Constitutional Arrangements	Almond, Ch.12:372-81, 403-07. (Also, Ch. 2, 37-43).
Oct. 27	Discuss: Russian "transition" & current constitution	
Oct. 30	Russian Political Culture	Almond, Ch.12, Russia,381-88.
Nov. 1	Russia: Parties, Voters, Parties, Elections	Almond, Ch. 12, 393-399.
Nov. 3	Discuss: Russian culture, party competition, elections	
Nov. 6	Russia: Presidential Domination of Policy-making	Almond,Ch.12, 388-93, 399-411
Nov. 8	Russia: Elections and Limits of Citizen Control	Schliefer "Normal Country" <i>Foreign Affairs</i> M-Apr 2004
Nov. 10	Discuss: Russian Democracy	<u>Optional Quiz on Russia</u>
Nov. 13	Germany: Development of a Democratic Culture	Almond Ch. 10, Dalton: "Germany," 261-71,277-86.
Nov. 15	Germany: Constitution	Almond Ch. 10, 271-77, 296-97; Ch. 6:101-111
Nov. 17	Discuss: German history, culture, constitution	
Nov. 20	Germany: Rules, Competition, Gov. Formation	Almond 115-122,
Nov. 22	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING VACATION	Reread 84-92
Nov. 24	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING VACATION	
Nov. 27	Germany: Party Competition	Almond, Ch. 10, 290-99
Nov. 29	Germany: Issues and Voters; 2005 Election	
Dec. 1	Discuss: German party system, elections, government	
Dec. 4	Germany: Consensual Style, Mixed System	Almond,Ch. 10, 287-90,299-311; Reread Ch. 4, 65-71.
Dec. 6	Germany: Elections and Citizen Control	
Dec. 8	Discuss: German Democracy	<u>Optional Quiz on Germany</u>
Dec. 11	Elections and Citizen Control: Britain, Germany, US, Russia.	Almond,Ch 7, skim all, but especially 148-50.
Dec. 13	Democratic Systems, Course evaluations.	No additional reading.

The examination will cover all lectures and all required readings. It is scheduled by the Registrar for Friday Dec 19 19:15 pm