

PSC101 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor: Bing Powell (Email: gb.powell@rochester.edu) MWF 10:00-10:50 Hoyt Aud
Fall 2009

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 countries.

Organization. The course meets three times a week. Mondays and Wednesdays will be devoted primarily to lectures and Friday (usually) to discussion--of both lectures and reading. You should sign up for a specific discussion section; (there is one discussion section that meets on Wednesday, the others on Friday.). The syllabus indicates the main themes of the two lectures each week and the required readings for that week. **A midterm examination on October 16 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 Thursday December 17 at 12:30. This date cannot be changed. Do not arrange to leave for winter vacation before taking the examination on this date.

Grades. Grades will be based on the midterm examination (20%), two brief optional quizzes (10 % each,) class discussion (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. It is acceptable, but not required, to use other democracies in the main text. Papers are due Wednesday December 9.

Assigned Readings: The assigned readings are an important part of the course and will be discussed in the discussion sections.

Purchase: Most of the required readings in the course are from Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Kaare Strom and Russell Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*, Updated 9th ed., 2010, Ch. 1-8, 10, 12, 19. (The text is called *CPT* in the syllabus.) The readings each week are not long, but they are dense. The country chapters in particular will repay careful rereading and the syllabus is designed to allow for this rereading.

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 *CPT* chapters by reading Anthony Birch, *The British System of Government*, on Britain; O'Leary and McGarry, *The Politics of Antagonism* or McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, on Northern Ireland; David Conradt, *The German Polity*; M. Steven Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia* or Thomas Remington, *The Russian Political System*. 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. 2	Democratic Systems Today	Syllabus; CPT, Ch.1, all.
Sept. 4	NO CLASS.	CPT, Ch.2, skim.
Sept. 7	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY	
Sept. 9	Comparing Democracies	CPT, Ch.3,43-51; Ch.6,101-110.
Sept. 11 esp.	U.S.A. in Comparative Perspective	CPT, Ch. 19 (Ranney) "US", 712-723, 727-738, 742-745.
Sept.14 esp. 190. (Ch.6,101-110).	Britain as Majorit- arian Democracy	CPT, Ch. 8 (Rose) "Britain," 160-173,185-
Sept.16	British Political Culture	CPT, Ch. 8, esp. 153-160, 173-182, 197. (Reread Ch.3).
Sept.16 & 18	<u>SECTIONS BEGIN</u> Discuss: British political system (Compare to US.)	
Sept.21	Britain: Party Competition	CPT, Ch. 8 "Britain," esp. 160-163, 185-190.
Sept.23	Britain: Issues, Voters, 1997, 2005, 2010 elections	CPT, Ch. 5, 81-92.
Sept.25 aggregation	Discuss: British party competition; interest & competitive parties	
Sept.28	Britain: Consensual Style --Majoritarian System	CPT, Ch. 8 "Britain," esp.172-173, 182-185, 190- 197.
Sept.30	Britain & US: Elections and Policy Control	CPT, Ch. 4, 60-74; Ch. 7, 127-138.
Oct. 1	Discuss: Interest groups; policymaking and citizen control-US and Britain	
Oct. 5	FALL BREAK - NO CLASS	http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/
Oct. 7	Majoritarian Failure: Tragedy in Northern Ireland	(CAIN project), 1 st 3 background essays
Oct. 9 Fitzduff)	Discuss: Northern Ireland	(Darby, Darby,
Oct. 12	NI: Search for Accommodation	No Additional Reading
Oct. 14	Review for midterm	Exam covers all lectures

Oct. 16

MIDTERM EXAM

and required reading.

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Themes</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Oct. 19	Russia: Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy?	CPT, Ch. 12 (Remington) "Russia," 355-362.
Oct. 21	Russia: Constitutional Arrangements	CPT, Ch. 12, 362-369,391-394. (Also, Ch. 2, 35-38).
Oct. 23	Discuss: Russian "transition" & current constitution	
Oct. 26	Russian Political Culture	CPT, Ch.12, "Russia," 370-377.
Oct. 28	Russia: Parties, Voters, Elections	CPT, Ch. 12, 381-386, Website TBA
Oct. 30	Discuss: Russian culture, party competition, elections	
Nov. 2	Russia: Presidential Domination of Policy-making	CPT, Ch.12, "Russia," 377-381, 386-395.
Nov. 4	Russia: Elections and Limits of Citizen Control	Schliefer "Normal Foreign Affairs M-Apr 2004
Nov. 6	Discuss: Russian Democracy	Optional Quiz on Russia
Nov. 9	Germany: Development of a Democratic Culture	CPT, Ch. 10, (Dalton) "Germany," 253-263,267-276.
Nov. 11	Germany: Constitution	CPT, Ch. 10, 263-267, 289-293; CPT, Ch. 6:113-120 (& 101-110)
Nov. 13	Discuss: German history, culture, constitution	
Nov. 16	Germany: Party Competition	Reread CPT, Ch 5, 81-92.
Nov. 18	Germany: Issues and Voters, 2009 election	CPT, Ch. 10 "Germany," 280-289. (Website TBA)
Nov. 20	Discuss: German party system, elections, government	
Nov. 23	Germany: Forming Governments	CPT, Ch. 6, 113-120
Nov. 25	THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASS	
Nov. 27	THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASS	
Nov. 30	Germany: Consensual Style, Mixed System	CPT, Ch. 10, 276-280,289-300; reread CPT, Ch. 4, 60-74.

Dec. 2 Germany: Elections and Citizen Control
Dec. 4 Discuss: German Democracy Optional Quiz on Germany

Dec. 7 Elections and Citizen Control No additional reading.
 Dec. 9 Democratic Systems Optional paper due.
Dec. 11 Discuss: Critical Terms - All parts of course

The examination on Thursday, Dec. 17 at 12:30 covers all lectures and readings.