



# **POL 4433: Comparative Government**

**Fall 2012**

**[Steven L. Taylor, Ph.D.](#)**

**Office: MSCX 331**

**Click [here](#) for office hours**

**Phone: 670-3759**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

The basic goal of this course is to introduce students to the basic concepts and methods of comparative politics. The course will provide both the discussion of specific cases, as well as a more general discussion of key conceptual and theoretical issues within the field.

## **READINGS**

There are two required texts for this course:

Draper, Alan and Ansil Ramsay. 2012. *The Good Society: An Introduction to Comparative Politics.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Boston: Longman.

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries.* New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.

Additionally, students will be required to read the following materials (either as handouts, via library databases, or via Dr. Taylor's web site/Blackboard):

Dr. Taylor's [Classroom Rules](#). (*especially* my attendance, plagiarism & Wikipedia policies)

Additional readings as noted below.

## **GRADING/EVALUATION**

Students will be evaluated on a standard 100 point scale (A=100-90, B=89.9-80, C=79.9-70, D=69.9-60, F=59.9-0). Grades will not be curved.

*Keep in mind the following: A=Outstanding, B=Above Average, C=Average, D=Below Average and F=Failing. If you need a particular grade, start working towards it from DAY ONE. It is difficult to be sympathetic to students who “need to get X, but who did not put effort into the course from the start of the term.*

### **Breakdown:**

Exams (3@20%)	60*
Writing Assignments (2@15% each)	30
Presentation	10
	===
	100%

\*10% of each exam comes from your participation in constructing the online study guide

### **Exam Information**

1. Exams will consist of short-answer and short essay questions.
2. No student will be seated for any exam once any other student has completed the exam and left the room.
3. If you are absent for an examination, you must provide verifiable evidence that your absence was unavoidable (e.g., doctor's note). Note: doctor's appointments made for convenience and not medical necessity do not qualify as excused.
4. Make up exam dates will be determined by the professor.
5. All make-up exams will be in a short essay format.

**Online Study Guide.** Students will be expected to contribute weekly based on the readings and the lectures, leaving comments concerning why they added what they added. I will go back and edit the document as needed. The study guide is to be found within the Blackboard course shell.

The exam will be based off the study guide.

Students who failed to participate will not only lose 10% off their exam, but will not be provided the final version of the guide. Also, students who do not contribute to the study guide will not be allowed to participate in in-class reviews.

The exact process will be discussed in class.

**Writing Assignments.** There are two 5-7 page papers in this course. Due dates are listed below. Visit the [Writing Assignments](#) page for further information and questions.

All papers must be submitted (on time) to me as a hardcopy and via Turnitin (within the course shell).

**Participation.** All students are expected to read the assigned materials prior to the start of class. Class discussion is a vital part of any college class.

**Presentation.** Each student will make a brief (10-15 minute) presentation based on materials in the Draper and Ramsay text. Details will be provided in class.

**ADA Policy:** Troy University supports Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which insure that postsecondary students with disabilities have equal access to all academic programs, physical access to all buildings, facilities and events, and are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. Eligible students, with appropriate documentation, will be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills and potential through the provision of academic adaptations and reasonable accommodations. Further information, including appropriate contact information, can be found at the following link: <http://www.troy.edu/humanresources/ADAPolicy2003.htm> .

**Cell Phone and Other Electronic Device Policy.** Use of any electronic device by students in the instructional environment is prohibited unless explicitly approved on a case-by-case basis by the instructor of record or by the Office of Disability Services in collaboration with the instructor. Cellular phones, pagers, and other communication devices may be used for emergencies, however, but sending or receiving non-emergency messages is forbidden by the University. Particularly, use of a communication device to violate the Troy University “Standards of Conduct” will result in appropriate disciplinary action (See the Oracle.) In order to receive emergency messages from the University or family members, the call receipt indicator on devices must be in the vibration mode or other unobtrusive mode of indication. Students receiving calls that they believe to be emergency calls must answer quietly without disturbing the teaching environment. If the call is an emergency, they must move unobtrusively and quietly from the instructional area and notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. Students who are expecting an emergency call should inform the instructor before the start of the instructional period.

## **COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE**

Note: The Professor reserves the right to make adjustments to this schedule as needed.

1/11: Class Introduction

## **Unit I: Basics of Comparative Politics**

A. A Broad Intro to Comparative Politics and Government: D&R, C1 (1/13)

### **1/16 MLK Day Holiday**

B. State, Society, and Culture: D&R, C2-C4 (1/18-1/27)

C. Intro to Political Economy: D&R, C5 (1/30)

D. Who Governs?

1. Authoritarianism, D&R, C6 (2/6, 2/8)

2. Democracy, D&R, C7 (2/10, 2/13)

### **2/17: Exam I**

## **Unit II: Development + Case Studies**

A. Development and Underdevelopment: D&R, C8 (2/20 and 2/22)

B. Developed Countries: US, Sweden, and Germany (2/24, 2/27, 2/29, 3/2)

C. Less Developed Countries: Nigeria, Brazil, and Iran (3/5, 3/7, 3/9)

### **3/9: Paper 1 Due**

### **3/12-3/16: Spring Break**

D. Communist/post-Communist cases: China and Russia. (3/19, 3/21, 3/23)

### **3/26: Exam II**

## **Unit III: Comparative Democracy and Institutional Design. (3/28-4/27)**

1. Introduction and Overview: C1, C2, C3 & C4

Handout on Constitutions

2. Party Systems: C5

3. Cabinets: C6

4. Executive-Legislative Relations: C7

5. Electoral Systems: C8

6. Interest Groups: C9

7. Division of Power: C10

- 8. Parliaments and Congresses: C11
- 9. Judicial Review: C12
- 10. Central Banks: C13

**4/30: Exam III**

**5/7: Paper 2 due online (uploaded to Turnitin within Blackboard) by 2pm**