

POSC 1040 INTRO TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

FALL 2018

SECTION 002: TUES/THURS 11:00AM-12:15PM

211 BRACKETT

PROFESSOR: Dr. Amber Curtis

OFFICE: 230-C Brackett

EMAIL: acurti2@clermson.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tues/Thurs 9:00-10:30am¹

PHONE: 864-656-0213

& by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Comparison is a fundamental aspect of human nature: everything we encounter is inherently evaluated in reference to something else. We cannot truly appreciate something without this relative perspective. Hence, the subfield of comparative politics examines the domestic politics and economics of multiple, and typically foreign, countries in an attempt to generate broader generalizations about important questions in political science. Why are some countries democratic and others authoritarian? Why are some countries rich and other countries poor? How are politics and economics related? This class surveys four country cases (the UK, Russia, China, and South Africa) to introduce students to the main themes, concepts, and methods of comparative analysis.

OBJECTIVES: Through active engagement in class, students will:

- Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts of comparative politics
- Acquire an in-depth understanding of four different countries in order to gain a sense of the histories and challenges faced by similar countries in other regions of the world
- Better comprehend what is/not unique about the U.S. political system
- Develop practical, transferrable skills such as reading comprehension, critical thinking, analytical research, persuasive writing, and public speaking
- Cooperate and communicate with one another to share knowledge and expertise
- Recognize where the course material fits into scholarly dialogue and analyze strengths/weaknesses within an argument
- Identify applicability of course material to personal interests and real-world events
- Learn to differentiate between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations/value/etc.
- Cultivate a strong sense of personal responsibility and the associated pride that results from setting clear goals, being challenged beyond comfort and pushed to excel, overcoming “obstacles”, and truly *earning* the outcome they receive

GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCY: This course fulfills the University’s General Education competency in Social Sciences (which requires students to “Demonstrate an understanding of social science methodologies in order to explain the consequences of human

¹ Drop by anytime within this time; no appointment is necessary and students are received on a first-come, first-served basis. Everyone should plan to come to office hours *at least once* during the semester! Please note that office hours may change some weeks due to faculty meetings and other conflicting obligations. Email is always the best way to get ahold of me, but please allow up to 48 hours for a response.

actions”) and Cross-Cultural Awareness (which requires students to “Demonstrate the ability to critically compare and contrast world cultures in historical and/or contemporary contexts”). Students taking this course will be able to document this competency with the assigned research paper and exams.

REQUIRED READING: You will need the following ASAP...

- Kesselman, Mark, Joel Krieger, and William A. Joseph. 2018. *Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas*. Eighth Edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth. ISBN: 9781337560443.² (Hereafter: KKJ)
- Other assigned readings accessible through Canvas
- Keep up with a reputable news source of your choice (recommended: *The Economist*, *BBC News*, *The Wall Street Journal*, etc.)

RECOMMENDED READING: Should you be so inclined... (these are entirely optional)

- Baker, Andy. 2014. *Shaping the Developing World: The West, the South, and the Natural World*. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.
- Gifford, Rob. 2007. *China Road: A Journey into the Future of a Rising Power*. New York: Random House, Inc.
- LeVine, Steve. 2009. *Putin’s Labyrinth: Spies, Murder, and the Dark Heart of the New Russia*. New York: Random House, Inc.
- Wooten, Jim. 2005. *We Are All the Same: A Story of a Boy's Courage and a Mother's Love*. New York: Penguin Books.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES: Personal responsibility is imperative. All readings and assignments should be done before class on the day they are listed to facilitate lecture and discussion. Please check Canvas and your Clemson email daily for important updates and announcements, as you will be accountable for all information transmitted via these electronic resources. Everyone is expected to pay attention, take good notes, participate actively during class discussions, and be courteous to others.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The course is structured as follows:

Attendance & Participation (0%)³

Note well that there is no “grade” for attendance or participation in this course. That said, it is *impossible* to do well without coming to class every day and being actively engaged. I do not need to know why you are gone on any given day; there is no need to “excuse” an absence. Just know that missing even a single class can have an extremely detrimental effect on your final course grade via its impact on your comprehension of the course material. Class format will vary between discussion, group activities, multimedia presentations, case studies, and lecture. Preparation and participation are critical as the course builds cumulatively upon all earlier material.

² You are more than welcome to purchase the cheaper loose-leaf version with MindTap access: ISBN 9781337807098.

³ I reserve the right to change this at any time if students start taking advantage of this policy.

Assignments (5%)

There are two short assignments that may be submitted any time before their respective due dates. Students are highly encouraged to complete these as soon as possible rather than wait until the last minute. Assignment 1 (worth 2%) is due through Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Friday, September 14th. Assignment 2 (worth 3%) is due through Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Friday, October 26th. Late assignments will be penalized -10 points per day.

Exams (75%)

There will be two closed-book, in-class midterms along with a cumulative final exam. Midterm I (worth 25%) on Thursday, October 4th will cover material from Units I and II. Midterm II (worth 20%) on Tuesday, November 13th will cover material from Units III and IV. The final exam (worth 30%) covers material from all units and will be given at the University-assigned time on Wednesday, December 12th from 3:00-5:30pm in our normal classroom. Mark your calendars now: exams may only be made up in the rare event of a legitimate, University-approved, and appropriately documented circumstance.⁴ (See more on this below.)

Research Paper (20%)

Students are required to write an analytical research paper; further details to follow. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with me early and often to discuss their paper ideas. To underscore the importance of—and high expectations for—this assignment, there is a built-in “Paper Work Day” on Tuesday, November 20th. A hard copy (stapled!) of the final draft is due at 11:00am on Thursday, November 29th. An electronic version must also be uploaded to Turnitin through Canvas no later than midnight that same day. A 10% per day late penalty will be strictly enforced for both components; no grade will be given until papers have been submitted to Turnitin.⁵ Please note: given the closeness between this due date and the end of class, students will not know their paper grade before the final exam! If this is important to you, I must receive your final paper no later than Thursday, November 15th.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Attendance & Participation – 0%
Assignments – 5%
Midterm I – 25%
Midterm II – 20%
Research Paper – 20%
Cumulative Final Exam – 30%

⁴ Be sure to reference p. 27-28 of the 2017-2018 Undergraduate Announcements for more detail (<https://www.registrar.clemson.edu/publicat/catalog/2017/acadReg.pdf>), particularly the section on what constitutes a “medical” excuse. Note also p. 4 of the 2018 Fall Term Undergraduate Class Regulations: “In the event of an emergency, the student should make direct contact with the course instructor, preferably before a class or an exam takes place. Students should speak with their course instructors regarding any scheduled absence as soon as possible and develop a plan for any make-up work. It is the student’s responsibility to secure documentation of emergencies, if required. A student with an excessive number of absences may be withdrawn at the discretion of the course instructor.”

⁵ Note: be sure to back up your work often and in multiple places. Computer/printer/data-loss problems are NOT an acceptable excuse for missing deadlines and are not justification for an extension.

GRADING POLICY: This is a letter-graded course. At the very end of the semester, grades ending in .5 to .9 will be rounded up to the nearest whole number; those below .5 will not be.

- 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 0-59 = F

CLASSROOM POLICY: It should go without saying that students are to adhere to proper and respectful conduct during class, particularly if/when sensitive material is presented and/or conflicting opinions arise.

NO ELECTRONICS POLICY: The use of laptops, cell phones, smart watches, etc. is not allowed during class! Doing *anything* on an electronic device during class time is prohibited. If you violate this policy, I retain the right to confiscate your device until class is over and/or ask you leave so your rudeness no longer disrupts your classmates' right to learn.

EXAM POLICY: Exams may only be made up under extreme circumstances and require appropriate documentation presented to the instructor prior to the date of absence. In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. unanticipated illness, accident, or emergency) documentation must be provided upon return to class. For illness, documentation should include an official note from a doctor or clinic. If the instructor approves a make-up exam, it must then be taken within one week of the original test date listed in the syllabus, except under extreme circumstances approved by the instructor.

CANCELLATION POLICY: If, for some reason, I am more than ten minutes late to class, a volunteer student should call the main Political Science office (864-656-3233) for an update or check with the POSC office staff in 232 Brackett. If class or office hours need to be cancelled unexpectedly, I will send an email and post a notice on Canvas in advance. In the event of inclement weather or power outages, we will follow the University's protocol as follows: "Any exam that was scheduled at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be given at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any assignments due at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any extension or postponement of assignments or exams must be granted by the instructor via email or Canvas within 24 hours of the weather related cancellation."

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: Violations of academic honesty, including cheating or plagiarism, are unacceptable and will be seriously prosecuted. Plagiarism includes—but is not limited to—borrowing ideas and paraphrasing them within a paper without properly citing them, copying passages directly from sources without enclosing them in quotation marks, purchasing or stealing another person's paper to turn in, or having someone else write an assigned paper. Note that I also consider plagiarism to include submitting your own identical work for more than one assignment or course (aka "double dipping" or "self-plagiarism") without prior approval from both instructors. I highly recommend that you review the "Plagiarism Packet" posted in the "Resources" module on Canvas, as well as the plethora of information on Clemson Library's "Avoiding Plagiarism" website.⁶ If you have any further questions, you should consult Clemson University's

⁶ <http://clemson.libguides.com/AvoidingPlagiarism>

current Undergraduate Announcements catalog for information on rules and regulations related to academic integrity. If you have any doubt about what is or is not permissible, ask first.

Clemson University's official statement on academic integrity is as follows: "As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a 'high seminary of learning.' Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form." See <https://www.clemson.edu/academics/integrity/plagiarism.html> for more information.

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY: Clemson University values the diversity of our student body as a strength and a critical component of our dynamic community. Students needing accommodations for disabilities should make an appointment with the office of Student Accessibility Services ASAP to discuss their specific needs. (See contact info below.) Qualified students must then provide me with a Faculty Notification Letter within the first three weeks of classes to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. I cannot guarantee accommodations for students who notify me of a disability request after this date! Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive and that new Faculty Notification Letters must be presented to each instructor each semester. Please also note that if you require a special testing environment and/or extended time on exams, it is your responsibility to complete the online request to do so through the Test Proctoring Center a minimum of 5 business days in advance of the test date specified on the class schedule below.⁷

Student Disability Services

Suite 239

Academic Success Center Building

836 McMillan Rd.

Box 344060

Clemson, South Carolina 29634-4060

Phone: 864-656-6848

Fax: 864-656-6849

E-mail: studentaccess@lists.clemson.edu

Website: <https://www.clemson.edu/academics/studentaccess/>

TITLE IX POLICY: Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, genetic information or protected activity in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Ms. Alesia Smith is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator, and the Executive Director of Equity Compliance. Her office is located at 110 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.656.0899 (TDD).

⁷ <https://www.clemson.edu/academics/studentaccess/test-center.html>

CLASS SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS

(Subject to change. Please check Canvas & your Clemson email daily for important updates! Make sure to come to class having already done the readings indicated for that day, though note that the specified topic du jour won't necessarily match up with the associated reading.)

PART I: THEMES IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Thurs 8/23: Course Introduction & Overview of Course Themes

- Review syllabus, Canvas webpage, Plagiarism Packet
- Ponder:
 - What is comparative politics? How does it differ from other subfields in political science? What are its main goals, themes, and methods of analysis?

Tues 8/28: NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS (PROFESSOR AWAY AT CONFERENCE)

- Last day to register or add a class or declare Audit*
- Read:
 - Clark, Golder, & Golder (2018) "The Origins of the Modern State" (p. 11-42, on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - What is a "state"? What is a "failed state"? What are the differences between the contractarian view and the predatory view? Which view do you personally think is most correct, and why?

Thurs 8/30: NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS (PROFESSOR AWAY AT CONFERENCE)

- Watch *Commanding Heights*, Part 1 "The Battle for Ideas"
 - Complete study guide
- Ponder:
 - According to the different economic philosophies profiled in the video, to what extent is government intervention in an economy necessary and/or beneficial? Why? Which view do you personally favor?

Tues 9/4: Crucial Concepts in Comparative Politics, Part I: Regime Types

- Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without a W*
- Read:
 - KJG Chp. 1, Sections 1-5 (p. 1-37)
- Ponder:
 - What is "democracy"? Why are some countries more democratic than others? What features distinguish a democratic regime from an authoritarian one?

Thurs 9/6: Crucial Concepts in Comparative Politics, Part II: Economic Ideologies

- Read:
 - "Principles of Communism" excerpt (pg. 41-54) from Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. 1848. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.⁸ (on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - How do we compare and contrast economic systems? How are politics and economics related?

⁸ Accessed from <http://www.marxists.org> on 1/4/16.

Tues 9/11: Crucial Concepts in Comparative Politics, Part III: Development Theories

- Read:
 - Shaping the Developing World: “Underdevelopment and Diversity in the Global South”* (on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - What are the differences between developed and developing countries? Why are some countries richer than others? What theory—if any—accounts for variation in countries’ political, economic, and social development? According to each theory, how would/should countries achieve stability and prosperity? In what ways are

REMINDER: ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE NO LATER THAN 11:59PM ON FRIDAY, 9/14

PART II: CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACIES

(CASE STUDY #1: THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN & N. IRELAND)

Thurs 9/13: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary British History

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 2, Section 1 (p. 38-50)
- Ponder:
 - What are the pros and cons of collectivism versus Thatcherism? Was the Third Way successful in bridging their divide?

Tues 9/18: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary British History, Cont’d

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 2, Section 2 (p. 50-57)
- Ponder:
 - How did things change with the 2010 and 2015 elections? What do things look like after “Brexit”?

Thurs 9/20: Presidential v. Parliamentary Democracy

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 2, Section 3 (p. 58-66)
- Ponder:
 - What are the differences between presidentialism and parliamentarism? What are the pros and cons of each? Is one type of democracy “better” than another? Why?

Tues 9/25: Single-Member District v. Proportional Representation Electoral Systems

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 2, Section 4 (p. 67-77)
- Ponder:
 - Why are electoral systems important? What are the different types of electoral systems out there? What are the pros and cons of each? Which type of electoral system would you rather live under and why? What determines the number of political parties in a country? Are all parliamentary democracies automatically multiparty (vs. two-party) systems, and vice versa? Why or why not? What are the pros/cons of a multiparty parliamentary system? In your opinion, which combination of political and electoral system is “the best”, and why?

Thurs 9/27: Contemporary Issues in the UK

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 2, Section 5 (p. 78-83)
- Ponder:
 - What are the main challenges facing the UK today? How might they be addressed? In what way(s) is the UK unique—or not? What can the UK teach us about politics and economics in other consolidated democracies?

Tues 10/2: Catch-Up Day/In-Class Review

Thurs 10/4: MIDTERM I EXAM

**PART III: DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS
(CASE STUDY #2: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION)**

Tues 10/9: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary Soviet/Russian History

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 13, Section 1 (p. 555-567)
- Ponder:
 - What is Marxism? What is Leninism? How did the Soviet Union operate, and why did it ultimately collapse?

Thurs 10/11: Russia's Democratic & Economic Transition

- IN-CLASS MOVIE (*Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World's Economy*)
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 13, Section 2 (p. 567-575)
 - KKJ Chp. 13, Section 3 (p. 576-585)
- Ponder:
 - How did Russia go about privatizing its economy and instituting democracy? Were these efforts successful? Why/why not?

Tues 10/16: Russia's Authoritarian Reversion

- Read:
 - Putin's Labyrinth: "Getting to Know The Putin"* (on Canvas)
 - Frolov, Vladimir. 2015. "Putin's Leadership Trap." In *Current Debates in Comparative Politics*, ed. J. Tyler Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood, Eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 112-113. (on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - What have Russian politics been like under Putin? Why is Putin so popular?

(continued →)

Thurs 10/18: Contemporary Issues in Russia

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 13, Section 4 (p. 586-597)
 - KKJ Chp. 13, Section 5 (p. 598-606)
- Ponder:
 - What are the main challenges facing Russia today? How might they be addressed? Would you classify Russia today as a democracy or as an authoritarian regime? Why?

PART IV: AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES
(CASE STUDY #3: THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA)

Tues 10/23: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary Chinese History

- IN-CLASS MOVIE (*The Tank Man*)
- Read:
 - China Road*: "Introduction" (on Canvas)
 - KKJ Chp. 15, Section 1 (p. 653-666)
- Ponder:
 - Who are the important leaders in recent Chinese history? What ideas influenced their policies? What impact did their policies have on China economically and politically?

Thurs 10/25: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary Chinese History, Cont'd

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 15, Section 2 (p. 666-673)
- Ponder:
 - In what ways is China an anomaly for comparative politics? What is the post-Tiananmen "deal"? How does the Chinese government ensure citizens' compliance?

REMINDER: ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE NO LATER THAN 11:59PM ON FRIDAY, 10/26

Tues 10/30: China's Political & Economic Systems

- Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without receiving a final grade*
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 15, Section 4 (p. 682-691)
 - KKJ Chp. 15, Section 3 (p. 674-682)
- Ponder:
 - How is the Chinese state organized? How does its population size affect things? What explains China's economic boom? Why has China achieved economic growth without democratization?

Thurs 11/1: Contemporary Issues in China

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 15, Section 5 (p. 691-699)
 - Fallows, James. 2015. "Arab Spring, Chinese Winter." In *Current Debates in Comparative Politics*, ed. J. Tyler Dickovick and Jonathan Eastwood, Eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 135-140. (on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - What are the main challenges facing China today? How might they be addressed? What does the future look like for China, both economically and politically? Will it ever become more democratic?

Tues 11/6: NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS (FALL BREAK)

Thurs 11/8: Comparing Russia & China

- Read:
 - "Avoid Failing Marx." *The Economist*. 17 October 2015. (on Canvas)
 - "Marx After Communism: Marx's Intellectual Legacy." *The Economist*. 19 December 2002. (on Canvas)
- Ponder:
 - In what ways are Russia and China similar? In what ways are they unique? What are the pros/cons of each country's approach to political and economic development?

Tues 11/13: MIDTERM II EXAM

**PART V: THE DEVELOPING WORLD
(CASE STUDY #4: THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA)**

Thurs 11/15: Important Eras, Events, & People in Contemporary South African History

- REMINDER: IF YOU WANT TO KNOW YOUR PAPER GRADE BEFORE THE FINAL EXAM, I MUST RECEIVE YOUR FINAL DRAFT BY THIS DAY ☺
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 11, Section 1 (p. 462-476)
- Ponder:
 - What led to apartheid? What kinds of policies were enacted under it? Who did these affect, and how? When/how did apartheid come to an end? In what ways does is this experience like/unlike those of other multiethnic, postcolonial countries?

Tues 11/20: NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS (PAPER WORK DAY)

Thurs 11/22: NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)

(continued →)

Tues 11/27: South Africa After Apartheid

- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 11, Section 2 (p. 476-483)
- Ponder:
 - What have South African politics and economics looked like since the end of apartheid? How democratic is South Africa now? To what extent has the legacy of apartheid affected present-day South Africa—and how?

Thurs 11/29: Contemporary Issues in South Africa

- RESEARCH PAPERS DUE (hard copy at 11:00am; digital copy to Turnitin through Canvas by midnight)
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 11, Section 3 (p. 483-492)
- Ponder:
 - What are the main challenges facing South Africa today? How might they be addressed?

Tues 12/4: Addressing HIV/AIDS

- COMPLETE COURSE EVALUATIONS ON CANVAS
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 11, Section 4 (p. 492-502)
- Ponder:
 - What does South Africa's experience with HIV/AIDS teach us about disease prevention and cure in the developing world? What approaches have various countries in Africa taken to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic? Why are some more successful than others?

Thurs 12/6: The Developing World in Comparative Perspective

- LAST DAY OF CLASS
- Read:
 - KKJ Chp. 11, Section 5 (p. 502-508)
- Ponder:
 - What prospects do poor countries have for political and economic development? Does any single development theory account for all of the different countries we have studied? Conversely, which theory best explains each individual case?
 - How do all the pieces of the semester (readings, activities, lectures, etc.) fit together? What overarching lessons have you learned from examining these four countries? What can they tell us about other, similar countries around the world?

Wed 12/12: **CUMULATIVE** FINAL EXAM (3:00-5:30pm)

☺ Looking forward to a great semester! Be in touch with any questions or concerns. ☺