COURSE OVERVIEW:

This introduction course will introduce students to some fundamental concepts and “vocabulary” used in contemporary comparative politics. We will examine issues such as what political science is about, political culture, political ideology, political institutions, the relationship between democracy and economic development, and the fundamental differences between democracy and non-democracy. In addition to the theoretical conceptualization, the course will be integrated into a survey of important political systems in the contemporary world, namely industrialized democracies, (post)-communist regimes and the Third World. Through this course, you are expected to develop a familiarity with the politics of these countries and/or systems, to understand important topics in comparative politics, and to be able to utilize comparative methods to analyze some of the current political issues in the world.

REQUIRED TEXT BOOKS:

The following required books are available for purchase at the SU bookstore:


In addition to the required text books, I may also hand out additional readings via ANGEL. You are also highly encouraged to follow current events by reading, for example The New York Times, The Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, MSNBC, CNN, Time, and Newsweek.
ATTENDANCE

Attending class is necessary in order to do well in the course. Exams will cover materials from text books, lectures, video presentations, and class discussions. Your grade will suffer if you fail to attend class. Absence may be granted in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. However, it is your responsibility to contact me before class or as soon as it is humanly possible with official documentations.

GRADING

Your grade is based on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Report</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Midterm

There will be a closed-book midterm exam. Detailed instructions on the format of the exam will be distributed later. The Midterm exam is tentatively scheduled on Thursday April 30th during regular class time. Midterm will cover all materials since the beginning of the quarter. It is your responsibility to study all materials from the text books, lectures, class discussions and video presentations.

Final

There also will be a closed-book Final exam on Tuesday, June 09th from 8:00am to 9:50am. Final will cover all materials since the beginning of the quarter as well, but with a heavier emphasis on materials since the midterm, therefore it is cumulative. Like the Midterm, the Final will include materials from the text books, lectures, class discussions, video presentations, as well as leadership presentations.

Country Report

You are required to write a short country report (5-6 pages, double-spaced, 12 point typed font, such as Times New Roman, with standard margins). Throughout the quarter, we will discuss several major topics in comparative politics, such as communism, electoral systems,
ethnicity, globalization, less-developed countries, liberalism, political economy, political parties, and political violence, etc. Please first select a topic or issue of your interest. And then pick a country to write a country report in which you apply the topic or issue of your selection. Detailed instructions on the country report will be distributed later in class. A one paragraph research proposal is due at the beginning of the class on **Tuesday May 5th**. The proposal is worth **2 points** of your paper. The purpose of the proposal is to help you to get a guided early start on your report. The report is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, May 26th**. Please submit a hardcopy and an electronic copy via the digital drop box on ANGEL.

*Movie Review*

We will be watching two major movies this quarter. You are required to write two short movie reviews (2-3 pages each) to reflect on the movies in the context of comparative politics. Each movie review is worthy of 5% of your grade. Detailed instructions on the movie review will be distributed later.

*Discussion and Participation*

Your participation is a critical part of the learning process; and your participation grade has two components: discussion leadership presentation and class discussion/attendance.

*Discussion Leadership Presentation*

Early on in the quarter, you will be grouped into several discussion leadership teams. Each team will have an opportunity to select a topic from a list of options. No two teams can lead a discussion on the same topic. Therefore, your team should make your decision as soon as possible. On **June 2nd and 4th**, discussion leadership teams will take turns to lead the discussions on the respective issues they have picked. You will be graded individually, with an opportunity to evaluate your peers. Cooperation among team members often yields higher grades. Therefore, it is important that each member of the team contributes as much as possible. More details will be discussed later in class.

*Participation/Attendance*

Your active participation is expected. In addition to my lecture, I expect you to be actively engaged in class discussions. At the beginning of the quarter, the class is to be divided into two groups: Group I and Group II. Individuals in each group are expected to submit one (1) reading summary question each person every other class starting on **Thursday April 9th** and ending on **Tuesday May 26th**. Your question is due by **8:00pm the day before the next**
**day’s class.** Questions are to be posted through a discussion board on Angel. I will compile a list from the questions you submit to guide our discussion about the topic. Once your group is created, I will post a detailed schedule on Angel. Together with your attendance, the process is worthy of 10%.

**Make-up Exams**

Make-up exams may be granted only in documented cases of true emergency. The make-up may be in a different format and will have completely different questions. Contacting me as soon as humanly possible with official documentation will make it more likely that I approve your request to make-up an exam. There will be **NO** make-up exam for a make-up exam. This restricted privilege **may not be repeated** and it is granted solely at the instructor’s discretion.

**Grading Scales**

The following is the SU grading scales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Re-Grading**

If you are in any way concerned about the grade you have received on an exam or an assignment, you should visit me during my office hours. Any student seeking to change his or her grade on an exam or assignment should be advised that the grade is subject to be re-graded in either direction.

**Penalties and Extensions**

Late assignments will incur a penalty of 10% for each day, including weekend days.
first day’s penalty will be incurred by assignments that are handed on the day of the deadline but after the time indicated.

Extensions may only be granted to students with documented medical or family emergencies. You should contact me before the assignment deadline or as soon as it is humanly possible with official documentations. Students seeking medical extensions should note that a doctor’s appointment slip alone is not considered as valid documentation. You must provide a statement, written and signed by the doctor, recommending an extension due to your illness. Students who represent the University for official business, such as athletic events or student interest group events, must contact me **before** you attend such events in order to receive consideration for extensions. You must provide me with proper documentations from your advisor to explain the date of the event, length of your absence, and significance of your participation. The documentation *cannot* be written by a fellow student. I retain full discretion in granting such extensions.

**INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**

Should you have any questions or want to discuss any issues or concerns relating to this course, I am available during my regular office hours. You may also email me to set up an appointment outside my regular office hours. PLEASE NOTE THAT I WILL NOT HOLD REGULAR OFFICE HOURS DURING THE ADVISING WEEK.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND STANDARDS:**

Honesty is the cornerstone of all academic work. Therefore, all students must comply with the University’s regulations on academic honesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but not limited to cheating; knowingly assisting another student to cheat; plagiarism; unauthorized possession of examinations; and unauthorized changing of grades. Any act of academic dishonesty will automatically result in a grade of “zero” for affected work. In addition, any act of academic dishonesty will be referred to University authorities for disciplinary action. For further information regarding the University’s policy on academic honesty, please refer to [http://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/page.aspx?ID=87](http://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/page.aspx?ID=87).

**ANGEL**

You have been added to the ANGEL online system. ANGEL, the web-based course management system, will be used to post course related announcements, readings, resources, assignments, grades, etc. It is your responsibility to check ANGEL and your SU e-mail on a regular basis for course-related material and/or updates. Neglecting to check ANGEL or your SU e-mail is not a valid reason for not knowing about course and/or assignment updates.
Please note that I will only use your SU email or ANGEL to communicate with you. You may also reach me through my office phone number. No private email, such as Yahoo or Hotmail, will be accepted.

In the event of an unexpected circumstance, such as weather condition or natural disaster, etc., ANGEL will serve as an alternative communication channel, if the regular SU email system is down.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that interferes with your performance as a student in this course, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, 296-5740, www.seattleu.edu/SAS/DS. You should also speak to me as soon as possible. If you use the Learning Center to take your exam, please allow at least one week for your exam to be arranged with the Center.

Disability-based accommodations can be arranged only through this process. I will be able to arrange appropriate accommodations for you as soon as I receive the official assessment from Disabilities Services.

WRITING CENTER

Seattle University has a Writing Center that you can go to if you have trouble with your writing assignments. The Writing Center offers students from all majors help with all phases of the writing process – brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revision, and editing. It is staffed by friendly and informative undergraduate writing consultants who believe that anyone can learn to write well and any draft can be developed to serve its writer well. Writing consultants prize lively conversation in a supportive and challenging environment that inspires students to produce their best writing. Primarily not a remedial service, the Writing Center encourages students to visit early and often in their writing process.

Location: LEML 204...Hours: M-Th, 9 am-8:30 pm and F, 9 am-3:30 pm...Phone: 296-6239...Website: www.seattleu.edu/writingcenter

ETIQUETTE

All students will conduct themselves in manner fitting the classroom. In addition to normal courteous and polite behavior, cell phone calls and text messaging, incoming or outgoing, are forbidden. In a class such as this, it is particularly important that students refrain from
unnecessary chattering, whispering, comings-and-going, note passing, etc. Any student
whose behavior distracts me or disturbs classmates will be asked to leave the room.

COMPUTER USAGE DURING CLASS AND COMPUTER RELATED PROBLEMS

Students who use laptops in class must do so exclusively for the purpose of note taking.
Sending text messages, surfing the web, emailing, or playing computer games in class
conveys disrespect to your fellow students and instructor.

It is your responsibility to save and back up your computer work frequently. Only in the
rarest cases will I grant extensions for assignments due to computer failures. If you
anticipate a computer problem, you must contact me no less than 12 hours before the
assignment due date to discuss alternative arrangements.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)
PLSC230 (01 & 02) Comparing Nations ADMIN 307 LEC TTH 10:00AM 12:05PM
Date Topics and Readings
Tuesday, March 31, 2009 Course Overview and Introduction to Comparative Politics
Chapter 1
Thursday, April 02,
2009 The Basics of Nation-State
Chapter 2
Tuesday, April 07, 2009 Nation-state and society
Chapter 3
Thursday, April 09,
2009 Democracy I
Chapter 6; Cases: UK and South Africa
Tuesday, April 14, 2009 Democracy II
Cases: France and India
Thursday, April 16,
2009 Film: The Queen
Tuesday, April 21, 2009 Advanced Democracy I
Chapter 7; Cases: US and Japan; Movie review I due
Thursday, April 23,
2009 Advanced Democracy II
Chapter 7; Cases: US and Japan
Tuesday, April 28, 2009 Summary and Review
Thursday, April 30, Midterm
2009

**Tuesday, May 05, 2009**  
Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism I  
Chapter 5; Cases: Nigeria and Iran; **Country report proposal due**

**Thursday, May 07, 2009**  
Film: The Last King of Scotland  
**Last Day to Drop May 8th**

**Tuesday, May 12, 2009**  
Communism and Postcommunism I  
Chapter 8; Case: Russia and China; **Movie review II due**

**Thursday, May 14, 2009**  
Communism and Postcommunism II  
Chapter 8; Case: Russia and China

**Tuesday, May 19, 2009**  
Political Economy  
Chapter 4

**Thursday, May 21, 2009**  
Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries I  
Chapter 9; Cases: Brazil and Mexico

**Tuesday, May 26, 2009**  
Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries II  
Chapter 9; Cases: Brazil and Mexico; **Country report due**

**Thursday, May 28, 2009**  
Globalization and A Final Look  
Chapter 10

**Tuesday, June 02, 2009**  
Presentation

**Thursday, June 04, 2009**  
Presentation

**Tuesday, June 09, 2009**  
Final Exam: 8:00-9:50AM