POLITICAL SCIENCE 11: INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Objectives and Approach: This course will explore questions and concepts in contemporary comparative politics. Themes include democracy and democratization, the persistence of ethnicity, the causes of civil conflict, the role of the state and political institutions, and the cultural foundations of politics. We will examine and critically evaluate several different approaches to politics, including modernization, Marxist, cultural, institutionalist, and leadership-centered approaches. Cases will be drawn from different regions and historical periods to ground students in the tools of comparative analysis. The major objective of the course is to teach students to think about politics in systematic and comparative terms.

Course Assignments and Grading: Assignments include an in-class midterm, one 5-7 page paper on a topic given by the instructor, and a comprehensive final examination. Class and section attendance is required, and you will be responsible for all lecture materials. You are expected to do the reading for each week and be prepared to discuss the reading in section. In-class tests will include both objective and essay questions. For students whose final exam grades are better than their average for the midterm and paper, the final will count 50% and each of the other two assignments 25%, before adjustment for participation. In the opposite case, each major assignment will count one-third. Grades will be adjusted, upward or downward, for section participation and contributions (10% of the final course grade). Students must complete the midterm, the paper, and the final examination to pass the course. Late papers will be penalized by a half grade per day. Extensions, incompletes, or make-up exams will be given only in exceptionally pressing cases and in accordance with UCSD policy. Petitions must be timely, properly documented, and submitted in writing. All requests for grade changes must be made formally in writing to your TA. Any such requests will cause the entire exam or paper to be reevaluated, and may result in either a higher or lower grade.

Academic Honesty: Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any violation is a very serious matter. UCSD rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Note especially the strict prohibition against plagiarism, i.e., submitting as your own or without proper attribution work done wholly or in part by another person. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are individual, and no collaboration with any other person is permitted. In-class tests are closed-book, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced. Any academic dishonesty will without exception be reported to the student's dean for disciplinary action.

Books: The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore. In addition, a course reader will be available for purchase from University Readers (www.universityreaders.com). For students who do not wish to purchase materials, copies of the books and the reader will be placed on library reserve.


Schedule: There will usually be two lectures and one section per week. Attendance is required. The paper will be due in class on October 20. The midterm is tentatively scheduled for November 3.
Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to provide an overview over the course. You cannot claim any rights from it. In particular, scheduling and dates may change. Although the syllabus should be a reliable guide for the course, official announcements are always those made in class.

September 27: Introduction and Logistics

September 29: What is Democracy?


October 4 and 6: Where Does Democracy Come From?


October 11 and 13: El Salvador and South Africa

Elisabeth Jean Wood, Forging Democracy From Below, pp. 25-144; 150-193.

October 13: Paper prompts handed out

October 18: What Explains the Persistence of Ethnicity?


October 20: When Does Grievance Produce War? (Paper due in class).


October 25 - 27: Yugoslavia


November 1: Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation (in class movie).
November 3: IN CLASS MIDTERM

November 8 and 10: Democratic Stability – Does Culture Matter?


November 15 and 17: Do Institutions Matter? Presidentialism vs. Parliamentarism.


November 22 and 29: What Determines the Number of Parties? Does the Number of Parties Matter?


December 1: Nazi Germany

