INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Course Description
Comparative Politics is a field of Political Science that includes the study of politics in other countries as well as comparisons of political institutions, policies, and behavior across countries. This is an introductory Comparative Politics course and has no prerequisites. We will examine issues of democracy and political development globally and by focusing on three distinctive and important countries: The United Kingdom (Great Britain), Russia, and Nigeria. After a first module that introduces the analytical “tool kit” of Comparative Politics, the readings and lectures will in large part focus on these countries and examine their societies and political history, the behavior of citizens and groups, the impact of political institutions, and public policy challenges.

Course Format and Learning Objectives
POLI 11D features two lectures and a 50-minute discussion section, led by one of the Teaching Assistants, each week. Section attendance is required, and participation will be graded. There will be no section before the first course lecture or during Thanksgiving week. The course has two major objectives: (1) to help you think about and understand politics in systematic and comparative ways, and (2) to give you knowledge and understanding of contemporary politics in the United Kingdom (Great Britain), Russia, and Nigeria. Thus, after completing this class, you should be able to discuss and explain the political challenges that face contemporary societies and the ways in which political decisions are made. Also, you should know well the politics of the three countries we will study in depth, and also the similarities and differences between them. The course will be supported by a Canvas electronic course account, where lecture files and assignments will be uploaded. The syllabus includes a list of study questions for each of four class modules. These questions are designed to help guide your studies, and we will address some of them in class, as time permits.

Course Assignments
Written course assignments include an in-class midterm, a paper on one out of a set of topics given by the instructor (you will have some choice), and a comprehensive (cumulative) in-class final examination. You are required to attend class and weekly discussion sections, and you will be responsible for all lecture and section materials. In-class tests will include both objective and essay questions. On tests, you will be responsible for all lecture and reading materials. There will be no make-up midterm. Incompletes or special exams will be given only for emergencies or recognized disability in accordance with UC San Diego policy. Petitions for any special accommodation must be timely and properly documented. Students requesting accommodations due to a disability must do so well before any assignment due date by providing a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Contact information: Phone: 858.534.4382; E-mail: osd@ucsd.edu; Website: https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/

Grading
All assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, where A = 90-100; B = 80-89.9; C = 70-79.9,
D = 60-69.9, and F = 59.9 or below. Course grades will be based on written assignments (90% of your course grade) and participation (10%). Your written assignment grade will be based on all three written assignments, and you will need to complete them all to pass the course. If your final exam grade is better than the average of your midterm grade and your paper grade, the final will count 50% and each of the other two assignments 25%, before adjustments for participation. Otherwise, each written assignment will count for one-third of the written coursework grade. Participation grades will be based mainly on well-prepared and constructive participation in section discussions and assignments, but you are also encouraged to participate in class and to contact and engage the teaching team or other students in other ways. Note that in most cases your participation grade can change your course grade by at most one-third of a grade (e.g., from a B+ to an A-, or vice versa). If you do not get a passing participation grade, however, the downward impact on your course grade could be larger.

Teaching Team
Kaare W. Strøm will be the principal instructor. Born and raised in the Norwegian town of Arendal (now familiar to many, in slightly twisted form, thanks to Disney), he attended St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN) as an international student and then earned his PhD from Stanford University. He teaches Comparative and European Politics at UC San Diego and has published a number of books and articles on Parliamentary Democracy, Political Parties, Powersharing, and European Politics. He was Study Center Director for the UC EAP programs in Lund and Copenhagen 2002-04 and taught in the Joint UC–Lund University Joint Summer School on Critical World Issues between 2004 and 2008. He has taught a UC San Diego Global Seminar in Copenhagen in 2012 and one in Dublin in 2016. His email is: kstrom@ucsd.edu. He will hold office hours in SSB 384 Mondays 1-3pm and by appointment.

C. Tyler Sharp will be a Teaching Assistant for the course and will be teaching the Friday sections. Tyler is a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at UC San Diego. Prior to joining the department, Tyler studied global politics at UNC Chapel Hill and served as a high school English teacher in Houston, TX. His academic interests are in comparative politics and political theory, centering on questions of democracy, justice, and social movements. Tyler can be reached at csharp@ucsd.edu and in SSB 324. Office hours will be Monday at 10am (in office, outdoors at SSB, or via Zoom) and by appointment.

Samuel D. Williams will also be a Teaching Assistant for the course and will be teaching the Wednesday sections. Sam is a third-year Political Science PhD student specializing in American and Comparative Politics. His research focuses on the political consequences of education policy and specifically the role of education as a tool for political socialization and assimilation. Sam was born and raised near Salt Lake City, Utah. He earned his undergraduate degree in international relations. Sam's office hours are Wednesdays from 2:00 - 3:00 in SSB 347; he is also available by appointment (including over Zoom). His email is: sdwillia@ucsd.edu.

Class Format and Conduct
Class sessions will take place every Monday and Wednesday in Solis Hall 104 at 11:00-11:50. There will be a set of Power Point slides for each class session, and these will normally be posted on Canvas before the beginning of that class, or shortly afterwards. Each student will be assigned to attend one 50-minute section per week. Sections will be held on Wednesdays and Fridays. You are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and sections, and your section participation will be graded. Be sure to attend the section for which you are registered. Be courteous to other students in class and sections and try not to interrupt. Do not eat, text, access social media, or listen to other devices during classes or sections.

Academic Integrity
Fair and effective education requires academic integrity. UCSD rules concerning academic
integrity can be found in the General Catalog. Note that plagiarism - submitting as your own work or without proper attribution something done wholly or in part by another person – is strictly prohibited. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on assignments as well as using unattributed sources (including work you may have done for other courses). Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course will be *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person permitted. We will report any case of suspected academic dishonesty to the Academic Integrity Office. If you are in doubt about the rules or have other questions about academic integrity, please contact the UC San Diego Office of Academic Integrity, access its website, or ask a member of the teaching staff.

**Books and Materials**
The following readings are required and have been ordered by the UCSD Bookstore, which is open for online book orders:


Except for the Powell text, the assigned books have been ordered in print copy by the UCSD Bookstore, though you are of course free to purchase or borrow them elsewhere. Please avoid old editions (11th edition or earlier) of the Powell text, which will be obsolete. Since print copies are difficult to obtain, the Powell text is available only in electronic form, provided by the UC San Diego Bookstore through a digital course materials program called Inclusive Access. This service enables the Bookstore to offer you [instant access](#) to online course materials at the [lowest price possible](#). This program is aimed to help you deal with rising textbooks prices and offers all students access to the materials at the start of instruction. You will immediately have free access to the *Comparative Politics Today* text (Powell) for the first two weeks of class. Login to your course on Canvas and select the Redshelf link to access your digital book. After the first two weeks of free access, your student account will be charged the inclusive access price of $29.18 for access. If, for some reason, you decide that you do not want to purchase this e-book, you can opt-out of the Inclusive Access program by going to the Redshelf link in your Canvas page and clicking “OPT-OUT”. If you opt-out by 10/09/21 (the drop/add deadline) your student account will NOT be charged. If you have any questions concerning Inclusive Access, please contact the Bookstore at textbooks@ucsd.edu or email help@redshelf.com.

We have also requested that course readings be placed on Library e-reserves whenever possible. Please note, however, that because of copying restrictions and the lack of electronic editions, not all required readings will be available on e-reserves. For Library help concerning course reserves, connecting from off-campus, and research support: [https://library.ucsd.edu/ask-us/triton-ed.html](https://library.ucsd.edu/ask-us/triton-ed.html).

**Calendar**
Tentatively, the midterm has been scheduled for **October 25** and the paper will be due on **November 19**. The **final exam will be given between 11:30 and 2:29** on **Tuesday, December 7**. All dates and assignments are subject to change.
COURSE OUTLINE

Sep 27 – Oct 11: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICS

Readings: Powell, chaps. 1-6; Rosling, Intro and chaps. 1-4.

Study Questions:
1. Should nations ever be prevented from forming states, and if so, when and how?
2. How can we best safeguard democracy?
3. What drives the gap and negativity instincts?
4. Is there a best way to choose rulers?

Class Schedule:
September 27: Comparative Politics: What and Why? (Powell, chaps. 1-2)
September 29: States and Nations (Powell, chap. 3; Rosling, Intro and chap. 1)
October 4: Rules of Politics; Constitutions and Political Institutions (Powell, chap. 5)
October 6: Citizens, Parties, and Interest Groups (Powell, chap. 4)
October 11: Public Policy and How It Is Made (Powell, chap. 6; Rosling, chaps. 2-4)

Oct 13 – Nov 1: THE UNITED KINGDOM

Readings: Powell, chap. 7 (Rose).
Bootle, chaps. 1-3, 7-8.

Study Questions:
5. Why are the British so politically old-fashioned?
6. Does the United Kingdom still have political lessons and practices to export?
7. Why Brexit?
8. Has the politics of class been replaced?

Class Schedule:
October 13: A United and Disunited Kingdom (Powell, pp. 132-42 and 153-57)
October 18: Westminster’s World: Winner Takes All (Powell, pp. 143-53 and 164-68)
October 20: Class Politics and Beyond (Powell, pp. 153-64; Bootle, chap. 1)

October 25: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

October 27: Crises and Leaders: Thatcher to Johnson (Powell, pp. 161-72)
November 1: Britain, Europe, and the World (Bootle, chaps. 2-3 and 7-8)

Nov 3 - 17: RUSSIA

Readings: Powell, chap. 11 (Remington).

Study Questions:
9. What parts of Lenin’s legacy are still with us?
10. Why was Russian liberalization so difficult?
11. How has Putin been able to win so many elections?
12. How much of a civil society does Russia have, and why?

Class Schedule:
November 3: Russia and Autocracy (Powell, pp. 298-302; Ostrovsky, pp. 1-8)
November 8: Leninism, Stalinism, and Stagnation (Powell, pp. 302-04; Ostrovsky, pp. 11-53)
November 10: The Fall of Communism (Powell, pp. 302-14; Ostrovsky, pp. 54-120, 140-64, and 174-204)
November 15: Yeltsin’s New Russia (Powell, pp. 304-39; Ostrovsky, pp. 140-64, 174-204, 263-80, and 304-31)
November 17: Putin: Nationalism and Autocracy (Powell, pp. 314-39; Ostrovsky, pp. 263-80 and 304-31)

November 19: PAPER DUE

Nov 22 – Dec 1: NIGERIA

Readings: Powell, ch. 17 (LeVan and Baba).
          Cunliffe-Jones, Prologue and chaps. 1-14.
          Review Rosling, chaps. 1 and 3.

Study Questions:
13. How has its pre-colonial and colonial history shaped Nigeria?
14. Has oil been Nigeria’s curse, or is ethnic strife the bigger problem?
15. What made the 1990s such a decisive decade for Nigeria?
16. Is there a way to clean up Nigeria’s corruption?

Class Schedule:
November 20: Nigeria: An African Giant (Powell, pp. 554-64; Cunliffe-Jones, Prologue, chaps. 1 and 3-5)
November 22: The Social Mosaic (Powell, pp. 564-73; Cunliffe-Jones, chaps. 6-7, 10, and 12)
November 27: A Fragile Democracy (Powell, pp. 573-86; Cunliffe-Jones, chap.13)
December 1: The Trouble with Nigeria (Powell, pp. 587-97; Cunliffe-Jones, chaps. 2, 8-9, 11, and 14)

December 7: FINAL EXAMINATION (between 11:30 and 2:29)