INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Objectives and Approach
This course is an introduction to comparative politics, a field of political science that involves cross-national analysis and area studies of domestic politics in other countries. The course is designed around the issues of democracy and political development. It has two major objectives: (1) to teach students to think about politics in systematic and comparative terms, and (2) to foster knowledge and understanding of the politics of three selected countries: Great Britain, Japan, and Russia. The readings and lectures will in large part focus on these countries. We shall examine each country’s social background and political history, the political behavior of its citizens and groups, how its political institutions operate, and its public policy challenges. The course will be supported by a Ted (Blackboard) account, which you can access at ted.ucsd.edu.

Course Assignments and Grading
Assignments include an in-class quiz with short identification questions, a midterm examination, and a comprehensive final examination. Class attendance is required, and you will be responsible for all lecture materials. In-class exams will include both objective and essay questions. For students whose midterm grade is better than their quiz grade, the quiz grade will be dropped, and the midterm grade will count for 50%, before any adjustment for participation (see below). In the opposite case, the distribution will be: quiz 25%, midterm 25%, and final exam 50%. Finally, course grades may be adjusted up to 10%, upward or downward, for class participation and contributions. Students who fail to complete the midterm and/or the final examination will not pass the course. Extensions, incompletes, or make-up exams will be given only in exceptionally pressing cases and in accordance with UCSD policy. Petitions must be timely and properly documented.

Academic Integrity
Fair and effective education requires academic integrity, and any violation is a very serious matter. The General Catalog spells out the relevant UCSD rules. 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 will be closed-book, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced. Any academic dishonesty will without exception be reported to the UCSD Office of Academic Integrity for disciplinary action. If you have questions about Academic Integrity, please ask the teaching staff or the UCSD Office of Academic Integrity.

Books and Materials
The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore. All readings below are required and will be placed on Library reserve. Please avoid old editions of Powell.


Calendar
There will be two class meetings per week. Attendance is required and you should be prepared to discuss the materials assigned up through that date. Tentatively, the quiz has been scheduled for August 13 and the midterm for August 20. The final exam will be given on Friday, September 4, probably between 11:30 and 1:30 (two hours only), location TBA. All dates and assignments are subject to change, as announced in class or electronically.
COURSE SCHEDULE

August 4-11:  THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICS

Class Schedule:
August 4: What Is Comparative Politics? States, Nations and Governments (Powell, chaps. 1-2)
August 6: Public Policy and Political Institutions (Powell, chaps. 6-7)
August 11: How to Make a Difference: Citizens, Parties and Interest Groups (Powell, chaps. 3-5)

August 13-20:  THE UNITED KINGDOM
Readings: Powell, chap. 8; Berlinski, chaps. 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, and Conclusion.

Class Schedule:
August 13: QUIZ
The Old-Fashioned British (Powell, pp. 148-59; Berlinski, chap. 1)
August 18: Majority Rule; Class to Identity Politics (Powell, pp. 159-79; Berlinski, chaps. 3, 5, and 7)
August 20: Britain from Thatcher to Cameron (Powell, pp. 179-93; Berlinski, chap. 10 and Conclusion)
MIDTERM EXAM

August 25-27:  JAPAN
Readings: Powell, chap. 11; Samuels, chaps. 2, 4, 6 and Conclusion

Class Schedule:
August 25: Electoral and Tectonic Shifts in Post-war Japan (Powell, pp. 294-335; Samuels, pp. 24-45)
August 27: Political Identity, Security and Locality (Samuels, pp. 80-109, 151-179, 180-200)

September 1-3:  RUSSIA
Readings: Powell, chap. 12.; Kotkin, entire; Berlinski, chap. 9.

Class Schedule:
September 1: Soviet Communism and Its Demise (Powell, pp. 336-344; Kotkin, chaps. 1-4; Berlinski, chap. 9)
September 3: Yeltsin to Putin: A New Russia? (Powell, pp. 344-83; Kotkin, chaps. 5-7 and Epilogue)

September 4: FINAL EXAMINATION 11:30 – 1:30 (Location TBA)