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, political institutions, the cultural foundations of politics, the persistence of ethnicity, and the causes of civil conflict. 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 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. Other reading assignments are available on the TED course website.


**Schedule:** There will usually be two lectures and one section per week. Attendance is required. The paper will be due in class on February 3rd. The midterm is tentatively scheduled for February 17th.

**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.*

**January 4:** Introduction and Logistics; Core Concepts.


**UNIT 1: DEMOCRACY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND TRANSITIONS**

**January 6:** What is Democracy? What is Authoritarianism?


**January 11 and 13:** Where Does Democracy Come From?


**January 18: Holiday**

**January 20: Authoritarian Institutions Guest Lecture on China by Victor Shih**


**January 25: Democratization in South Africa**

Sparks, Alistair. *Tomorrow is Another Country*


*Paper topic distributed.*

**UNIT TWO: POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

**January 27, February 1, and 3: Presidential and Parliamentary Democracy**


*Paper due February 3*

**February 8 and 10: Electoral Rules and Party Systems**


“With different rules, some big elections in 2015 would have had very different outcomes.” The Economist, 12/30/2015.

Watch this video:
https://www.facebook.com/cbcnews/videos/10153739225939604/

And this one:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSUKMa1cYHk

And one more:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFt0k6n_HKc

February 15: Holiday

February 17: Midterm

UNIT 3: SOCIETY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

February 22 and 24: Cultural Theories of Politics


February 29: The Collapse of the Weimar Republic in Interwar Germany


March 2: Ethnicity and Politics


**March 7: Civil Conflict**


**March 9: Rwanda**

Martin Meredith, “The Graves Are Not Yet Full,” in *The Fate of Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), ch. 27.