

POLS 100, Autumn 2005

**ISSUES & APPROACHES IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS**

Room 9, TR 2:00 – 3:25 pm

Asma Abbas

2-V, Hall College Centre

[aabbas@simons-rock.edu](mailto:aabbas@simons-rock.edu); x7215

Office Hours: T, 3:30-5:30 pm; W, 2:15-3:15 pm; by appt.

**W**elcome to Comparative Politics! This course is an introductory survey of the field of comparative politics. We will review some of the major concepts, themes, issues and approaches that populate the field. We will also try to situate comparative politics within the larger discipline of political science, and each in turn within the expansive world of the study of politics.

We will attend to the importance of questions in politics: What answers do questions give even before they are actually answered? What is at stake? Why and how are questions asked, and who asks what questions? The course is designed as a comparativist's toolbox containing the various methods and approaches available, and used by political scientists, to study major current and historical political problems, to compare them, to theorise about them, and possibly also to figure out ways to solve them. It will involve a sustained look at the importance, mechanics and problems of these practices as they pertain to issues of modernisation, development and underdevelopment; globalisation; revolution, protest and social movements; ethnicity and nationalism; democracy and democratisation; authoritarianism and corruption; inequality; civil society and political institutions; and anything else that you may wish to talk about. This is to ensure that you leave nothing at the door, and that you bring to the classroom whatever you are thinking and feeling about the world we live in and our role as its citizens.

## TEXTS

### *Required*

Brown, Bernard and Roy Macridis. *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings (CPNR)*

Needler, Martin. *The Concepts of Comparative Politics (Needler)*

Soe, Christian. *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics 05/06 (AE)*

Other required and suggested readings beyond the above-mentioned books have been placed on electronic reserve, and are detailed in the reading schedule that follows.

The films that will be screened over the course of the semester will also be considered part of the course material.

## EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

### *Attendance and Preparation*

You are required to attend class having done the assigned reading for the day. Please bring the text to class.

Active class participation is not only required, it is expected.

We will follow the college attendance policy. Two unexcused absences will earn you an official warning. Three unexcused absences shall result in suspension.

Just so we are all on the same page, there will be pop quizzes in every class that will serve as your attendance for the class. There will be quite a few quizzes (let's call the number "n"), and "n-2" quizzes will count towards your final grade.

### *Written Work*

There are two components of your written assignments for this course.

**First**, each section of the syllabus will correspond to a project, approved by me, that you will complete. This will require your identification of (1) problems and questions within a given set of readings, and (2) current issues to which a certain reading can be applied, to the end of (3) having these two intersect in your written project (about 3-4 pages long). There will be 5 minutes of each session assigned to calling on you randomly to share an outline of your project. Completed projects for one section are to be handed to me on the stated dates.

**Second**, at the end of the semester, you will have a final exam, and submit a case-study derived from, or related to, your projects over the course of the semester. We will discuss this in detail. You will be required to present your work as part of this assignment.

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED, BUT NOT GRADED.

*For course policies on Academic Honesty and Religious Holidays, please refer to the SRC Catalogue, pp. 31-33. For issues of learning skills, and subsequent accommodations, please get in touch with me, and also contact Rebecca Fiske (rebecca@simons-rock.edu).*

### *A sketch of your grade composition*

Class Participation + Quizzes	20%
9 Projects + Final + Presentation	80%

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## CLASS SCHEDULE

- All readings marked with an asterisk are on electronic reserve. The rest are available at the Hart Bookstore. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus—you will be consulted for, and informed of, changes made.

Tuesday, 17 January      Breaking Ice

### ***Part I: Politics, Comparison and Comparative Politics***

Thursday, 19 January      CPNR, pp. 1-17; pp. 19-28

Tuesday, 24 January      CPNR, pp. 29-44

### ***Part II: Contentions in Comparative Politics***

Thursday, 26 January      CPNR, pp. 84-95

STATE, NATIONS &  
BOUNDARIES      \*Tilly, Charles. "Prisoners of the State"

Tuesday, 31 January      CPNR, pp. 96-106

\*Selected Readings (TBA)

**Project 1 due by noon on Friday, 3 February**

Thursday, 2 February      CPNR, pp. 107-134

THE STATE IN GLOBALISATION

Tuesday, 7 February      CPNR, pp. 107-134 (contd.)

AE, #40, #41

**Project 2 due by noon on Friday, 10 February**

Thursday, 9 February      Karl and Schmitter, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," AE, #16  
DEMOCRACY & ITS "OTHERS"      \*Pateman, Carole. "Democracy and Democratisation"

   \*Lijphart, Arend. "Majoritarian versus Consensual Democracy"

Tuesday, 14 February      CPNR, pp. 135-140; pp. 237-265  
DEMOCRACY & ITS "OTHERS"

Needler, Chapter 2

Thursday, 16 February      (Continued from above)

DEMOCRACY & ITS "OTHERS"      AE, #43, #44, #45

Tuesday, 21 February      NO CLASS – Winter Break

Thursday, 23 February      NO CLASS – Winter Break

**Project 3 (midterm project) due by noon on Monday, 27 February**

***Part III: Institutions and Actors in Politics***

Tuesday, 28 February	CPNR, pp. 293-310; pp. 353-378
INSTITUTIONS & INFRASTRUCTURE	*"Presidential vs. Parliamentary Democracy: A Debate" AE, #42
Thursday, 2 March	(contd.)

**Project 4 due by noon on Friday, 3 March**

Tuesday, 7 March	*Stoker, Gerry. "From Government to Governance"
CIVIL SOCIETY	*Putnam, Robert. "Bowling Alone"
	*Foley & Edwards. "The Paradox of Civil Society"
Thursday, 9 March	(contd.)
Tuesday, 14 March	CPNR, pp. 311-352
POLITICAL PARTIES	
Thursday, 16 March	(contd.)

**Project 5 due by noon on Friday, 17 March**

Tuesday, 21 March	CPNR, pp. 379-408
Thursday, 23 March	(contd.)
	AE, Unit 2
Tuesday, 28 March	NO CLASS—Spring Break
Thursday, 30 March	NO CLASS—Spring Break

**Project 6 due by noon on Monday, 3 April**

***Part IV: Political Development, Political Change, Political Action***

Tuesday, 4 April	CPNR, pp. 47-73
	Needler, pp. 39-82
Thursday, 6 April	(contd.)
Tuesday, 11 April	CPNR, pp. 176-201
	AE, Unit 1 (TBA)
	AE, Unit 2, Part D; Unit 3

**Project 7 due by noon on Friday, 14 April**

Thursday, 13 April	CPNR, pp. 202-236
	*O'Donnell. "The State, Democratisation, and Some Conceptual Problems," in Smith, Acuna & Gamarra (eds). <i>Latin American Political Economy in the Age of Neoliberal Reform</i>
Tuesday, 18 April	AE, Unit 4 (TBA)
Thursday, 20 April	AE, #38, #39

**Project 8 due by noon on Friday, 21 April**

Tuesday, 25 April	Needler, pp. 3-12
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	CPNR, pp. 136-168
Thursday, 27 April	*McAdam, McCarthy & Zald. "Introduction: Opportunities, Mobilising Structures, and Framing Processes: Toward a Synthetic Comparative Perspective on Social Movements." p. 1-17
Tuesday, 2 May	*Selections from <i>Social Movements Reader</i> (TBA)
Thursday, 4 May	Project Presentations
	<b><u>Project 9 due by noon on Wednesday, 3 May</u></b>
Wednesday, 10 May	<b>FINAL EXAMS/PROJECTS DUE</b>