

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Department of Political Science

Professor Ian Lustick
Teaching Assistants: Alex De Renzy Channer
Dan Miodownik
Keren Yarhi

Spring 2005

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Political Science 110

This course is designed to introduce students to comparative political analysis. How can the political behavior, circumstances, institutions, and dynamic patterns of change that people experience in very different societies be analyzed using the same set of concepts and theories? That is the question posed by comparative politics in general, and this course in particular. The challenge is made both more difficult and more exciting by including both historical and contemporary societies.

The normal technique for introducing comparative politics to students is to either consider political systems in detail in several large European democracies along with an Asian great power and one or two third world countries, or to examine multiple theories applicable to different dimensions of political life and use examples from many countries around the world to illustrate those theories. This course is organized differently. We will focus on a limited number of monographic studies—book length treatments by leading scholars of specific political questions drawn from diverse geographical and cultural settings. By thinking carefully about how the authors drill deeply into the fabric of the society or problem of interest to them we will see how comparative politics is actually done at the professional level, learn a great deal about a variety of important political systems, and gain powerful insights into the general theoretical questions of interest to these particular authors, including the origins of nationalism, the relationship between states and markets, institutions and identities, causes of ethnic violence, and the relationship between religion and politics in democratic development. Students will also improve their skills for reading and absorbing sophisticated political analysis.

Students are expected to keep up with the reading and to bring their books to class. I will use lectures to establish theoretical and historical contexts for the reading of assigned books and seek to elucidate and evaluate their arguments. Recitation sections will be devoted primarily to intensive discussion of readings and lectures.

Grades in the course will be based on a mid-term, a final examination, and a 5-7 page book report. The book report will compare a comparative politics book not assigned in the course, but chosen by the student and approved by his/her TA, to one of the books assigned in the course. Examinations will combine both short answer and essay questions. Grades will be calculated as follows:

Mid-term Examination:	20%
Book Report:	20%
Performance in Recitation Section	20%
Final Examination	40%

The following books are required for purchase and are available at House of Our Own Bookstore at 3920 Spruce Street.

Stathis Kalyvas, The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe

Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism

Anthony Marx, Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil

James Ron, Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel

Two other books are also required reading:

Yashar Kemal, Memed, My Hawk

Yahya Sadowski, Political Vegetables

Unfortunately, the Yashar Kemal novel, which we will be reading first, is out of print. *Students are urged to search used bookstores and the internet to find a personal copy.* The library has three copies, which are on reserve at Van Pelt. The entire book has been posted on the course's blackboard site for those who fail to acquire copies for themselves. *Similarly, only some forty copies of the Sadowski book will be available for purchase at House of Our Own. Again, students are urged to search bookstores for the book, but the Sadowski volume will also be posted on the course's blackboard site as well.*

Schedule of Classes

Tuesday, January 11: Introduction to this Introduction to Comparative Politics

Thursday, January 13 – Tuesday January 25: Kemal, Memed, My Hawk

Thursday, January 27 – Tuesday, February 8: Gellner, Nations and Nationalism

Thursday, February 10 – Tuesday, February 22: Kalyvas, The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe

Thursday, February 24: Review

Tuesday, March 1: **Mid-term Examination**

Thursday, March 3 – Tuesday, March 22: Marx, Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil

Thursday, March 24 – Tuesday, April 4: Sadowski, Political Vegetables

Thursday, April 7 – Tuesday, April 19: Ron, Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel

Thursday, April 22: Case Studies, Counterfactuals, and the Challenge of Comparative Politics, Review
Book Reports Due