Introduction to Comparative Politics
Political Science 1340 002C
Southern Methodist University Spring 2007

Time: TTH 9:30-11:00
Professor: Michael Lusztig
Office: Carr Collins 204
Phone: 214 768-3530
Office Hours: TTh 11:00-12:00; W 10:00-11:00 and by appointment

Course Description:
This course is intended to introduce students to a core sub-discipline within political science: Comparative politics. The first portion of the course constitutes a discussion of some of the key concepts and ideas pertaining to the comparative study of politics. The remainder of the course examines the politics of a number of countries: specifically Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico and (possibly) Brazil.

Course Requirements:

Annotated Bibliography** due Mar 22*  15%
4-6 Page Term Paper** due Apr 10*  20%
Mid term exam Mar 08  20%
Quizzes Feb 08;Mar 01;Mar 29;Apr 19  15%
Final Exam May 05 (3:00-6:00)  25%
Professionalism  5%

*Late assignments lose three points per day (including weekends). Assignments that are more than one week late will not be accepted. In the interest of fairness, no excuses (barring documented illness, injury, or family emergency) will be accepted.

Quizzes:
Quizzes will be on the readings only. These are open note – not open textbook! – quizzes. They will take 15 minutes, and will put a premium, therefore, on good reading notes.

**Writing Assignments:
There are two small writing assignments for this class. The first is an annotated bibliography; the second is a short research paper. Although it is due first, the annotated bibliography is actually the bibliography for your research paper. You will be graded on the quality – not the quantity – of your research. Specifically, you will annotate (write a two paragraph note about) your six most important sources. We will have a class dedicated to this assignment and more details will be presented then. The research paper will be on the country of your choice. You will be asked to explain the political stability, or lack thereof, in that country.

Attendance Policy:
You are expected to attend each class. Failure to do so will almost certainly affect exam performance. In addition you will be penalized 1.5 percent of your overall class grade for every class for which you do not have an excused absence. Please note that except for documented illness, injury or emergency, you must request an excused absence prior to the class that you miss. If you come late to class, it is your responsibility to ensure that I have noted your attendance.
Professionalism and Expectations for this Course:
You will have noticed that there is a professionalism grade associated with this course. Because that is a bit
ambiguous, let me explain both that and my expectations. At the very least, this can help you decide if this is
the course for you. One of the things that grades do is to provide cues to others – employers, graduate
schools, etc – as to your preparedness and competence for future endeavors. In my courses, part of that grade
is predicated upon your professionalism. In that sense I will assess you along the same criteria as would your
future employer.

In most cases, your professionalism grade will be simply an average of the grades from your other
assignments, and hence will not affect you. In some cases, your professionalism grade will be higher than the
average of your other assignments. For example, if you participated in making the classroom a positive
learning environment for others, I will reward that. I will also use the professionalism grade to compensate for
a poor assignment, or to reward manifest improvement as the course progresses. In other cases, your
professionalism grade can hurt you. Specifically, if you act like a chucklehead, I will penalize you. Here are the
areas in which you can lose professionalism grades:

1) Punctuality. Class starts when it is scheduled. I would like you to be in your seat by the time class is
scheduled to start. If there are exceptional circumstances, such as a class across campus immediately prior to
this one, please let me know. If you are late, I expect you to come in unobtrusively and not fight your way to
your preferred seat.

2) Appointments. When you make an appointment with me, it is a binding commitment. You need to come;
on time. If you have to cancel, I expect a good and articulated reason for doing so. If you cannot honor
appointments, in addition to losing professionalism grades, you will have access to me only in office hours. I
will gladly make appointments outside of office hours, but only with people who do not abuse the privilege.

3) Etiquette. A small minority of SMU students are inclined to treat their professors as “the help.” You pay a
lot to come here. That does not entitle you to be disrespectful in deed or attitude. Email etiquette is a sore
point with faculty campus- and even nation-wide. Moreover, it won’t do you any good in future to be sloppy
in your emailing habits. So, when you email me, I expect a salutation (as in any other letter), not a simple
demand for information. Since it is unlikely you are emailing just to chat, you probably want something from
me. When you get it, I expect an acknowledgment in the form of a thank you. Unless you are unwilling to
follow these basic rules of etiquette, I will always email you back within one weekday (and usually more
quickly). If you are unwilling, in addition to losing professionalism grades, subsequent emails will go
unanswered. I have posted office hours and you will have to see me then.

4) Comportment. In class I expect you to pay attention, not to talk to other students, not to sleep, not to
read any material that does not pertain to the course, and not to start packing your books until I announce
that class is over.

Grading:
I do not grade perfectly, so I expect you to feel free to challenge any grade that you receive and to do so
without fear of ridicule or consequence. You must, however, a) have specific grounds, and b) challenge only
my interpretation of the established grading criteria, not the criteria themselves. Please note that “working
hard” or “feeling like [you] deserve” a particular grade are not relevant grounds for challenging a grade. If you
feel that any grading criteria are unfair, you may challenge those too, but only prior to turning in the relevant
assignment. I will make my criteria known in advance and will not penalize you for politely challenging, or
requesting pedagogical justification of, them.
Plagiarism:
The penalty for cheating will not be merely a failing grade on the assignment in question. At a minimum, a clear case of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for this class and likely a referral to the University Honor Council. An HV (Honors Violation) on your transcript will tell future employers or graduate schools all they will care to know about you, so don’t risk it. **This is not a game.**

Plagiarism is defined by Southern Methodist University according to Alexander Lindley’s definition:

Plagiarism is the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own ([Plagiarism and Originality](New York: Harper, 1957), p.2). Plagiarism may take the form of repeating another’s sentences as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, or even presenting someone else’s line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from another.

If you have any questions regarding citation, please see me. While I am not looking for excuses to accuse you of plagiarism, and therefore you need not be worried about honest mistakes, you should be aware that the following excuses will not work:

- **“I didn’t know that I had to use quotation marks when I borrowed someone else’s prose.”** This is the time-honored excuse for plagiarism. It stretches credibility that you can get to college and still think it is okay to score a good grade by passing someone else’s work off as your own. So that there is no ambiguity on the matter, it is a serious offence to use someone else’s words without attribution. Doing so is grounds for severe penalty.

- **“I used footnotes, I just didn’t use quotation marks.”** The logic here is that instead of stringing together a series of quotations, which looks bad, you take out the quotation marks, but keep the footnotes. This is intended to immunize you against charges of cheating if caught. If you are not caught, you sound profound. Again, this is cheating; again, the consequences are serious.

- **“But I changed every fourth word…”** I call this weaselling, whereby the plagiarist seeks to maintain the myth of originality by changing every third or fourth word. Thus from the original: “The distress cries of industries were less likely to be heard, or to be heeded” we get: “The cries of distress from companies were unlikely to be heeded or listened to.” This can happen once or twice in a paper without serious comment. I have read entire papers that were weaselled. Weaselling without footnotes is even more serious. Both are cheating; both could get you to Honor Council.

- **“I didn’t realize that I couldn’t turn in the same paper for more than one class.”** You can’t, unless you have explicit permission from the professors in **both** classes.

- **“I didn’t know how to reference internet sources, so I didn’t cite it.”** The moral equivalent of “I didn’t know the price so I didn’t pay for it,” this one is a non-starter. Using a poor referencing technique is certainly not plagiarism. Failing to cite certainly is.

Disability Accommodations:
If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4563) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Then you should schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate Arrangements.
Readings:

You are expected to do all of the assigned readings and will be examined on them. All readings come from the following books, which have been ordered and are at the Bookstore.


Annual Editions, *Comparative Politics 06/07*.

Outline:

Week One

T Jan 16 Introduction

Th Jan 18

Readings: Mahler: ch.1, pp. 144-149.

*CP:* ch.44

Week Two

T Jan 23 Modernization Theory, The 1970s

Th Jan 25 Regimes, Parties

Readings: Mahler: chs.2, 4

*CP:* ch.45

Week Three

T Jan 30 Parties

Th Feb 01 Great Britain – Early History, 20th Century

Readings: Mahler: pp. 149-158

Week Four

T Feb 06 Great Britain -- 20th Century, Institutions

Th Feb 08 Great Britain – Legislature, Culture and Parties

*Quiz Date*

Readings: Mahler: ch.9

*CP:* chs.1
Week Five

T Feb 13 Great Britain – Mrs. Thatcher’s Revolution

Th Feb 15 Term Paper Workshop

Readings: Mahler: ch.9
CP: ch.3

Week Six

T Feb 20 France – Institutions, Political Culture

Th Feb 22 France -- Political Culture, Parties

Readings: Mahler: ch.10

Week Seven

T Feb 27 France – Parties, Miscellany

Th Mar 01 France – Miscellany, The European Union

Quiz Date

Readings: CP: chs.5-7

Week Eight

T Mar 06 Midterm Review

Th Mar 08 Midterm

Readings: None

Week Nine Spring Break

Week Ten

T Mar 20 Germany – Early History, 20th Century

Th Mar 22 Germany – Institutions, Political Culture

Readings: Mahler: ch.11
Week Eleven

T    Mar 27    Germany -- Parties and Interests, Reunification

Th   Mar 29   Germany -- Reunification

Quiz Date

Readings:  CP: chs.9-11

Week Twelve

T    Apr 03    Japan -- Early History, 20th Century/Institutions

Th   Apr 05    Japan -- Parties and Political Culture

Readings:  Mahler: ch.12

Week Thirteen

T    Apr 10    Japan -- Key Issues in Contemporary Japan

Th   Apr 12    Mexico -- Early History, 20th Century

Readings:  CP: ch.13

Week Fourteen

T    Apr 17    Mexico -- Oil and Corporatism

Th   Apr 19   Mexico -- Parties and Institutions

Quiz Date

Readings:  Mahler: ch.14
                     CP: ch.33

Week Fifteen

T    Apr 24    Mexico -- Political Culture/The Future

Th   Apr 26   Review Session

Readings:  Study for your exam