Introduction to Comparative Politics  
Political Science 1340 003C  
Southern Methodist University Spring 2008

Time: TTH 9:30-11:00  
Professor: Michael Lusztig  
Office: Carr Collins 204  
Phone: 214 768-3530  
Office Hours: M 10-11; Th 11-12

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 20* 15%  
4-6 Page Term Paper** due Apr 09* 20%  
Mid term exam Mar 06 20%  
Quizzes Feb 07;Feb 28;Mar 27;Apr 17 15%  
Final Exam May 07 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. 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 apply modernization theory as a means of determining the level of democracy that exists 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
Part of my job is to assess your predicted performance in the workplace or graduate school. This professionalism grade will be affected by tardiness to class, disruptive behavior such as reading or talking during class, and failure to keep or come on time to scheduled appointments.

Blackboard
You will be expected to sign up for Blackboard. A full list of my policies and your responsibilities is available there, as are tips, resources, and announcements. Please be sure to modify your profile to receive emails to your preferred address. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email address is correct.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious problem in academics and will not be tolerated in this course. Please note, students accused of plagiarism in this class will be reported to the SMU Honor Council. If convicted, students almost invariably receive an HV (honors violation) on their transcripts for a lengthy period. It is tough to apply successfully to post-graduate programs or for employment with an HV, so don’t plagiarize.

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.”

• “I used footnotes, I just didn’t use quotation marks.”

• “But I changed every fourth word…”

• “I didn’t realize that I couldn’t turn in the same paper for more than one class.”

• “I didn’t know how to reference internet sources, so I didn’t cite it.”

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.

Michael J. Sodaro, *Comparative Politics: A Global Introduction*  
Annual Editions, *Comparative Politics 07/08*.

Outline:

Week One (Jan 15, 17)

**Introduction; Modernization Theory**

Reading: Soldaro pp. 124-132; 139-142; ch.12

Week Two (Jan 24) (There is no Tuesday class b/c Tuesday is Monday at SMU)

**Pluralism**

Reading: Soldaro ch.4  
*CP* ch.13

Week Three (Jan 29, 31)

**Liberalism; Institutions**

Reading: Soldaro ch.13  

Week Four (Feb 5, 7)

**Regimes; Parties**

Reading: Soldaro ch.9  
QUIZ

Week Five (Feb 12, 14)

**Electoral Systems; Term Paper**

Reading: Soldaro ch.3
Week Six (Feb 19, 21)

Great Britain

Reading: Soldaro ch.16

Week Seven (Feb 26, 28)

Great Britain

Reading: Soldaro ch.14
CP ch.4
QUIZ

Week Eight (Mar 4, 6)

Review, Midterm

Spring Break

Week Nine (Mar 18, 20)

France

Reading: Soldaro ch.17

Week Ten (Mar 25, 27)

France

Reading: CP chs.5-6
QUIZ

Week Eleven (Apr 1, 3)

Germany

Reading: Soldaro ch.18

Week Twelve (Apr 8, 10)

Germany

Reading: CP chs.7-8
Week Thirteen (Apr 15, 17)

Japan

Reading: Soldaro ch.19
QUIZ

Week Fourteen (Apr 22, 24)

Mexico

Reading: Soldaro ch. 22

Week Fifteen (Apr 29)

Review