Comparative Political Systems

Steven Alan Samson, Liberty University
DESCRIPTION

A comparative study of the political and governmental systems of selected nations with that of the United States.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Each student is responsible for assigned readings and should keep a looseleaf notebook of class materials. A separate notebook or folder of reading materials will be kept on reserve on the library, along with a few other resources.

2. Participation is an essential part of class. Reading assignments should be completed before the class meets. Be prepared to discuss textbook material, report on assigned articles (selected from Comparative Politics 96/97), and review current events.

3. Attendance is required. A week's absence may be excused, but lengthy absences or erratic attendance will have a detrimental effect on grades (possibly 10% of the grade or more). If you expect to miss class, please notify me through the school before class meets.

4. Students will be tested on the lecture, reading, and discussion material through seven quizzes (the lowest score will be dropped) and two essay and short answer exams. Final grade: quizzes = 60%, exams = 40%.

5. Each student will make two brief (10-12 minutes) oral presentations on two countries (each from different continents) in class. Short outlines or abstracts should be provided at the time of presentation. Textbook case study countries are not eligible.

6. Each student will take a pass/fail political geography quiz.

READING LIST

Textbooks

Magstadt, Thomas M. Nations and Governments, 2nd ed. [M]
Johnson, Paul. Modern Times, revised edition [J]

Reserve Desk

Comparative Politics 96/97 [C]

SCHEDULE

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION; THE AMERICAN SYSTEM (January 14-22)

Required: M. 1-3; J. 1, 18, 19 (pp. 659-74); C. 64; United States Constitution
Handouts: Ryn, "Cultural Diversity and Renewal;" Estrada, "From El Paso to Plymouth"
Reports: C. 31, 32 & 35, 36 & 38, 39, 40-41

PART TWO: WESTERN EUROPE (January 24-29)

Required: M. 4-6; J. 17
Handouts: Kopff, "Commentary on the Gallic Culture War;" Brown, "Regression and Renewal"
Reports: C. 3-4, 7-9, 10, 11, 13 & 15, 16-17, 20, 22, 26, 28

PART THREE: RUSSIA AND SLAVIC EUROPE (January 31-February 5)

Required: M. 7-9; J. 12 (pp. 429-31), 13, 19 (pp. 674-96)
Handouts: Harrigan, "Allied Crimes Against Humanity;" Fleming, "Ghosts in the Graveyard"
Reports: C. 43, 44, 45, 46, 48-49

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY QUIZ: February 5

PART FIVE: ASIA (February 7-14)

Required: M. 13-15; J. 14 (pp. 466-480), 16; C. 68
Reports: C. 57, 58, 59, 60

MIDTERM EXAM: February 10

PART FOUR: THE MIDDLE EAST (February 14-19)

Required: M. 10-12; J. 14 (pp. 480-505); C. 69

PART SIX: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (February 21-26)

Required: M. 16-18; J. 15; C. 67
Reports: C. 54, 55

PART SEVEN: LATIN AMERICA (February 28-March 5)

Required: M. 19-21
Reports: C. 52, 53

FINAL EXAM: March 7
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Library

Balfour, Michael. Germany: The Tides of Power, 1992. 320.943 B185g
Bromley, Simon. Rethinking Middle East Politics, 1994. 320.956 B868r
Centeno, Miguel. Democracy within Reason: Technocratic Revolution in Mexico, 1994. 320.972 C397d
Cossoiotto, Matthew. The Almanac of European Politics 1995. R320.02 A445c
Crow. Italy: A Journey Through Time, 1965. 945 C953i
Culturgram '97. R320.02 C968d
Delury, George E. World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties, 2nd ed., 1987. R320.02 W927d
Department of State. Background Notes. R320.02 D419d
Diamond, Larry, et al., eds. Developing Countries, 1988-1989. 320.91734 D383d
Dudley, William, ed. Middle East: Opposing Viewpoints, 1992. 320.956 M127d
Fischer, David Hackett. Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America, 1989. 973.2 F529a
Kraljic, Matthew. The Breakup of Communism, 1993. 320.947 B828k
Lieven, Anatol. The Baltic Revolution, 1995. 947.4 L722b2
Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Aldo Solari, eds. Elites in Latin America, 1967. 309.18 G768e
Rosenstock-Huessy, Eugen. Out of Revolution: The Autobiography of Western Man, 1938. 940.2 R815o
Sorokin, Pitirim. The Crisis of Our Age, 1941. 901 S715c1
Thatcher, Margaret. The Downing Street Years.
Other
Brown, Harold O. J. The Sensate Culture, 1996. [on order]
Cahill, Thomas. How the Irish Saved Civilization, 1995. [on order]
Naipaul, V. S. The Middle Passage, 1962.
Pritchett, C. Herman. The American Constitutional System.
Singer, Max, and Aaron Wildavsky. The Real World Order, 1996.