Instructor: Dr. James Samstad  
jsamstad@mail.sdsu.edu

Office Hours: TuTh 10:00–10:50 am  
AH 4234

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The principal objective of this course is to introduce many of the core concepts and debates that are central to the comparative politics field. In doing so, it will upon the experiences of a variety of countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

The course is divided into four major sections. We will begin with a review of the development of the modern nation state, examining competing theories of development and economic growth. Next we will look comparatively at variations among industrialized democracies, including presidential versus parliamentary systems, majoritarianism versus proportional representation, corporatism, and developmentalism.

The course will then turn to the rise and subsequent fall of Communist regimes, both through rapid collapse (the Soviet Union) and gradual, ongoing transformation (China).

Finally the challenges of political and economic development in the developing world will be explored, including the legacy of colonialism, the different paths towards democracy, and the problems of economic reform in the face of globalization.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students should:

1) Have a clear understanding of the nature and scope of economic globalization;
2) Be familiar with historical development of the modern democratic state in the industrialized world;
3) Understand the difference between presidential and parliamentary regimes and between majoritarianism and proportional representation;
4) Have a strong familiarity with the concepts of corporatism and developmentalism;
5) Be capable of identifying the key types of trading blocs;
6) Understand the nature of command economy systems and the different ways these systems have been transformed;
7) Be familiar with the problems of authoritarianism and democratization as well as globalization and economic reform in the developing world.


**REQUIRED READINGS**

The book listed below is required and may be purchased from the campus bookstore.


Students are expected to complete the required readings for each topic by the date of that lecture and be prepared to discuss and ask questions about them.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Students are required to attend class regularly and participate in discussions, take an in-class midterm, write a paper, and complete a final exam. Grades are based on a 1,000 point scale, weighed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>350</td>
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Final grades will be given in accordance with the number of points received:

- 930–1,000 points   A
- 900–939 points     A–
- 870–899 points     B+
- 830–869 points     B
- 800–829 points     B–
- 770–799 points     C+
- 730–769 points     C
- 700–729 points     C–
- 670–699 points     D+
- 630–669 points     D
- 600–629 points     D–
- Below 600 points   F

**Attendance:** An attendance sheet will be distributed for each regular class session (excluding the days of the midterm and final). Those not attending will need to have a valid and documented excuse to not be docked for missing that day. At the instructor’s discretion, those arriving after roll has been taken may be given half credit for attendance if they talk to the instructor immediately after class.

Up to fifty points for attendance will be allocated in proportion to the number of sessions attended. For example, an 80% attendance rate will earn 40 points for attendance. Excused absences will neither be counted as present nor absent in calculating this percentage (that is, as if there had been no class session that day in that student’s case).

Note that any student caught signing in for a fellow student not in attendance will be considered to be cheating on an assignment and will be disciplined accordingly.
**Participation:** Students are expected not only to attend class regularly, but participate in class discussions. Each student will be graded according the degree to which he or she has participated in discussions regularly and in an informed manner. For average levels of participation, this portion of the grade will roughly match that for attendance, but it will be adjusted upwards or downwards for greater and lesser participation levels.

**Midterm:** The midterm will be held during regular class session on Thursday, October 25 and will be based on the readings, lectures, and discussions through October 11 (that is, Parts I and II of the course). At least one week prior to the midterm, a study guide will be distributed giving more details as to its structure and content.

**Paper:** A paper topic will be distributed on October 25 after the in-class midterm is turned in and will be due at the beginning of class on November 22. In addition to the hard copy, students must submit an exact copy in Word (DOC or DOCX), Rich Text (RTF), or Adobe Portable Document (PDF) format to Turnitin via Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. that evening. Please begin the file or archive’s name with your last name (the rest of the filename may be anything you wish).

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be held on Thursday, December 13 from 8:00 am–10:00 am in the regular class room. It will be comprehensive in nature, but will emphasize the readings and lectures since the midterm, as well as key information that was discussed during the current events presentations. As with the midterm, at least one week prior to the final a study guide will be distributed giving more details as to its structure and content.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Cheating on papers and exams will result in an automatic failing grade for the course and the reporting of the student to university authorities for disciplinary action, including possible expulsion.

In writing, remember that credit by means of a footnote or endnote must be given for every direct quotation, for paraphrased or summarized text, and for information that is not common knowledge. *Ignorance as to what constitutes plagiarism will not be accepted as an excuse.* Students who have questions about the definition of plagiarism should consult the university’s official statement on Academic Dishonesty [<http://csrr.sdsu.edu/academics1.html>], or ask the instructor.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In accordance with federal law, individualized accommodations, such as additional time for test taking, will be made for students with disabilities. However, requests for such accommodations must be made by the end of the second full week of instruction and may require approval and certification from Student Disability Services (SDS), Calpulli Center, Suite 3101 <dsstest@mail.sdsu.edu> [619-594-6473].
COURSE SCHEDULE
(Subject to change)

I) INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Introduction to Course and Review of Syllabus (August 28)

The Challenge of Globalization (August 30)
Hauss 2002, Chapters 1 and 17.

II) ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES

Development of the Modern Democratic State (September 4–6)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 3.

Presidential versus Parliamentary Regimes: The US and the UK (September 11–13)
Hauss 2002, Chapters 2 and 4.

Systems of (Semi-) Proportional Representation: France (September 18–20)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 5.

The Corporatist State: Germany (September 25–27)

Trading Blocs and the Emergence of the European Union (October 2–4)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 7.

The Developmentalist State: Japan (October 9–11)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 8.

III) COMMUNISM AND POST-COMMUNISM

Marxism and the Rise of Communism (October 16)

Communism’s Collapse and Aftermath in Russia (October 18–23)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 10.

→ Thursday, October 25: MIDTERM (IN-CLASS)

→ Thursday, October 25: PAPER TOPIC DISTRIBUTED

Communism’s Reform in China (October 30–November 1)
Hauss 2002, Chapter 11.
IV) Developing Countries

*Economic and Political Development in the Developing World (November 6)*
Hauss 2002, Chapter 12.

*Colonialism, Authoritarianism, Invasion, and Independence: Iraq (November 8–13)*

*The “Unlikely” Democracy: India (November 15–20)*

*November 22: Thanksgiving Holiday*

*Negotiated Democratization: South Africa (November 27–29)*
Hauss 2002, Chapter 15.

→ **Tuesday, November 27, 8:00 am: PAPER DUE**

*The Gradual Path of Political and Economic Reform: Mexico (December 4–6)*
Hauss 2002, Chapter 16.

→ **Thursday, December 13, 8:00 am–10:00 am: FINAL EXAM**