University of Rochester – PSC 101/IR 101
Fall 2012
Monday/Wednesday/Fridays 11-11:50 am
Bausch and Lomb 109

Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor Meguid
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Office Hours: Mondays 1-3pm or by appointment

Teaching Assistants:
Rabia Malik (rabia.malik@rochester.edu) Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4pm, Harkness 305
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Course Description
This course will introduce students to comparative politics – the study of domestic political institutions, processes, and outcomes across and within countries. These important themes and concepts of contemporary comparative politics include the vibrancy of democracy, the centrality of political and electoral institutions, the possibility of revolution and the power of ethnicity. Cases will be drawn from different countries and historical periods to give students a grounding in the method of comparative analysis. This course is recommended for those thinking about a major, minor, or cluster in political science or international relations and others who are simply interested in learning more about the politics of developed and developing countries.

Course Requirements
Students are expected to attend lectures every Monday and Wednesday and keep up with the readings. All students will be assigned to a section which meets once a week (most likely on Thursday or Friday) during course time. Attendance is mandatory. Sections will serve as an opportunity to discuss the readings and thus, regular and active participation is expected. Participation in section will count for 20% of the final grade. An in-class midterm examination will be worth 35% and a final examination will count for 45% of the final grade. According to the Registrar’s website (http://www.rochester.edu/registrar/examschedule.html), the final exam will tentatively be held Thursday, December 20 at 7:15pm. However, because exam schedules can change, DO NOT arrange to leave for break before the end of the exam period. Barring extraordinary circumstances, there will be no make-up midterm or final exams.

An optional 5-7 page paper on the Institutions weeks’ readings can be written for extra credit. The paper topic will be handed out November 12 and due by noon on November 21 (hard copy only, no email submissions accepted). If interested, please contact Professor Meguid.
Readings
In this course, we will read a combination of books, book chapters and journal articles. The books are available for purchase at the Bookstore or, alternatively, are on reserve at Rush Rhees Library. Journal articles and chapters in edited volumes are accessible through the Library’s electronic reserves on Blackboard.

Texts available for purchase at the Bookstore


Friday, August 31: Course Introduction

*No class on Monday, September 3rd: Labor Day*

September 5 and 7: What is Democracy?


September 10, 12, and 14: How does Democracy Come About? Theories of Democratization


**September 17, 19 and 24: Democracy and Democratization: Cases**


**September 26 and October 1: Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict: Theories**


**October 3, 10 and 12: Ethnic Conflict: The Case of Yugoslavia**

*NB: No class Monday, October 8: Fall Break*


**October 15 and 17: Revolutions**


**October 22 and 24: Revolutions around the World: Cases**


**October 29: Midterm review**

No new readings

**October 31: In-class MIDTERM**

**November 5 and 7: Do Institutions Matter? Presidentialism versus Parliamentarism**


**November 12 and 14: Do Institutions Matter? Electoral Systems**


Quentin Quade, “PR and Democratic Statecraft,” in Diamond and Plattner (eds), The Global Resurgence of Democracy, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996. 181-186


**November 19: Do Institutions Matter? Political Party Systems**


*No class November 21*

**November 26 and 28: Politics and Culture: From Civic Culture to Social Capital**


**December 3 and 5: Politics and Culture: From Civic Culture to Social Capital (cases)**


December 10 and 12: What Have We Learned? Review of the Course

**Note: There is a cumulative final exam. See Registrar’s website for date and time.**