

**PLS 215**  
**COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

**Spring 2006**

**Instructor: Professor Terry Clark**

**Office:** **280-4712, Ad 426a**

**Office Hours:** **MWF, 10:30 to 12:00**  
**M, 2:00-2:30**  
**W, 2:00-4:00**

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**PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND OBJECTIVES:** The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the basic tools and concepts in political science and to familiarize students with the research process of the social sciences. The first part of the course focuses on how (method) and what (subject matter) political scientists compare. Part two of the course then considers the structures and processes within the nation-state, beginning with generalizations drawn from comparative analyses. It concludes by comparing government and politics in several specific nation-states. In the final section of the course extended consideration is given to global processes occurring across international boundaries: development and democratization.

The objectives of this course are 1) to master the key concepts in political science, 2) to master the research process, 3) to develop critical thinking skills, and 4) to develop good technical writing skills.

**COMMUNICATION:** All students are required to have and use a Creighton e-mail account. I will make frequent use of these accounts, and these accounts only, to advise students on matters related to the course, to include class cancellation. I do not accept any work submitted by e-mail.

**TEXTBOOKS:** The following textbooks are required.

Almond, Gabriel A., G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Kaare Strom, and Russell J. Dalton.  
*Comparative Politics: A Theoretical Framework*. 4th edition. NY: Pearson Longman, 2004. (APSD)

Clark, Terry D. *Beyond Post-Communist Studies: Political Science and the New Democracies of Europe*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2002. (TDC)

Sodaro, Michael J. *Comparative Politics: A Global Introduction*. 2nd edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004. (S)

**EVALUATION:** You will be evaluated on the basis of three (3) hourly examinations, a research proposal, several unannounced quizzes, and participation. The weight for each component is as follows. Please note that I do not accept any work submitted by e-mail.

1st and third hourly examinations 15% each =

2nd hourly examination

research proposal

unannounced quizzes

participation

Points for each requirement will be assigned from 0 to 100. The final course grade will be determined on the basis of the weight for each assignment and the following scale.

93 to 100	A
88 to 92	B+
83 to 87	B
78 to 82	C+
70 to 77	C
60 to 69	D
below 60	F

Class Participation: You will be assigned a grade based on your participation in class, which will be worth ten percent of your final grade. Obviously, if you attend class infrequently, you can not participate and your grade will suffer as a result. *You will be penalized one point on your final grade for every class missed over a limit of three.*

Readings for the course are listed in the assignment section of this syllabus. Please, read the assigned materials before each scheduled class. In the expectation that you have done so, I will feel free to call upon students to respond to questions based on the readings. Even if I do not call on you, you should make sure that you read and comprehend the assignments since I do not intend to lecture "from the book." Instead, I will use the readings as a "springboard" for the day's lecture.

Unannounced Quizzes: As a further incentive for you to read and participate in class, there will be several unannounced quizzes during the semester. The quizzes are designed to test your understanding of the basic ideas and concepts introduced in the assigned readings before they are

discussed in class. They will be worth 10% of the final grade. *There will be no make-up quizzes. Unless you have an appropriate excuse, you will receive a zero for each quiz missed.*

Research Proposal: You will prepare a research proposal, typewritten and double-spaced, for submission April 28. Drafts of sections of the proposal will be submitted throughout the semester. (The first draft of the research question is due February 20, the first draft of the literature review section is due February 27, and the first draft of the hypothesis and theory section is due March 3.) Drafts may be resubmitted as often as the student may desire, but no drafts will be accepted for grade after April 7. I do not accept either drafts or the proposal by e-mail. The following schema contains the elements necessary to a good research proposal and is provided as guidance.

1. **Research Question:** This is the most important part of your proposal. Identify the central question that your proposal intends to answer. The question must be formulated so as to seek a cause for a particular political phenomenon. Why does it occur in one set of nation-states and not in another? Define all your key terms, scope the question (indicate the date and geographic context), and argue why the question is an important one. Conclude by identifying your hypothesis and giving a brief synopsis (executive summary) of the theory.
2. **Literature Review:** Identify how many hypotheses have been proposed to answer your question and label them. Discuss each hypothesis in order in which they were identified. Conclude by identifying your proposal's hypothesis along with a justification for doing so.
3. **Hypothesis and Theory:** Identify your proposal's hypothesis and define the independent variable. Fully discuss the logical link leading from cause to effect (the theory behind your hypothesis)
4. **Footnotes and Bibliography:** You must cite all sources. The style for both citations and the bibliography is found in *The Brief Holt Handbook*. Do not rely on a single source addressing your issue; make sure that the analysis is yours. Your bibliography must contain at least ten books and articles. No internet sources that are not also available in print (i.e., as articles in professional journals) may be included. Should you need help in identifying sources, do not hesitate to ask me for assistance.

The final grade for the research proposal will be the average of the draft sections (one-third of the grade) and the final submission (two-thirds of the grade). The following scale will be used in determining the grade for the research proposal.

**Style:**

Grammar	10 points
Clarity	10 points

**Content:**

Research Question	20 points
Literature Review	20 points
Hypothesis and Theory	30 points
Bibliography and Citations	10 points

**Late Submission Policy:** Those submitting assigned work late will suffer a five point penalty for every twenty-four hour period, or fraction thereof. I do not accept late submissions of either the final exam or the final draft of the proposal.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All work that you submit must be your own, and all sources must be properly cited. The purchase of "research service" papers, plagiarism, resubmission of prior work, obstructing the work of others, misuse or abuse of library or computer resources or any form of misrepresentation in gathering or presenting data constitute academic dishonesty. While I do not expect anyone to engage in such practices, should you do so, you will receive an "F" for the course.

Suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean's office and managed according to the College of Arts and Sciences academic honesty guidelines (<http://puffin.creighton.edu/ccas/FacStaff/polManual/polManual.htm>). Grounds for investigating papers for this will include, but will not be limited to my judgement that work is not responsive to the assignment, a discrepancy of more than one letter grade separating a paper from prior work submitted by the student, or my evaluation that the paper reflects knowledge and/or writing styles not usually available to undergraduate students.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Let me encourage you to visit with me to discuss any problems you are having with the materials or course assignments. Do not wait until the last minute to seek advice or assistance. You may well find that my calendar is full. My office hours are on the first page of this syllabus. You may also reach me by e-mail or you may call me at home (293-8460) between the hours of 7:00 and 10:00 P.M. (please, do not call after 10:00 P.M.).

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Unless otherwise noted, assigned readings are to be read by the first day of the lesson.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
Introduction	Jan 1	None
Library Tour	Jan 13	Class meets at the Library

Key Terms	Jan 16	S, 119, 141-161, 187-206 (Key terms)
The US Political System	Jan 18	S, 185-187
British Political System	Jan 20-23	S, 341-387 S, 437-483 (Germany, due Jan 23)
The French Political System	Jan 25-27	S, 388-436 S, 484-524 (Japan, due Jan 27)
Democracy	Jan 30	S, 162-184
A Framework for Comparison	Feb 1	APSD, 39-55
Comparative Politics and Political Science	Feb 3	S, 3-55
An Art or a Science?	Feb 6	S, 56-95

### **FIRST HOURLY EXAMINATION – February 8**

Thesis Writing (Research Questions) Feb 10		none
Thesis Writing (Literature Reviews) Feb 13		none
Behavioralism: Political Culture	Feb 15	APSD, 56-77 S, 255-269
Political Behavior: Recruitment and Elites	Feb 17	APSD, 150-152 S, 96-118

### **FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH QUESTION SECTION DUE - February 20**

Thesis Writing (Hypotheses and Theories)	Feb 20-22	S, 628-658 (Mexico, due Feb 22)
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### **FIRST DRAFT OF LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION DUE – February 27**

Political Behavior: Groups and Interest Articulation	Feb 24-27	APSD, 78-101
Ideology and Constitutions	Mar 1-3	S, 270-294 S, 123-140 APSD, 128-141

**FIRST DRAFT OF HYPOTHESIS AND THEORY SECTION DUE – March 3**

**SPRING BREAK – March 4 to 12**

Rational Choice Theory	Mar 13-15	TDC, 108-110, 84-102 (due Mar 15)
New Institutionalism	Mar 17-20	TDC, 102-127
Institutions: Party Systems and Elections	Mar 22-24	APSD, 102-126 S, 230-240
Institutions: Legislatures	Mar 27-29	APSD, 141-147 S, 185-206 S, 686-706 (Nigeria, due Mar 29)
Institutions: Executives	Mar 31	APSD, 147-155 S, 185-206 (review)
Institutions: the Bureaucracy and Public Policy	Apr 3-5	APSD, 155-160 APSD, 164-196

**LAST DAY TO SUBMIT DRAFT SECTIONS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL – April 7**

The Judiciary	Apr 7	None
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**SECOND HOURLY EXAMINATION – April 10**

The Third World	Apr 12	None
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**EASTER RECESS – April 13 to 17**

Development and Modernization	Apr 19-21	S, 295-315 S, 316-336
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**RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE – April 28**

Democratization	Apr 24-28	S, 207-229
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**FINAL EXAMINATION – 10:00 to 11:40 AM, Monday, May 1**