

Las Positas College
3000 Campus Hill Drive
Livermore, CA 94551-7650
(925) 424-1000
(925) 443-0742 (Fax)

Course Outline for POLI 20
COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT
Effective: Fall 2018

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

POLI 20 — COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT — 3.00 units

Contemporary forms of government, institutions and political problems of selected national governments.

3.00 Units Lecture

Strongly Recommended

POLI 7 - Introduction to American Government
with a minimum grade of C

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

- Political Science

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Expected Outside of Class Hours:	108.00
Total Hours:	162.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

A. POLI7

1. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. Constitution
2. Identify and evaluate institutions and political processes within the United States and California
3. Discuss and analyze contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California
4. Explain the civil liberties and civil rights of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions
5. Analyze the role of culture, diversity and ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California
6. Analyze how to effectively participate in politics at the national, state, county and/or city levels

B. -Eligibility for ENG 1A

1. Use strategies to assess a text's difficulty, purpose, and main idea prior to the act of reading
2. Annotate a text during the act of reading
3. Employ strategies that enable a critical evaluation of a text
4. Respond critically to a text through class discussions and writing
5. Use concepts of paragraph and essay structure and development to analyze his/her own and others' essays
6. Write effective summaries of texts that avoid wording and sentence structure of the original
7. Organize coherent essays around a central idea or a position
8. Apply structural elements in writing that are appropriate to the audience and purpose
9. Provide appropriate and accurate evidence to support positions and conclusions
10. Produce written work that reflects academic integrity and responsibility, particularly when integrating the exact language and ideas of an outside text into one's own writing
11. Utilize effective grammar recall to check sentences for correct grammar and mechanics
12. Proofread his/her own and others' prose

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Identify the role of the state.
- B. Compare political systems, both in theory and with actual country examples.
- C. Explain the impact of the regional, economic, historical and cultural factors on political institutions and behavior.
- D. Analyze political systems by using the comparative method.

- E. Distinguish among regime types and their central features.

V. CONTENT:

- A. Introduce different regime types and their resulting institutions in political systems
 - 1. Democracies, transitional democracies, and non-democratic (authoritarian) nations and governments and resulting political systems of selected nations
 - 2. Written and unwritten structures of constitutional governments
 - 3. Ideology and Politics
 - a. Political ideas and approaches to governments, politics, and processes
 - b. Role of ideology (ideas) from historical context relating to development of selected nations, governments, politics, processes
 - c. Ideology and its influence into to the 21st Century
- B. Discuss theory regarding the stability of regimes and transitions from one regime type to another
 - 1. "Limited government" and differing operations in selected nations
 - 2. Selected nations transitioning and operating with limited government structure
 - 3. Patterns of 20th Century government
 - a. growth in 20th Century of "transitional nations" toward democratic nations
 - b. Aspects of historical development of the Soviet Union into 20th Century
 - 4. Roles and responsibilities in political regime of selected nations
 - a. "popular"
 - b. political institutions
 - c. governmental officials
 - d. political parties and interest groups
 - e. media
 - 5. Historical development through contemporary systems of selected nations, governments, institutions and processes.
- C. Include actual country examples of each regime type in terms of institutions, processes, political culture, historical/cultural context, and role of the people.
 - 1. Influence of governmental structures, institutions, and political processes
 - a. Assemblies and legislatures
 - 1. Parliaments vs Congress
 - 2. Legislative process and functions in selected nations
 - b. Executives
 - 1. Prime Minister v. President and roles and responsibilities
 - c. Judiciaries
 - 1. Legal and court structures and legal proceedings and procedures
 - d. Bureaucracies
 - 1. Roles and responsibilities, functions and processes
- D. Discuss the role of the state and popular participation in political and economic development within countries
 - 1. Role of "popular", leaders, public officials, governmental institutions within government structure in selected nations
 - a. Elections, popular, political parties, "group interests," governmental officials
 - 2. Interest articulation and interest aggregation in selected nations
 - a. "What" and "how" the wants and needs are translated
 - b. Role, functions, responsibilities of government institutions, "groups," popular leaders
 - c. Assess avenues for articulating and aggregating "interests" in selected nations, governments
 - 3. Political culture and socialization in relation to governments, politics, processes in selected nations
 - 4. Political events in framework of different governmental structures and processes and societies
 - 5. Differing economies and effects
- E. Introduce the use of the comparative method by utilizing diverse historical, regional, cultural, political and economic case studies
 - 1. Public policy making in contemporary systems of selected nations, governments, institutions and processes
 - 2. Institutions, roles and processes
 - a. interest articulation and aggregation,
 - b. political parties, groups and organizations
 - c. military/armies in selected nations
 - 3. Political processes of governmental structures within nations
 - 4. Governments in contemporary society in selected nations
 - a. contemporary structures, roles, functions, responsibilities, processes

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** - Formal and informal seminar/lectures
- B. **Written exercises and case studies** -
- C. **Discussion** - Class and small group discussions
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Audio visual materials
- E. Small group activities
- F. Role playing simulations
- G. Primary and secondary readings and internet assignments

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading from handouts and/or text:
 - 1. Why and how of comparative politics
 - 2. Constitutional democracies, parliamentary systems and pluralism
 - 3. Models, regimes, and regions: the idea of the State
 - 4. Monarchies, Dictatorships, Parliaments, limited democracies and rule
- B. Writing assignments
 - 1. Define "development" as it relates to states and societies.
 - 2. What are the causes of "underdevelopment?" What are the symptoms?
 - 3. How do the electoral systems and processes of Mexico and Russia differ?
 - 4. Explain the many influences affecting the creation of legislation in Germany.
 - 5. Explain how interests are articulated and aggregated in Japan.
- C. Class discussion
 - 1. Given the choice between serving as the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, which job would you prefer and why?
 - 2. Compare and contrast the constitutional powers of the French President and the British Prime Minister.
 - 3. To what degree do such variables as climate, resources, food and population size play a role in shaping political institutions?
- D. Small group discussions
 - 1. Develop and present a selected aspect of a nation – a states' political, economic or cultural institutions.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Research Projects
4. Papers
5. Oral Presentation
6. Projects
7. Group Projects
8. Class Participation
9. Class Work
10. Home Work

B. **Frequency**

1. Two midterms and a final exam
2. Quizzes per instructor
3. Minimum one research paper/project per instructor
4. Oral presentations per instructor
5. Weekly home work reading assignments.
6. Analytical critiques on reading assignments per instructor
7. Projects, participation, class work per instructor

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Kesselman, Mark, Joel Kriefer , and William Joseph. *Introduction to Comparative Politics*. 7th ed., Wadsworth, 2015.
2. Hauss, Charles. *Comparative Government*. 9th ed., Cengage Publishing, 2014.
3. Powell, Jr., G. Bingham, Russell Dalton, and Kaare Strom. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. 12th ed., Pearson, 2018.
4. Roskin, Michael . *Countries and Concepts: Politics, Geography, Culture*. 13th ed., Pearson, 2016.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Green books
- B. Original source documents and case studies
- C. Scantrons