

PS120: Politics around the World

Discussion Section 3

Discussion: Comparative Political Systems

Coming prepared to section means attempting to fill out this chart and being prepared to debate the merits of each system. We will divide into sides in section.

Please note: this activity is about executive systems (parliamentary versus presidential). These are different than electoral systems (proportional representation versus single member district/first-past-the-post). This is also different than party systems (2-party versus multi-party systems).

Executive System	Parliamentary (i.e. U.K.)	Presidential (i.e. U.S.A)
Describe the Features of the System		
What are the advantages of this system? <i>How</i> do the features of the system lead to these particular advantages?		
What are the disadvantages of this system? <i>How</i> do the features of this system lead to the particular advantages		

Things to think about as you prepare:

- What is the relationship between the executive branch and the legislative branch?
- What is the relationship between the Head of State and the Head of Government? How are the head of government and head of state selected? How long do they serve?
- How are laws made in each system?
- Is one better than the other?
- What is the role of the opposition in the UK?
- What is the role of the cabinet?
- What are the three most important parties in the UK?

Practice Essay Question

“The United Kingdom is in the process of negotiating its exit from the EU. Will the UK be the “winner” “loser” in these negotiations? Why?”

To think through in preparing:

- What are the main arguments for each side? Why does each side argue what they do? What is the logic behind these arguments.
- Who will be most affected by ‘Brexit’? Which industries? Which groups of people? Which regions?
- What are the different issue areas that will be affected? (economy, immigration)
- What is the evidence that each side relies on? Is this evidence convincing? Why or why not?