

Political Science 260 – Introduction to Comparative Politics
Dr. Roger Murphy

Summer 2018
Central Europe
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Overview

How and why do they do that? This course provides an introduction to the politics of selected countries around the world, from advanced industrial democracies to developing countries and authoritarian regimes. We will examine the similarities and differences between political and economic systems (for example, institutions, elections, participation and civil rights) which will provide greater insight into the world around us as well as our system of government. Students will learn the strengths and weaknesses of democratic and non-democratic systems, of the challenges of development and of the impact of systems (for example parliamentary and presidential) on political outcomes.

The course will be taught by lecture and discussions, supplemented by guest speakers and visits to important cultural sites throughout the students' stay in Europe. Students will address such issues as the transition to democracy and capitalism, EU and NATO expansion, economic development and marketization, ethnic and religious cleavages as well as examining the structure and processes of European political systems. The purpose of the course is twofold, to provide detailed knowledge of the politics of Europe and to engage students in a critical analysis of the challenges, issues and goals of European states (which in turn will provide insight into the operation of our own political system).

Required Readings

Patrick O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 4th Edition, Norton
Patrick O'Neil, *Cases in Comparative Politics*, 4th Edition, Norton

Course Requirements

Comparative politics is usually taught in one of two particular formats. The first involves an examination of particular concepts, such as 'democracy,' 'development,' 'parliamentary systems' etc. The second involves case studies of particular countries. This course will fuse these two approaches. Each day there will be a country unit lesson plan (delivered in the form of a power point) and supplemented by readings. There will also be a topic power point every other day supplemented by readings. It is vital that students utilize both the on-line content and the readings to successfully complete the course.

There will be three on-line **multiple choice quizzes**. These quizzes will be available on

June 8, 15 & 22. Each quiz will be worth 15% of the total course grade. The quizzes will be divided as follows: 1 through Nations and Society, 2 through Communism, 3 from India to the end. Make sure you have the textbooks at hand when you take the quizzes.

There will also be an on-line forum where you will interact with students engaged in a study abroad program in Central Europe. This forum will contribute 25% of the course grade. Students will discuss comparative issues of democracy, culture, society, foreign policy etc. Students will also have the opportunity to view materials from the study abroad program.

Grading Scale: A = 90% or higher; B = 80 to 89%; C = 70 to 79%; D = 60 to 69%; F = 59% and lower

Make-up examinations will only be given with the prior approval of the instructor and late papers (without prior approval) will be penalized. Any form of academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Students found guilty of such actions will receive a zero for the work in question and also be subject to university disciplinary procedures.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Accessibility Resource Center, DSU 1074. The telephone number is (270) 745-5004 v/tty.

Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Title IX Policies

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) (<https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf>) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at (https://wku.edu/policies/hr_policies/2040_discrimination_harassment_policy.pdf).

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.