Introduction to Comparative Politics

This course is designed as an introduction to the basic concepts and three of the major themes in Comparative Politics: (1) The State, Political Regimes and Institutions; 2) Political Participation and State-Society Relations; and (3) Political Economy. Comparative politics as a sub-field of political science is based on the principle that through the comparison of politics in different countries, we can theorize about the historical development and future trajectories of individual or groups of countries. To illustrate the comparative method, we will be focusing on six countries—China, France, India, Mexico, Nigeria and the United States.

Course Requirements:

A. Examinations (Mid Term 30%, Final 30%)
There will be two exams for the class. The in-class mid-term will cover the first section of the course while the final exam scheduled by the University will cover material in the second and third sections of the course. For both exams, students will be expected to write clear, coherent essays and respond to short-answer questions that incorporate lecture notes and the assigned readings.

B. Term Paper (30%)
Students will be required to write a short term paper (7-10 pp). They will identify a topic and choose any country, other than the six we are focusing on, by Thursday, 10 March 2006 when they must submit to their discussion section instructor a paragraph outlining the topic and a short bibliography of preliminary sources, including three readings on each of the major themes of the course. The term paper is due on the last day of classes. The guidelines for the paper are available at: [www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/paper_memo.html](http://www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/paper_memo.html)

Grading Policy Regarding Missed Exams and Late Papers: To avoid any penalties, students must sit for the exams when they are scheduled and turn in their assignments by the deadline. If there is a documented family or health emergency, the professor should be informed as soon as possible to reschedule the exam or arrange for an extension for the paper. Once an alternative date has been established, students must abide by the new deadline. Even in the case of a family or health emergency, the mid-term exam must be taken prior to the due date for the term paper, which must be submitted before the final exam, in order to ensure the coherency of the course. Students who cannot fulfill these requirements will be advised to drop the course.

Papers that are submitted late will receive a penalty of 1/3 the letter grade for each day they are late (e.g., when an assignment is a day late, an A+ becomes an A, which is lowered to an A- if submitted the following day, and then a B+ the next day, etc.) No paper will be accepted that is more than one week late. The professor and section instructors are not responsible for papers that are not submitted in person. For other information on grading, extensions and other issues related to the class: [http://www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/class_memo.html](http://www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/class_memo.html)
C. Participation in Required Discussion Section (10%)
Students are required to regularly attend class as well as a discussion section. Students must register for a discussion section by the second week of classes and may not change sections without prior authorization by the class instructor. To receive full credit for participation, students must regularly attend the discussion section, have completed the reading assignments for that week, and actively participate in the discussion.

Readings:
There is one textbook for this class which is available at Labyrinth Bookstore:

I recommend purchasing the following volumes from which we are reading multiple chapters:

Readings with links are available via the on-line syllabus:
   [www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/syllabus05.html](http://www.columbia.edu/~ljb34/comp_polts/syllabus05.html).

A reading packet will be made available to students for the remaining readings.

** All readings are also available on reserve at Barnard Library **

SYLLABUS

**Comparative Politics and The Comparative Method**

**Case: USA**
Kesselman et al, “United States”

I. The State, Regimes and Institutions

**The State and Political Authority**

**Case: Nigeria**
Kesselman et al., “Nigeria”
Regimes: Totalitarianism and Authoritarianism

Case: China
Kesselman et al. “China”
A. Nathan. “China: Authoritarian Resilience,” 6-17

Regimes: Democracy/Polyarchy
P. Schmitter & T. L. Karl. 1991.“What Democracy is ... and is Not,” J of Democracy, 2:1, 75-88

Case: India
Kesselman et al. “India”

Regime Transitions: Democratization and Consolidation
J. Linz & A. Stepan, “Toward Consolidated Democracies,” 14-33

Case: Mexico
Kessleman et al. “Mexico”

Presidential and Parliamentary Systems

Case: France
Kesselman et al. “France”

IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM

Conducting Secondary Research at Barnard/Columbia
II. Political Participation and State-Society Relations

Political Representation and Electoral Systems

Political Society, Civil Society and Social Capital

Case: USA

Social Movements and Collective Action

Case: Mexico

In-Class Film: “A Place Called Chiapas”

Politicianized Identity: Theories of Identity Politics

Case: Nigeria
In *Crafting a New Nigeria*. 2004:

Nationalism in Comparative Perspective: Civic vs. Ethno-Nationalism

Case: France
IV. Political Economy

Economic Development and Political Regime Change

Economic Development and the Environment: China
Additional Readings TBA

The Development State: India

The State and the Global Economy
R. Wade and M. Wolf, “Are Global Poverty and Inequality Getting Worse?” 440-446.

Evening Session:
   **Diplomatic Forum:** The Role of African Immigrants in the Development of the Continent

The Political and Economic Crisis of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Conclusion and Review Session

**TERM PAPER DUE IN LAST DAY OF CLASSES**

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