

## PSC101 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor: Bing Powell (Email: gb.powell@rochester.edu)  
Spring 2013

MWF 10:00-10:50 Morey 321

Objective: This course is an introduction to the study of political sciences and comparative politics. We focus on how citizens may be able to control public policies in different modern democracies. We begin by briefly applying some of these ideas to the American political system. We then turn explicitly to the politics of contemporary Britain, Russia and Germany. We shall be comparing these systems with each other, with the United States and occasionally with other countries.

Organization: The course meets three times a week. Mondays and Wednesdays will be devoted primarily to lectures and Fridays usually to discussion of both lectures and reading. You will be assigned to a specific discussion section; both discussion sections meet on Friday at the regular class time. The syllabus indicates the main themes of the two lectures each week and the required readings for that week. A midterm examination on February 27 covers lectures and required readings to

challenge to Russia and Germany. There is an optional quiz after the six lectures on each of these Registrar on May 8 at 12:30. This date cannot be changed. Do not arrange to leave for summer vacation before taking the examination on this date.

Grades: Grades will be based on the midterm examination (20%), two brief optional quizzes (10% each), class discussion (10%) and the final examination (50%). Missing a quiz increases the midterm and final weights by 5% each. Students interested in writing an optional paper (for 25% of final grade) should talk to the instructor on the subject of a paper on citizen control of influence or policymaking in democracies to another country. Only papers on this topic are acceptable. It is acceptable, but not required, to use other democracies in the main text. Papers are due on Wednesday, May 1.

Assigned Readings: The assigned readings are important part of the course and will be discussed in the Friday conversations.

Purchase: Most of the required readings in the course are from G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Kaare Strøm and Russell Dalton, *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*, 10th ed., 2012, Ch. 1-8, 10, 12, 19. (The text is called *CPT* in the syllabus.) The readings each week are not long, but they are dense. The country chapters in particular will repay careful rereading and the syllabus is designed to allow for this rereading.

ALSO: Various websites are shown in the syllabus; these may be updated in lecture.

Reserve: Optional: if you wish to learn more about Britain, Northern Ireland, Germany, and Russia, it may be helpful to supplement the *CPT* chapters by reading Ian Rudge, *et al.*, *The New British Politics* on Britain; O'Leary and McGarry, *The Politics of Antagonism* or McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles* on Northern Ireland; David Conradt, *The German Politics*; M.

*Democracy Denied in Russia* or Thomas Robinson, *Politics in Russia*. Full of the books are on Reserve in Rush Phase Library. The electronic book by Dalton, *Politics in Comparison* on line <http://www.comparativepolitics.org/dalton/> (Reserve) is also recommended.

Week	Topic	Assigned Reading	Assigned Reading
Jan. 16	Democratic Systems Today	Syllabus; CPT Ch.1, all; CPT, Ch.2, skim;	
Jan. 18	Comparing Democracies	CPT, Ch.3, 44-52; Ch.6, 100-108.	
Jan. 21	NO CLASS: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY		
Jan. 23	U.S.A. in Comparative Perspective	CPT Ch. 19; Ranney, "US", esp. 673-684, 689-701, 704-707	
Jan. 25	<u>Section meetings begin.</u> Discuss: why gov?, concepts, citizen control, US democracy		
Jan. 28	Britain as Majoritarian Democracy	CPT, Ch. 8: Rose, "Britain," esp. 160-172, 181-185. (Ch.6, 100-108)	
Jan. 30	British Political Culture	CPT, Ch. 8, esp. 151-160, 173-179, 192. (Reread Ch.3)	
Feb. 1	Discuss: British political system (Compare to US)		
Feb. 4	Britain: Party Competition	CPT, Ch. 8, "Britain," esp. 160-62, 181-185.	
Feb. 6	Britain: Issues, Voters, 1983, 1997, 2010 elections	CPT, Ch. 5, 81-92.	
Feb. 8	Discuss: British party competition; interest aggregation & competitive parties		
Feb. 11	Britain: Consensual Style -Majoritarian System	CPT, Ch. 8, "Britain," esp.172,179-181,185-192.	
Feb. 13	Britain & US: Elections and Policy Control	CPT, Ch. 4, 61-74; Ch. 7, 124-144.	
Feb. 15	Discuss: Interest groups; policymaking and citizen control--US and Britain		
Feb. 19	<del>Modernization Failures</del> <a href="http://spin.rut.ac.uk/">http://spin.rut.ac.uk/</a>		
Feb. 20	NI: Search for Accommodation	Background essays	
Feb. 22	Discuss: Northern Ireland (Darby, Darby, Fitzduff)		
Feb. 25	Review for midterm exam	No Additional Reading	
Feb. 27	MIDTERM EXAM		
Mar. 1	NO CLASS TODAY	Exam covers all lectures and required reading.	

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Themes</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Mar. 4	Russia: Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy?	CPT, Ch. 12: Remington, "Russia" 335-342.
Mar. 6	Russia: Constitutional Arrangements	CPT, Ch. 12:342-351,372-374. (Also. Ch. 2. 38-41).
<del>Mar. 6 Discuss: Russian transition &amp; current constitution</del>		
SPRING BREAK MARCH 11-15 NO CLASSES		
Mar. 18	Russian Political Culture	CPT, Ch.12, Russia,351-358.
Mar. 20	Russia: Parties, Voters, Elections	CPT, Ch. 12, 362-367. Website TBA
Mar. 22	Discuss: Russian culture, party competition, elections	
<del>Mar. 22 Russia: Presidential Election</del>		
Mar. 27	Russia: Elections and Limits of Citizen Control	Schliefer "Normal Country?" Foreign Affairs M-Apr 2004
Mar. 29	Discuss: Russian Democracy	Optional Quiz on Russia
Apr. 1	Germany: Development of a Democratic Culture	CPT, Ch. 10, Dalton: "Germany," 245-254,259-267.
Apr. 3	Germany: Constitution	CPT, Ch. 10, 255-259, 271-283; CPT, Ch. 6:111-118 (& 100-108)
Apr. 5	Discuss: German history, culture, constitution	
Apr. 8	Germany: Party Competition	Reread CPT: Ch 5,81-92.
Apr. 10	Germany: Issues and Voters, 2009 election	CPT, Ch. 10: "Germany" 272-280. (Website TBA)
Apr. 12	Discuss: German party system, elections, government	
Apr. 15	Germany: Consensual Style, Mixed System	CPT, Ch. 10, 267-271,280-290; Reread CPT, Ch. 4, 61-75.
Apr. 17	Germany: Elections and Citizen Control	
Apr. 19	Discuss: German Democracy	Optional Quiz on Germany
Apr. 22	European Union Context	Blackboard Sbragia:EU

~~Apr. 24 Elections and Citizen~~ ~~Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100~~  
Control: 4 Countries 124-127, 147.  
Apr. 26 Discuss: EU Context; Elections & Citizen Control  
Apr. 29 Democratic Systems No additional reading.  
May 1 Discuss: Focus Points. Optional paper due.

The examination on May 8 at 1230 covers all lectures and readings.