Introduction to Comparative Politics
Political Science 204, Summer, 2006

Distance Education/Independent Study

Draft Syllabus 2.0

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SSIL -- Social Sciences Instructional Lab -- Contact Information:
(These are the folks who will administer the midterm and final exam.)
e-mail: de@ssil.uoregon.edu
Phone: 346-4642

Important Notice: It is essential for the purposes of this course that you check your UO e-mail account regularly or set it to forward to the account that you regularly use.

Course Description

This course provides an introductory survey of the political regions of the world, focusing on each region's "political setting" (history, geography, etc.), its political institutions and processes, and the problems and prospects of key nations in six regions. In short, it is a look at the past, present, and future of politics in each region.

The course structure follows that of our text, Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges (5th Ed.), by Charles Hauss. Hauss begins with an introductory chapter (Part 1) followed by sections on industrialized democracies (Part 2), communism (Part 3), and the third world (Part 4), followed by a conclusion (Part 5). Three additional country studies are also available through the text’s companion web site and will be required reading as well (don’t worry – it’s not an especially long book). The course will be divided roughly in half, with a midterm examination covering Parts 1 and 2 of the text, and a final examination covering parts 3-5.

Your grade for the class will be based on the following (more details on each below):

- Chapter quizzes – 19 quizzes at 2 points each, for a total of 38% of your course grade. You will take these quizzes through the class Blackboard page.

- A midterm (31%) and final (31%) examination, which you will take at the Social Sciences Instructional Laboratory (SSIL) if you are in or near Eugene, or at an approved, proctored location if you are outside of Eugene (see instructions below).

Technological Requirements

In order to access course materials and complete your internet-based assignments, you will need regular access to a fairly competent computer with web access, with at least 56K dial-up (although faster connections will obviously be better). Lack of such access is not an excuse to request alternative assignments or extensions on deadlines – it is a reason not to take this class. For example, if you lose your connection or crash while you are taking a quiz you will not get a second chance to take it!
Warning:

This is an online course. It has no face-to-face meetings. Contrary to what many anticipate, this makes it harder, not easier. This independent study version of PS 204 is designed for self-motivated students who wish to proceed through the subject material at their own pace. Keep in mind that independent study is not the best option for every student. The lack of lectures or discussion sections means you have fewer opportunities to learn challenging material. To succeed in this course, you must be motivated and well organized, and your reading, studying, and analytical skills should be strong. Historically, the range of grades in this class has been very large – we have had large numbers of both A-pluses and Fs. Because so much of the course grade is based on the multiple choice quizzes and examinations, please give careful consideration to whether that is a format that will work for you. The quizzes and exams are not easy. Marginal students just taking this class to avoid attending lectures and section meetings, or because they think it will be easy, are strongly encouraged to drop now and enroll in the traditional version of this class – you will learn more and your grade will be higher. Note that PS 204 cannot be repeated for credit – the traditional lecture course PS 204 and the independent study/distance education course PS 204 are the same course.

Important Notes:

• No incompletes or extensions can be given for this course due to the closure of the SSIL lab at the end of the term. All exams and postings must be completed by the dates listed below.

• All examinations must be taken in the SSIL lab or in a proctored environment approved in advance by SSIL Director, Cathleen Leue.

• No extra credit work or make-up assignments can be given.

E-mail Access

Important class announcements will periodically be sent out via e-mail to your UO account. It is therefore imperative that all students either use their UO email account, and check it several times a week, or set it to forward to the account you really use. Please take steps immediately to make sure that this is taken care of, and also make sure that e-mails I send out to the class via Blackboard will make it past your spam filter. This is your responsibility. All UO students are now automatically assigned UO e-mail accounts which are automatically used as your e-mail address in all UO directories. If you do not know how to access your UO email account, contact the Computing Center at 346-4412 to find out. You may also need to set up a Blackboard account.

Texts and Assigned Readings

Text: Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges, Charles Hauss. (5th Ed.) available at the UO bookstore and on reserve at the UO Library. This is a fairly new edition – make sure that you do not have the outdated 4th edition! Used copies are OK, but you won’t have access to some additional (but not required) resources through “InfoTrac” and you will have fewer (but still plenty of) options for the assignments.

CD-ROM and text web site: In addition to the formal readings, each book chapter comes with additional readings and interactive exercises in the accompanying CD-ROM, and on the book’s web site. You might find these exercises helpful in preparing for your quizzes and exams.

Remote Site Students: To order the book with InfoTrac, you have two options: (1) order the book directly from the publisher at 1-800-354-9706, and specify that you need ISBN 0495159751. This includes InfoTrac and does not affect your cost. (2) The other option is to e-mail Gina Murray at the bookstore at ginaw@uoregon.edu and have it shipped to you. Either way you’ll pay around the same amount plus shipping.
Course Web Sites

Various elements of this class are accessible through several web sites.

- **Distance Education.** You can access the examination-related components of the course through the UO Distance Education Web page at [http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/](http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/). It contains all the information necessary for signing up to take the midterm and final exams.

- **Text book website.** The text book’s companion web site includes a variety of materials, including chapter outlines, practice quizzes, flashcards and links; access it at: [PS 204 Text Web Page](http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20bl&product_isbn_issn=0534572804&discipline_number=20).

  Just keep in mind that they have not been updated; any newer information in the chapters themselves supercedes any older information in these sites if they should conflict. (Unfortunately, those resources are not available for the Canada chapter.)

- **Comparative Politics Resource Center web site.** A variety of internet/InfoTrac activities and related optional activities are available at the [Comparative Politics Resource Center](https://blackboard.uoregon.edu/webapps/login/). I encourage you to browse the many resources available here.

- **Blackboard.** Other course information (including the syllabus, discussion boards, grades, and “lecture” power points) is located on the class blackboard site at [https://blackboard.uoregon.edu/webapps/login/](https://blackboard.uoregon.edu/webapps/login/). This is also where you will take the chapter quizzes. (The quizzes on the book web page are for practice.) One of the first things you should do in preparing for this course is take a thorough tour through the entire course Blackboard site.

Chapter Quizzes (38% total; 2 points for each chapter quiz)

For each of our book’s first 16 chapters, plus the three online chapters, you will take a short multiple choice quiz through the course Blackboard page. These are not to be confused with the practice quizzes available at the book’s web site. The practice quizzes do not count toward your grade; these do. The official Blackboard chapter quizzes are not proctored, but they are closed book. In order to take them you will need to promise that you are not looking things up in the book, sharing questions or answers with classmates, printing out the quiz, or using a quiz or quiz answers provided by a classmate. *If you engage in any of these activities even once, your grade for all the quizzes will be a zero,* which will make it essentially impossible to pass the class.

**Deadlines:** The course is divided into four Parts. (These course Parts don’t correspond exactly to the “Parts” of the book.) Each Part of the course includes several chapters and associated chapter quizzes. All the quizzes in a given Part must be finished by the deadline for that Part. You must complete the quizzes for Part I (chapters 1-4 and the online Canada chapter) by no later than the Friday of Week 2, July 7, at 4:00 PM. Quizzes for Part II (chapters 5-7 plus the online Japan chapter) are due the **Wednesday** of Week 4, July 19 at 4:00 PM. Quizzes for Part III (chapters 8-12) are due Friday of Week 6, August 4. Quizzes for Part IV (chapters 13-16 plus the online South Africa chapter) are due **Wednesday** of Week 8, August 16, also at 4:00 PM. This is a veritable plethora of quizzes, so be sure to pace yourself! **Access to the quizzes will be password-protected after the dates/times just stated.** Thereafter, they will only be available to students with approved extensions.
Discussion Board Postings

You will have the opportunity to post to several Blackboard discussion threads during the course of the term. The first discussion thread offers each of you the chance to introduce yourself. Topical discussion boards for each section of the book, with threads for each chapter will also be available on an optional basis. There is no length requirement other than that you must have something substantive to say. You may of course respond on more than one topic or respond more than once on each discussion board if you like. Remember to use proper netiquette – internet courtesy. Challenging a person’s ideas is acceptable; but insulting the person who voiced the ideas discourages the cooperative learning process.

All discussion board participation is voluntary. At the end of the course, if someone’s scores are borderline between one grade and the next and that person has engaged in significant discussion board participation, I will bump the grade up to the next level.

Exams (62% divided into a midterm (31%) and final (31%) examination)

You will take two proctored examinations based on the assigned readings in the Text – a midterm and final exam each worth 31% of the course grade. See below for detailed instructions for taking these exams. Exams are made up of multiple choice questions. The midterm will cover the first two sections of the book (chapters 1-7, plus the online chapters on Canada and Japan) and the final will cover Parts 3-5 (chapters 8-17 plus the online South Africa chapter). The final examination is not cumulative. Tests are closed-book and cannot be taken more than once. Both exams will be in the system at all times, so take extra care when logging in that you are logging in for the correct test! If you take the wrong test there is literally nothing anyone can do to “fix” it.

The exams cover a wide range of material and require knowledge of broad concepts and specific factual details. The main factor that will distinguish the types of questions on the exams from those on the quizzes is that the quiz questions will be more detail-oriented and the exam questions more concept-oriented.

The deadline for taking the midterm is Friday of Week 4, July 21. The deadline for taking the Final exam is Friday of Week 8, August 18.

Quiz, activity, and exam deadlines:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Sections</th>
<th>Text Chapters</th>
<th>Quiz/Activity Deadline</th>
<th>Exam Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Introduction</td>
<td>1-4, &amp; Online Canada Chapter</td>
<td>July 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2: Industrialized Democracies, Continued</td>
<td>5-7, &amp; Online Japan Chapter</td>
<td>July 19</td>
<td>Midterm July 21</td>
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<td>3: The Crisis of Communism 4: The Third World</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>August 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4: The Third World, Cont. 5: Conclusion</td>
<td>13-17, &amp; Online So. Africa Chapter</td>
<td>August 16</td>
<td>Final August 18</td>
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Examination Policies and Procedures:

Exam testing policies can be viewed on-line at http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/info.oncampus and http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/info.offcampus. It is each student’s responsibility to understand and follow the policies outlined in this document. If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Test Scheduling and Deadlines: You may schedule an exam at any available time (available test times will be determined by SSIL or your approved remote proctor), up to the deadlines – Friday, July 21 (week 4) at 4:00 PM for the midterm and Friday, August 18 (week 8) for the final, up until SSIL’s last time slot that day. It is your responsibility to make sure that you take the exam before the deadline. I strongly recommend making an appointment as early as you can, and taking the exams at least a day or two before the deadlines in case something comes up at the last minute. You will take the chapter quizzes on your own through Blackboard – you do not need to make appointments for them, but please recall that quiz deadlines are two days earlier than the exam deadlines.

On-Campus Students: If you are taking this course on campus, you will take all your tests at the Social Science Instructional Lab (SSIL) located in McKenzie Hall 445. All on-campus tests are given and scheduled by appointment only. Before you can schedule an exam, you must complete the On-Line Introduction to Test taking by going to: http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/ and clicking anywhere on the paragraph about clicking there to go to the “test-taking wizard.” After you complete the introduction, you will be given a Test Taker ID Number and Password. With these, you can log into your Test Taker Home Page from the above distance education web page. From your Test Taker Home Page you can make appointments to take tests, cancel appointments, see your test scores, e-mail your professor, change your test taker password, and more. You should go through the On-Line introduction the first week of class. Take the time to read the information under the link, “On Campus Students.” If you have further questions about testing, contact: de@ssil.uoregon.edu.

It is strongly recommended that students make appointments in SSIL for taking tests early. You cannot, however, make appointments more than two weeks in advance of your intended test date (not the test deadline). If you want to take tests early you may do so.

Be sure to schedule yourself enough time to finish a test. Budget extra time for possible software complications: Thirty minutes is the average time needed to complete the exams, and appointments are for one hour. Budget extra time for possible software complications. The lab fee for this class also entitles you to use the computers in SSIL for word processing, web browsing, etc. Absolutely no food or drink allowed is in the lab. For more information, check the SSIL Web page at: http://ssil.uoregon.edu/.

To ensure that SSIL test times are available for all student schedules, a wide variety of test-taking times are available. They will be posted at http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/. If your schedule is inflexible it is your responsibility to sign up far enough in advance to get a space in a time slot that fits your schedule. It is not SSIL’s or the instructor’s responsibility to make an additional exam time for you. More slots are likely to be added during the term as the level of demand becomes clear.

Remote Site Testing (other than Eugene) – Off-Campus Students: If you are taking this course off-campus, go to the web site: http://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/ and click on the “Off Campus Students” tab at the top of the page. Read all the information on the page. Before you can take a test, you must obtain a proctor and have the proctor approved by SSIL. You must do this before the end of the second week of classes. The web page describes how to do this. Once you have found a proctor, fill out the remote site request form on the web page. SSIL will notify you if the proctor you have chosen is approved. If you have further questions, contact de@ssil.uoregon.edu.
All visits to the proctored test sites must be scheduled in advance. You can get all necessary information about your testing site by contacting the testing site proctor or the Continuation Center’s Distance Education Program. All Beaverton test-takers should go to http://de.uoregon.edu/proctoring/exam-ps.php#Portland for specific instructions.

- The deadlines discussed above apply to off-campus students as well as on-campus.
- It is imperative that you get your proctor approved well in advance of the test date.
- No matter how trustworthy she is, your Mom cannot proctor your exams.
- No matter how trustworthy you are, you can’t proctor your own exams.

Testing Center Security:

For security reasons, the following class policies will be strictly enforced at both the Eugene Campus SSIL testing center and the remote site testing centers. Students at the remote sites should be aware that each remote site may have additional policies.

- Bring a picture ID with you to the lab. You will not be allowed to take a test without it.
- When using the lab to take a test, leave any bags, books, papers or computer diskettes with the person administering the quiz.
- While taking a test, you will not be allowed to use any information resources such as books, notes, or computer files.

Do not hesitate to ask the person administering the test for help with the testing software. If you experience any problems with the software, notify the person administering the test immediately. The person administering the test will help you restart the software and contact the professor about the problem.

Whom Should You Contact?

For questions concerning administration and scheduling of exams, contact the SSIL lab first; for questions regarding quiz or exam content, activities, blackboard postings, essays or grading, contact Professor Davidson.

Final Grade Calculation

Final grades are calculated based on your percentages on the 19 chapter quizzes (Chapters 1-16 plus the three online chapters) at 2% each, and the midterm and final exams at 31% each.

If necessary, I reserve the right to apply a curve at a level which I deem appropriate. While a curve is a possibility, you should not count on it; rather, you should assume that your grade will be based on your raw scores and the cutoffs below. If I do use a curve, no one will receive a grade below where the raw scores would have placed you; but depending where you are in relation to the cutoffs, it is possible that some students’ letter grades would increase while others would not.

Cutoffs for letter grades are as follows:

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-93.33</td>
<td>93.34-96.66</td>
<td>96.67 +</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-83.33</td>
<td>83.34-86.66</td>
<td>86.67-89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-73.33</td>
<td>73.34-76.66</td>
<td>76.67-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-63.33</td>
<td>63.34-66.66</td>
<td>66.67-69.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59.99</td>
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