

COMMON COURSE OUTLINE

Political Science POLS 1132 Introduction to Comparative Politics

COURSE DESCRIPTION

1. Credits 3
2. Lecture hours/week 3 lecture per week, no lab
3. Prerequisites none
4. Co-requisites none
5. MnTC goals
 - #5: History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences
 - #8: Global Perspective
6. Description:

Compares political and economic systems, political and economic conditions, and political and economic policies of diverse countries and regions around the world. Comparisons and contrasts will consider governments, cultures, patterns of political and economic development, as well as political values, processes, and institutions. Includes comparisons, where apt, with United States. Analyses will include statistical, historical, and forecast data, as well as theoretical perspectives.

DATES LAST REVISED: September 2011, July 2015, November 2017 [for Transfer Pathway submission]

DATES LAST REVIEWED: August 2018

OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS and possible topics

Essentials of Comparative Politics

- how and what to compare?
- ideologies and political values
- globalization
- states and governments; societies, cultures, and identities; economies and markets
- democratic versus non-democratic governments
- mature democracies versus emerging democracies
- economically developed regions versus developing regions
- political violence

Politics, Economics, and Culture in Developing Regions (a sharper focus on comparing economically developing and developed regions)

- religion
- colonialism and nationalism
- inequalities and obstacles to development
- women, children, and minorities in development
- democracy and democratization
- human rights
- political leadership
- strength of states, governments, civil society
- failed states, turmoil, and corruption
- ethnicity and ethnic conflict
- migration and refugees
- democratic versus non-democratic governments
- mature democracies versus emerging democracies
- economically developed regions versus developing regions
- political violence

Comparing Present Conditions to likely Future Conditions

- population and demographic change
- urbanization
- resource scarcity (food, water, energy)
- environmental decay (deforestation, desertification)
- inequalities and poverty
- disease
- condition of women, children, and minorities
- crime and violence
- changing political institutions

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Assess national political institutions using the comparative method.
2. Assess national political processes/phenomena using the comparative method.
3. Assess national political values and cultures using the comparative method.
4. Compare and contrast perspectives on comparative politics.
5. Reflect on or participate in the roles and responsibilities of national citizens in a global context.
6. Reflect critically on one's own national values, opinions, and experiences in contrast to those of people elsewhere.
7. Explain the historical evolution of political institutions, processes, and conditions in diverse countries and regions (MnTC goal 5b)
8. Assess how political values, institutions, and behaviors in diverse countries and regions shape individual lives, public policies, and political, legal, economic, social, historical, and cultural conditions (MnTC goals 5a and 5c)

9. Illustrate how a variety of perspectives and motives – such as economic development, nationalism, or religious beliefs -- can differently explain political, legal, economic, social, historical, cultural, and religious conditions (MnTC goals 5c, 5d, and 8b)
10. Analyze and assess how political, legal, economic, social, historical, cultural, religious, and linguistic features influence the relationships among states and societies in the past, present, and future (MnTC goals 8a and 8b)
11. Evaluate the Political Science method of comparative inquiry by conducting comparative analyses using, for example, polling and surveys (MnTC goals 8a and 8b)
12. Exercise and assess the roles, responsibilities, and ethical features of active global citizenship (MnTC goal 8d)
13. Address national and international conditions by engaging the political, legal, economic, social, historical, cultural, religious, and linguistic factors informing the situation and potential solutions (MnTC goal 8c)

METHODS FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

May include diagnostic, formative, and summative versions of: answering questions on exams and quizzes; long-form writing (such as writing reactions to political events and conditions, evaluating public policy, advocating policy, writing research essays and political analyses); short-form writing (such as in-class essays, book reviews, reflective writing, opinion pieces, Letters to the Editor, or other brief commentary); submitting a writing portfolio; and participating in group activities, group projects, classroom discussion, classroom presentations, classroom activities, oral presentations, or debates.

SPECIAL INFORMATION: None

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about MnTC GOALS

From http://www.mntransfer.org/students/plan/s_mntc.php and links (viewed July 2015)

MnTC goals:

#5: History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Goal: To increase students' knowledge of how historians and social and behavioral scientists discover, describe, and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events, and ideas. Such knowledge will better equip students to understand themselves and the roles they play in addressing the issues facing humanity.

Students will be able to:

- a. Employ the methods and data that historians and social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.

- b. Examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
- c. Use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
- d. Develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.

#8: Global Perspective

Goal: To increase students' understanding of the growing interdependence of nations and peoples and develop their ability to apply a comparative perspective to cross-cultural social, economic, and political experiences.

Students will be able to:

- a. Describe and analyze political, economic, and cultural elements which influence relations of states and societies in their historical and contemporary dimensions.
- b. Demonstrate knowledge of cultural, social, religious and linguistic differences.
- c. Analyze specific international problems, illustrating the cultural, economic, and political differences that affect their solution.
- d. Understand the role of a world citizen and the responsibility world citizens share for their common global future.