

PLS 1003
Introduction to Comparative Politics
Spring 2009

Dr. Roper
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Course Home Page: www.ux1.eiu.edu/~sdroper/pls1003.htm
Course WebCT Page: <https://online.eiu.edu/webct>

Course Description:

This is an introductory course in comparative politics with an emphasis on democratic institution-building. We examine the theoretical and the practical dimensions of comparative politics. The first two sections of the course examine institutional and behavioral issues currently debated in newly established democracies in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the former Soviet Union. We explore competing theories of comparative politics as well as core issues in the field such as party and parliamentary development, influence of electoral systems, economic development and voting behavior. The final section applies these theories and concepts to a case study of Russia, Mexico and Japan. Our course is available on WebCT. At our WebCT site, you can access the course home page, chat room, email forum and your grades.

Classroom Requirements:

- It is not appropriate to come to class late; however if you come to class late, please find a seat near the door and do not be disruptive.
- If you need to leave early, please discuss this with me prior to the start of class. Otherwise, it is not appropriate to leave and to enter the room during class.
- I require that cell phones be turned-off, including no text messaging. I consider texting during class to be inappropriate and disrespectful.
- I do not allow notebook computers to be used in the classroom without proper documentation indicating that this need is due to a University-approved disability.
- I will respond quickly to emails that have been sent either through WebCT or directly to my EIU account. However as a courtesy, I ask that you address me politely in the message. It is inappropriate not to have a salutation. Proper salutations include “Dr. Roper” or “Professor Roper.” I will not respond to emails that do not address me respectfully.

Grading Requirements:

There are three examinations during the semester. The final examination is not cumulative. At the end of the semester, I will double a student’s best examination. The examinations consist of multiple-choice questions. Material for the examinations is drawn from both the lectures and the assigned readings. Once examinations have been distributed, no one may leave the room and

return. I give make-up examinations only with prior notification based on a University-approved excuse. If you miss an examination due to a University-approved activity, please provide documentation prior to the examination. If you miss an examination due to illness or a family emergency, please contact me before the exam (either phone or email). I require proper documentation in order to take a make-up examination. The make-up examination should be scheduled as soon as possible and consists of essay questions. Any student who misses an examination without prior approval or proper documentation receives a zero for that examination. Grades for the examinations and the course are not curved or adjusted.

Points:

Examination 1	100 points
Examination 2	100 points
Examination 3	100 points
(One examination will be doubled)	
<u>Total</u>	<u>400 points</u>

Grades:

Final grades for the course will be based on the following:

A	90-100%	(360-400 points)
B	80-89%	(320-359 points)
C	70-79%	(280-319 points)
D	60-69%	(240-279 points)
F	0-59%	(0-239 points)

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following: Cheating, or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other academic dishonesty. Plagiarism which includes but is not necessarily limited to, submitting material as one's own work when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person. Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action and results in an "F" for this course.

Student Disabilities:

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please notify me during the first week of class.

Readings:

Gabriel A. Almond, *et. al.* 2006. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. 8th Ed. New York: Pearson-Longman.

Course Outline:

Introduction: How to Study Comparative Politics: Chapter 1 and 2

Social Mobilization and the State: Chapter 4

Democratization and Political Culture: Chapter 3

Examination 1

Elections and Electoral Systems: Chapter 5

Parties, Party Systems and Voting Behavior: Chapter 7

Variations of Presidentialism and Parliamentarism: Chapter 6

Examination 2

Case Study of Russia: Chapter 12

Case Study of Mexico: Chapter 14

Case Study of Japan: Chapter 11

Examination 3 (Wednesday, 6 May 6 10:15-12:15)