GROSSMONT COLLEGE

Official Course Outline

POLITICAL SCIENCE 124 – INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units Semester Hours

POSC 124 Introduction to Comparative 3 3 hours lecture: 48-54 hours

Government and Politics 96-108 outside-of-class hours 144-162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

None.

Corequisite

None.

Recommended Preparation

None.

3. Catalog Description

Students in this course will analyze the political systems of selected developed, transitional, and developing countries of the world in order to understand the importance of political development, political institutions, political actors, political processes, and political change for the dynamics of today’s global society.

4. Course Objectives

The student will:

a. Utilize the comparative method of learning in order to better understand the cultures and political systems of the globe and to better understand the specific problems selected countries face.

b. Define and utilize concepts used in comparative political analysis such as political culture, ideology, political socialization, and political development.

c. Analyze the social, cultural, and economic factors underlying alternative political systems.

d. Differentiate between the formal and informal bases of political power in selected political systems.

e. Identify and examine patterns of change as they occur in the political cultures and institutions of developed and developing countries.

f. Explain the political economy and the influence of market and other international forces on national politics.

5. Instructional Facilities

Standard classroom

6. Special Materials Required of Student

None.

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7. Course Content

a. Introduction: learning from comparison.

Why compare?

b. Political systems and processes.

(1) Types of political systems.

(2) The debate about political development.

(3) Effect of regional political organizations.

c. Country studies. Selected country studies including advanced industrial, transitional, and developing countries such as, but not limited to, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, China, Nigeria, Iran, etc.

d. Diverse historical, regional, cultural, political, and economic case studies.

e. Variety of political systems that exist across the globe.

f. Social and institutional factors that shape a country’s political system and affect its citizens’ everyday lives.

g. Theory regarding the stability of regimes and transitions from one regime type to another.

h. Role of the state and popular participation in political and economic development within countries.

8. Method of Instruction

a. Class discussions and group projects such as investigating the political evolution of a particular country and reporting their findings back to the class.Or, having each member of the group examine a particular example of a course concept, sharing their findings, and proposing hypotheses.

b. Readings and lectures.

c. Multimedia presentations, including video and computer presentations.

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

a. Students will be evaluated on the basis on their comprehension of the subject matter and on their ability to apply this knowledge with insight to modern governments and politics. Students might be, but are not limited to being, evaluated on their ability to articulate course concepts in the course of comparing and contrasting different political systems. Students might also be evaluated on their ability to remember and articulate detailed examples of political manifestations of certain class concepts.

b. Quizzes and examinations, including a final exam: objective and essay questions.

c. Group discussions and projects such as creating electronic or hard copy posters elaborating how a general topic is realized in particular examples. Or, by examining and presenting how course topics have played out in a particular country.

d. Research project with internet component comparing the effectiveness of policies in at least two countries.

10. Outside Class Assignments

a. Textbook reading. For example, with the aim of the ability to retain and apply both specific facts and general concepts as presented in college-level comparative government textbooks. Instructors may also choose to have students examine anything from academic articles to popular news reports with the goal of student understanding and then explaining how course concepts are articulated in such texts.

b. Conducting research in preparation for written and/or oral projects on topics such as transnational policy analysis, theories of development, or country studies.

11. Texts

a. Required Text(s):

(1) Roskins, Michael G. *Countries and Concepts: Politics, Geography, Culture.* 13th ed. New York: Pearson, 2015.

(2) Danziger, James N. and Charles Anthony Smith. *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science.* 12th ed. NY: Pearson Publishing Group, 2015.

(3) Westerhof, Caroline. *Annual Editions: Comparative Politics* 33rd ed. Iowa: McGraw Hill/Dushkin, 2015.

b. Supplementary texts and workbooks:

Payne, Richard J. *Global Issues: Politics, Economics, and Culture*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson, 2016.

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Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

* 1. Compare the political systems of disparate countries by synthesizing the effects of such factors as political culture, ideology, socialization, and governmental structures.
  2. Differentiate between the formal and informal bases of political power in selected political systems.
  3. Evaluate forces leading to different levels of political and economic development between developed, newly industrializing, and lesser developed countries while assessing the explanatory power of various theories of development.

Date approved by the Governing Board: December 11, 2018