

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL CULTURE POLS 349 WR, CD2

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Office Hours; MW 1:30-2:30, R 4:00-5:30 pm, and by appointment
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Ford Hall 207
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3 credit hours

Political culture is an important subfield of comparative politics. Although there are many competing descriptions of political culture, it is generally defined as the political values, attitudes and beliefs of a particular society or subset of society, and the related behaviors of groups and individuals. Political observers as far back as Aristotle have generalized about the national characteristics of certain peoples. Neglected in recent years, political culture is making a comeback in comparative politics, due largely to the centrality of cultural identity and ethnic conflict in world politics.

What You Should Acquire in this Course

1. You should acquire an understanding of political cultures in various regions of the world through course readings. Toward this end you'll study the development of political culture as a concept and its utility for understanding contemporary political processes. Special attention will be devoted to the historical and contextual factors shaping different political cultures.

Understanding of the formative influences of political culture will be assessed through analytical papers and a written exam requiring you to compare and contrast a variety of cultural experiences and evaluate their impact on politics. Understanding will also be demonstrated through classroom discussion and through a major research paper. One major criterion for successful completion of the research paper assignment is the ability to use sensitive information in a discerning and objective manner.

2. We will examine attempts to categorize political cultures, and will explore political culture and tradition, political and economic change, democratization, authoritarianism, and ethnic violence. We'll look at the role of leadership in manipulating cultural and ethnic perceptions and behavior. Understanding of the impact of political culture in its various manifestations will be assessed through essay assignments requiring you to apply political culture theories to the United States, various African, Asian, Latin American and European nations.

3. We will explore the reciprocal influences between political institutions and political culture. Do good laws make good citizens, as Rousseau argued, or is it the other way around? And how malleable are political cultures? Some dictators--Mao, Castro and Stalin, for example--tried to remold their political cultures to achieve revolutionary goals, with disastrous results. Can democracies imbue citizens with noble goals, at lesser cost?

Here it is very important for you to be able to understand the mutual impact of structures and values. Since the answers are not always clear-cut, assessment will take into account your ability to raise questions about the inter-relationship of these two central variables, through performance on written exams, critical reviews, class participation, and the research paper.

Course Requirements:

Participation, meaning regular attendance and participation in classroom discussion, is worth 15 percent of the grade. You will also write 2 short (3-4 page, typed, double-spaced) analytical essays, based on the required readings, worth 10 percent each.

Since this is a WR course, each of you will write a comparative research paper (15-17 pages) on some aspect of political culture, based on your personal interests and decided in consultation with myself. This will be worth 40 percent of your grade, and must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the course. And you will help your fellow students by critiquing two of their papers--this assignment will be worth 10 percent. I will also critique your first drafts.

Finally, we will have a short written exam at the end of the semester, worth 15 percent of your grade. This will be either take-home or in class—we'll vote to see which you prefer.

Summary of Requirements:

Participation:	15% (150 points)
Short essays (2)	20% (200 points)
Paper critiques	10% (100 points)
Paper (1st March 19, Final April 23)	40% (400 points)
Final Written Exam	15% (150 points)
Total:	100% (1000 points)

Grades will be calculated as follows:	900-1000 points:	A
	800-899 points:	B
	700-799 points:	C
	600-699 points:	D
	0-599 points:	F

We won't use the +/- system in this class. I will follow these criteria in grading written work:

A Excellent work. Analytical, clearly written, well-organized, thoughtful, insightful. Virtually no room for improvement. Complete, standardized references.

B Good work. Covers the major analytical points, well-written, shows good effort, but could use more insight and better organization and clarity. Good, standardized references, but missing some important ones.

C Average work, demonstrates only modest effort. More descriptive than analytical, many obscure passages, not very well organized, some grammatical mistakes. References are incomplete.

D Substandard, only marginally acceptable. Virtually no analytical perspective, completely descriptive, poorly organized, frequent grammatical mistakes and awkward constructions. Few or incomplete references indicate hasty (lazy) preparation.

F Too awful for words.

Academic Honesty

You should know your rights and responsibilities as enumerated in the University of Louisville Undergraduate Catalog. Obviously you should not plagiarize or cheat in any way. At a minimum this will mean failing the course; it could result in dismissal from the University. Know what plagiarism is!

Required Texts:

Andrew Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans are Seduced by War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

Preben Kaarsholm, ed. *Violence, Political Culture and Development in Africa* (Oxford: Ohio University Press, 2006).

Lawrence E. Harrison and Jerome Kagan, eds. *Developing Cultures: Essays on How Cultures Change* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997).

COURSE OUTLINE AND REQUIRED READINGS

I. Introduction to Political Culture (January 7, 9, 11, 14)

- Harrison, in Harrison & Berger, pp. xi-xv.
- Berger, in Harrison & Berger, pp. xvii-xxvii.
- Lipset, pp. 17-28.
- Bacevich, pp. ix-xii, 1-7.
- Karsholm, in Karsholm, pp. 1-24.

II. Political Culture: American Exceptionalism (January 16, 18, 23)

- Lipset, pp. 31-109
- Bacevich, pp. 9-33.

January 21: Martin Luther King Day—No Class.

III. Religious, Racial, & Ideological Values in America (January 25, 28, 30)

- Lipset, pp. 113-208.
- McWhorter, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 409-418.

--First short analytical essay, defining and discussing political culture in comparative perspective. Due January 30 (10%).

IV. Militarism, Crime and Violence in America (February 1, 4, 6, 8)

- Bacevich, pp. 34-174.
- Lipset, pp. 267-292

V. Culture and Violence: Africa (11, 13, 15)

--Reno, Eltringham, Johnson, Triulzi, Ultas, in Kaarsholm, pp. 25-48, 66-91, 92-104, 122-138, 161-180.

VI. Culture and Development: Africa (Feb 18, 20, 22)

--Lewis, Bernstein, and Renne, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 3-62

VII. Culture and Development: Asia (Feb 25, 27, 29)

--Tu, Yoshihara, Chua, Weller, and Das, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 65-159.

--Lipset, pp. 211-263

--**Second short analytical essay, on either culture and violence, or culture and development. The paper must be conceptual and comparative, and cannot draw on the American experience. Due February 29 (10%).**

VIII. Culture and Development: Islamic Systems (March 3, 5, 7)

--Tibi, Hefner, Aijazuddin, Esmer, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 163-231.

March 10-16 SPRING BREAK

IX. Culture and Development: Latin America (March 17, 19, 21)

--Grondona, Barbarosa, Hojman, Basanez, Ugalde, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 235-325.

--**Research papers** due for distribution to class March 19, 3 copies. Late papers will not be accepted—you will simply lose 100 points.

X. Culture and Development: Eastern Europe & Eurasia (March 24, 26, 28, 31)

--Kovacs, Chkonina, Petro, Brown, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 329-405.

--**Critiques of papers due March 25 (10%)**

XI. Culture and Development in Western Democracies (April 2, 4, 7, 9)

--Spring, Marini, Latouche, Montaner, Blanck & Pettersson, in Harrison & Berger, pp. 419-498.

XII. Political Culture and American Global Dominance (April 11, 14, 16, 18)

--Bacevich, pp. 175-232.

Take-home exam (if we choose to have one) will be distributed April 11.

Exam or Review Session: Monday April 21

Research Papers: Final draft due Wednesday April 23.