CPO 2002 Introduction to Comparative Politics
Dual Enrollment
Spring 2015

Instructor: Ms. Amelia Estrada
Room: 2110
Meeting Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:50 pm to 3:45 pm
Email: aestrada@ppmhcharterschool.org
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:45 pm-4:30 pm, by appointment only

Course Description:

Why do some countries have democratic forms of government while other are ruled by authoritarian leaders? Why do several European countries have welfare states while the United States does not? Why does ethnic violence occur? Why is Latin America characterized by such high levels of income inequality? These are but a few of the interesting and important questions that we will analyze and discuss during the course of this semester.

This is an introductory course in comparative politics. This class is designed to be accessible to students with no prior knowledge of particular regions of the world or with the study of comparative politics. There are, therefore, no prerequisites. Students will explore major themes in comparative politics and analyze several country case studies. By the end of the semester, you will be able to explain concepts such as democracy, authoritarianism, the welfare state, dependent development, and the comparative method. Moreover, students will be able to identify the challenges facing countries in Africa, Europe and Latin America and offer competing explanations for why these countries exhibit such divergent political and economic trajectories.

Course Guidelines:

1. The class is in session Tuesday and Thursday, 2:50 pm to 3:45 pm. Tardies are not accepted. Take care of all your business before 2:50 PM. After three absences, you will be asked to drop the class and jeopardize your participation in the dual enrollment program.
2. Your questions will only be addressed by Ms. Estrada during class and during office hours.
3. Although we are a BYOD school, unless asked, you do not need to use your electronic devices in my class. Put all devices away.
4. All stipulations of the PPMH Code of Student Conduct and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity are applicable. The consequence for cheating can include disciplinary probation or expulsion both at PPMH and at FIU.
5. All written assignments are to be submitted via Turn it in.
6. You are required to read all material before class. There will be a quiz every class. The professor may assign additional reading from those listed.
7. There are only two exams (worth 60% of your grade). The dates are listed below. You will not be able to make-up these exams unless verifiable documentation is provided that entails an emergency.
8. This is a college class and appropriate behavior is expected. Participation is highly encouraged, however, comments that are racially and/or sexually biased or culturally insensitive are not allowed. Furthermore, talking is considered disrespectful and it is immediate grounds for dismissal.
Course Text:


Methods of Assessment:

1. Quizzes: 20%
2. Midterm: 30% (15% multiple choice; 15% Essays) Exam: November 1st
3. Final: 30% (15% multiple choice; 15% Essays) Exam: January 17th
4. Research Assignments: 20%
   a. Conflict Resolution Due: December 22nd

Class Schedule: (Subject to Change)

No class on Early Release Days
No class Week of November 22nd & Week of December 20th

I. The Political World and the Comparative Method – Week 1 & 2
   a. Required Reading: O'Neil Chapter 1: “Introduction”, pg.2-23

II. Empires, States and the State System – Week 3 & 4

III. Established Democracies: Britain, Germany, Japan and India – Week 5-8

IV. Developing Democracies: Nigeria, Mexico and Russia – Week 10-13
   a. Required Readings: O'Neil Chapter 7 “Political Violence”; Chapter 9 “Communism and Post Communism”; Chapter 10 “Less Developed and Newly Industrializing Countries”; various articles and excerpts on the case studies.

V. Non Democracies: Iran and China – Week 14 & 15
   a. Required Readings: O'Neil Chapter 6 “Non Democratic Regimes”; various articles and excerpts on the case studies.

Final Review Week: January 10th