

PIA3107: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Comparative Politics

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

3107

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

SA3107 / POL3107 Comparative Government & Politics / AIS/PIA2050 Comparative Politics and Societies

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to provide students with a comprehensive introduction to important concepts, theories and debates that underpin the study of comparative politics. This course will focus on several key topics, including: · How to account

for differences between autocracies and democracies · Variations in the institutional forms taken by different political systems · Political transitions · The varying role of governments in national economies · Differences in political culture and citizen participation Examples will be drawn from a variety of democratic and nondemocratic countries, including but not limited to the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, China, Nigeria, Iran, and Brazil.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Detect the scope, nature, limitations, major features and the value of democratic and nondemocratic government		x	x	x
2	Appraise the trajectory of institutional development and how evolution of political institutions is related to socioeconomic and historical factors		x	x	x
3	Understand and critically analyse core concepts, theories and debates related to comparative politics		x	x	x
4	Reflect on the relevance of the experience of other countries' political development to the future of political change in Hong Kong		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Lecturer presents key concepts, theories, and scholarly debates in Comparative Politics	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Group discussions	Students will analyse contents of lectures and readings	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	Think pieces	Students will be required to show critical thinking and to develop original arguments on topics covered in class and in the readings	1, 2, 3, 4	1.5 hours/Week 10 – Week 13

4	Quizzes	Students will demonstrate their command of course materials and their capacity to apply course materials in their analysis of real world cases	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class Participation	1, 2, 3, 4	10	Contributions to class discussions	Yes
2	Think pieces	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Two brief essays (1500 words each; weighted equally) asking students to engage with course materials in the development of original arguments and institutional reform proposals	Yes
3	Midterm quiz	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Questions will require the application of materials covered in class and selected readings in the analysis of real-world cases.	No
4	Final Quiz	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Questions will require the application of materials covered in class and selected readings in the analysis of real-world cases	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Class participation

Criterion

Contributions to class discussions

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Regular and highly thoughtful contributions to discussions held in class and tutorials

Good (B+, B, B-)

Frequent, thoughtful contributions to discussions held in class and tutorials

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Occasional thoughtful contributions to discussions held in class and tutorials

Marginal (D)

Rare contribution to discussions held in class and tutorials

Failure (F)

Little to no contribution to discussions held in class and tutorials

Assessment Task

2. Think pieces

Criterion

Demonstrate a capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Marginal (D)

Limited capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Failure (F)

Poor capacity to engage abstract theories in answering the field' s animating question, in the analysis of real-world cases, and in the development of institutional reform proposals

Assessment Task

3. Midterm and Final quizzes

Criterion

Show understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Marginal (D)

Limited understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Failure (F)

Poor understanding of the relevant literature and ability to apply general theories in the analysis of real-world cases

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

State formation; political regimes; identity; markets; governing institutions in democracies; electoral systems; social movements; authoritarian rule; regime change; political transition; globalisation

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Orvis, Stephen and Drogus, Carol Ann (2014). <i>Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context</i> 3rd Edition (Washington, DC: CQ Press).
2	Todd Landman & Edzia Carvalho (2017). <i>Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction</i> (4th Edition) 2017 (London & New York: Routledge).
3	Matthew Y. H. Wong (2017). <i>Comparative Hong Kong Politics</i> (Singapore: Springer Singapore).

Additional Readings

	Title
1	O' Neil, Patrick H., Fields, Karl, Share, Don (2013) <i>Cases in Comparative Politics</i> (Fourth Edition) (New York: W. W. Norton & Company).
2	Daniele Caramani (ed) <i>Comparative Politics</i> (Second Edition) (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
3	Mark Kesselman, Joel Krieger, and William A. Joseph (eds) <i>Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Ideas</i> (Fifth Edition) (Wadsworth: Cengage).
4	Lijphart, Arend (2012) <i>Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries</i> (Second Edition) (New Haven: Yale University Press)