

Disclaimer: This is an indicative syllabus only and may be subject to changes. The final and official syllabus will be distributed by the instructor during the first day of class.

The American University of Rome International Relations Program

Department or degree program mission statement, student learning objectives, as appropriate

Course Title:	Comparative Politics
Course Number:	POL 202
Credits & hours:	3 credits – 3 hours
Pre/Co-Requisites:	lower level POL or IA course or permission of the Instructor

Required Textbook *(subject to change)*

- ALMOND Gabriel, POWELL Bingham, DALTON Russell, STRØM Kaare Comparative Politics Today. A World View New York, Pearson, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-205-70401-9.
- LANDMAN Todd, Issue and methods in Comparative politics. An introduction, London-New York, Third edition, Routledge 2008.
ISBN: 0-203-92978-0.

Recommended Readings *(subject to change)*

A list of readings about the comparative methodology is provided and will be useful both for written assignments (e.g. term paper) and oral presentations. These readings will be uploaded on MyAUR.

Course description

Basic concepts used to compare political systems and understand how they function: the nature of politics, power and authority, political order, change and participation. The basic building blocks of politics in different states are examined and analyzed, the relative merits and disadvantages are evaluated enabling students to understand their workings and make judgments on their effectiveness.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. demonstrate a knowledge of the basic terminology of political institutions and the functional differences of the major examples of them. They should be familiar and be able to describe and use the most common types of executive, legislature, regional distribution of power, electoral systems.
2. show an ability to compare and evaluate the different elements of politics that make up the knowledge element of the course. They should also be familiar with and be able to use the most common theoretical instruments of comparative politics. Finally, they should be familiar with the major issues being debated in contemporary politics and how the different systems approach them.
3. find and retrieve primary sources for information on political issues and

institutions and secondary sources of analysis in academic databases such as JStor. They will evaluate the reliability of their sources and will present the information and analysis in both oral and written form.

Course Learning Activities

- classes will normally be divided into a presentation on the day's topic by the instructor (LO1) (45 to 60 minutes);
- a discussion and analysis of the topic by all students (LO2) (30 to 45 minutes);
- a country presentation by an assigned student(s) (LO1 and LO3) (15 to 30 min) and a discussion about that (LO2 and LO3) (45 to 60 minutes).

Assessment tools

Class participation	10%
Oral presentation	15%
Written assignment	15%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	40%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading
Week 1	Course introduction. It will be presented the general objectives of the CP course and the learning objectives.	
	Introduction to Comparative politics: the discipline, the methodological approach	
Week 2	Issue in Comparative Politics	Chapter 1 Book: Comparative Politics Today
	Comparing Political Systems	Chapter 2 Book: Comparative Politics Today
Week 3	Political Culture and Political Socialization	Chapter 3 Book: Comparative Politics Today
	Interest Articulation	Chapter 4 Book: Comparative Politics Today
Week 4	Interest Aggregation and Political Parties	Chapter 5 Book: Comparative Politics Today
	Government and Policymaking	Chapter 6 Book: Comparative Politics Today
Week 5	Why comparing countries	Chapter 1 Book: Issues and methods in Comparative Politics
	How to compare countries	Chapter 2 Book: Issues and methods in Comparative Politics

Week 6	Choosing countries and problems of comparison	Chapter 3 Book: Issues and methods in Comparative Politics
	Revision and discussion of the previous lectures	
Week 7	Mid-term exam	
	Common themes and different comparisons	Chapter 10 Book: Issues and methods in Comparative Politics
Week 8	New challenges for comparative politics Presentation: Spain	Chapter 11 Book: Issues and methods in Comparative Politics Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
	Presentation: Italy	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
Week 9	Presentation: Belgium	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
	Presentation: Great Britain	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
Week 10	Presentation: Ireland	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
	Presentation: France	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
Week 11	Presentation: Germany	Readings for oral presentations on European states is posted on MyAUR.
	<i>European Union: how does it work?</i> Margherita de Candia Master's degree in International Relations, University of "Roma Tre", Roma, IT	Files uploaded on MyAur (paper about European elections and chapters from 1 to 7 about European Union institutions)
Week 12	<i>From First to Second Republic in Italy: what is changed?</i> Instructor	
	<i>The breakup of ex-Yugoslavia</i> Maja Ajdin Ph.D in Political Science Department of Political Sciences University of "Roma Tre", Roma, IT	
Week 13	Final exam: exercise Revisions and discussion.	
Week 14	FINAL EXAM	

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;
Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;
Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please refer to the Provost's Office list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally not be counted as an absence.

Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

*Note: No Instructor may penalize a student more than half a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

Grade Point Average

A student's grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the quality points achieved by the number of credits for each course. The result is then divided by the total number of credit hours taken. The Cumulative or Career Total Grade Point Average (CGPA) is the grade point average for all credit hours taken at the University and at approved study abroad programs. The GPA and CGPA are calculated by truncating after the second digit after the decimal point. Transfer credits have no effect on the CGPA at The American University of Rome.

Grades

Grades are posted on a secure area of the University's official website and are mailed to AUR degree students only upon written request. Grades are mailed to the various study abroad programs. Grades computed in the (GPA) reflect the following grade equivalents:

GRADE		GPA	
A	Excellent	4.00	94 – 100 points
A-		3.70	90 – 93.99 pts
B+	Very Good	3.30	87 – 89.99
B	Good	3.00	83 – 86.99
B-		2.70	80 – 82.99
C+		2.30	77 – 79.99
C	Satisfactory	2.00	73 – 76.99
C-	Less than Satisfactory	1.70	70 – 72.99
D	Poor	1.00	60 – 69.99
F	Failing	0.00	59.99 – 0
WU	Unofficial withdrawal counts as an F	0.00	
P	Applicable to development courses	0.00	
<i>Grades not computed into the grade point average are:</i>			
W	Withdrawal		
AUDIT (AU)	Only possible when the student registers for a course at the beginning of the semester as an audit student		
I	Incomplete work must be completed within the ensuing semester. Failure to do so results in automatically converting the I grade to the default grade, which is then computed into the grade point average		
P	Pass grade is applicable to courses as indicated in the catalog.		
WIP	Work in progress		