

## Module specification

### **IMPORTANT NOTES – PLEASE READ THEM BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM**

1. The module learning outcomes in section 7 should be mapped against the overall programme outcomes listed in the programme specification.
2. Learning outcomes in section 7 are grouped under four main headings (A/B/C/D). However, where a heading is not appropriate to a particular module, it would be reasonable to remove it from this form.
3. The number of learning outcomes should be sufficient to show the character of the module and differentiate it from other modules and may vary according to content. Experience suggests that the fewer learning outcomes the better, and certainly no more than twelve per module.
4. The assessment strategy and methods in section 9 should cover the full range of intended learning outcomes.
5. Detailed guidance on credit level descriptors and on linking module learning outcomes to assessment and teaching strategy can be found in the SEEC website at <http://www.seec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SEEC-descriptors-2016.pdf> and the QAA website <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary/pages/glossary-c.aspx>.
6. This form covers the minimum set of information required by the Open University but institutions may add other information for internal use if required.

### 1. Factual information

<b>Module title</b>	Politics 230 - Comparative Politics		
<b>Module tutor</b>	Dr. Tina Mavrikos-Adamou	<b>Level</b>	5
<b>Module type</b>	Taught	<b>Credit value</b>	15
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	100% face-to-face		
<b>Notional learning hours</b>	150		

### 2. Rationale for the module and its links with other modules

This level 5 elective module studies and compares politics across states, by exploring several questions through research on similarities and differences among countries and within and between political systems. In the process, students will discover various ways in which institutional and non-institutional variables determine the answers to complicated questions like why nations thrive or fail, how culture affects governance quality, or what drives change within states and across borders. Country cases will be drawn from different regions of the world to ground students in the set of tools of comparative analysis, so that they may use these tools to further examine and link facts to the larger questions of international relations. The module will thus enhance student capacities to explain political phenomena, and eventually make predictions, using the comparative method.

## 2. Rationale for the module and its links with other modules

As a part of the International Relations program, the module blends in with and complements knowledge and capacities built at levels 4, 5 and 6 in all humanities and social sciences fields, such as political science, history and governance (ex. POL 201, POL 202, POL 221, EUST 210, SOC 349, POL 249).

## 3. Aims of the module

By introducing students to the comparative method and by examining distinct socio-economic and political structures, the module aims to a) add to student knowledge about the world, b) build their skills and capacities to identify and investigate the similarities and differences amongst various socio-economic and political systems, and c) use facts in effective deduction and induction processes, so as to build and test hypotheses. The module aims to enhance student understanding of important political trends and concepts, expose them to politics in a number of countries, and foster a desire to dig more deeply into the fascinating field of comparative politics. Apart from knowledge and understanding of international affairs, students will become acquainted with comparative research and analysis methods, and will develop a series of cognitive, transferable and professional skills in the process. As an elective to the IR program, the module aims to serve and contribute to its desired learning outcomes.

*Objectives of the module include the following:*

- 1. Create a learning environment that is receptive to the needs and views of students and encourages them to achieve their full potential*
- 2. Place (and invite students to place) questions of national and international order and (in)stability at the center of analysis*
- 3. Ensure that students acquire effective knowledge and understanding of internal and external dynamics affecting political, economic and social developments in the world*
- 4. Enable students to identify, examine and analyze differences and similarities in socio-economic and political developments within and across state borders*
- 5. Assist students in developing cognitive skills, esp. with regard to integrating theoretical concepts into logical analysis, and demonstrating a coherent and independent thought process in discussing about events, challenges and opportunities facing the future*
- 6. Assist students in developing practical and transferable skills, esp. with regard to integrating the comparative approach to their overall analysis skills*

## 4. Pre-requisite modules or specified entry requirements

Politics 101, politics 201

## 5. Is the module compensatable?

N/A

## 6. Are there any PSRB requirements regarding the module?

N/A

7. Intended learning outcomes		
A. Knowledge and understanding	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
<p><i>At the end of the module, learners will be expected to:</i></p> <p><b>A1.</b> Demonstrate effective knowledge and understanding of comparative politics methods and tools</p> <p><b>A2.</b> Comprehend the core themes explored by comparative politics (democracy, development, culture, governance, etc), and account for their contextual characteristics</p> <p><b>A3.</b> Identify, consider and evaluate patterns of differences and similarities in political processes within and across political systems, and effectively relate them to larger questions of regional and/or international affairs</p>	<p>A2</p> <p>A1</p> <p>A2, A3</p>	<p>Lectures, class discussions, module readings, written assignments and exams, research work in library and various databases, formative assessments, use of audiovisual resources in-class, tutor feedback on formative and summative assessments, learning in action</p>

B. Cognitive skills	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
<p><i>At the end of the module learners will be expected to:</i></p> <p><b>B1:</b> Have a developed ability to process and synthesize information from different sources and produce rational conclusions</p> <p><b>B2:</b> Apply concepts, theories and methods of comparative politics to the analysis of broader questions of international affairs</p> <p><b>B3:</b> Identify and investigate problems, and formulate and advocate solutions by building reasoned arguments and exercising critical judgement in the process</p>	<p>B1</p> <p>B2</p> <p>B3</p>	<p>Lectures, class discussions, module readings, written assignments and exams, research work in library and various databases, formative assessments, use of audiovisual resources in-class, tutor feedback on formative and summative assessments, learning in action</p>

<b>C. Practical and professional skills</b>	<b>Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy</b>
<p><i>At the end of the module, learners will be expected to:</i></p> <p><b>C1:</b> Demonstrate initiative, self-organisation and time management attributes</p> <p><b>C2</b> Ability to identify professional paths and the associated qualifications</p> <p><b>C3</b> Awareness of relevant, professional ethics</p>	<p>C1</p> <p>C3</p> <p>C4</p>	<p>Meeting assignment deadlines, staying up to pace with readings, lectures, exam and writing assignments, in class discussions on current affairs and case studies; consultation on the selection of the individual paper research theme; formative assessments; encouragement to participate in conferences, events and lectures featuring policy makers on and off campus; encouragement to use and employ scientific journals in research, to look for opinions and analyses of highly distinguished scholars and figures, and to use primary resources; emphasis on academic integrity and proper referencing</p>

<b>D Key transferable skills</b>	<b>Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy</b>
<p><i>At the end of the module, learners will be expected to:</i></p>	<p>D4</p>	<p>Lectures, class discussions, module readings, written</p>

D Key transferable skills	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
<p><b>D1:</b> Communicate information, arguments and ideas in a range of contexts</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Apply knowledge to identify and critically analyze problems, as well as to offer solutions</p> <p><b>D3.</b> Be able to develop a formal plan of complex, collaborative tasks, by reflecting on their own learning process as a whole</p>	<p>D1</p> <p>D3</p>	<p>assignments and exams, research work in library and various databases, formative assessments, use of audiovisual resources in-class, tutor feedback on formative and summative assessments, learning in action</p>

### 8. Indicative content.

The timetabled components of the course comprise an 11-week teaching schedule of 4-hour classes per week. The content indicated below is tentative. The instructor reserves the right to make changes if necessary. It is the responsibility of each student to stay abreast of what happens in the classroom and of changes in the dates of assignments, exams, etc

Week 1: Introduction to the course: Basic concepts of comparative politics, methods and tools of comparison

Week 2: Consolidated Democracies: France

Week 3: Consolidated Democracies: Japan

Week 4: Consolidated Democracies: India

Week 5: Consolidated Democracies: The United States

Week 6: Mixed Systems: Brazil

Week 7: Mixed Systems: Mexico

Week 8: Mixed Systems: Nigeria

Week 9: Mixed Systems: The Russian Federation

Week 10: Authoritarian Regimes: Iran

Week 11: Authoritarian Regimes: China



9. Assessment strategy, assessment methods, their relative weightings and mapping to module learning outcomes			
<p>The writing assignment will involve a response to a prompt provided by the instructor, approximately 1.500 words in length. The assignment will aim at challenging student knowledge and understanding of themes covered in class, capacity to build and present cohesive and reasoned arguments, clarity of communication, and critical thinking skills. Students will need to employ time management skills and demonstrate the capacity to gather, organize and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of sources.</p> <p><b>Research Paper (approx. 2.500 words)</b></p> <p>Building on the paper outline submitted earlier in the semester, students will submit a full research paper of approx. 2.500 words. In evaluating their work, emphasis will be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of the discussion/analysis theme, and formulation of relative questions</li> <li>- Demonstration of comprehensive knowledge/understanding/grasp of topic</li> <li>- Effective integration and application of IR theory and comparative methods</li> <li>- Narrative structure and content development</li> <li>- Clarity and cohesion of arguments, with emphasis on a clear line of logic</li> <li>- Analysis, synthesis and critical skills</li> <li>- Research depth and proper use of academic references (bibliography, in-text citations, footnotes, etc)</li> <li>- Meaningful use of different presentation tools (eg charts, photographs, tables)</li> </ul>	<b>25%</b>	<b>Week 8</b>	%
	<b>35%</b>	<b>Finals week</b>	%

<b>9. Assessment strategy, assessment methods, their relative weightings and mapping to module learning outcomes</b>		
--	--	--

Assessment tasks	A1			A2			A3			B1			B2			B3			C1			C2			C3			D1			D2			D3		
	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3																								
Midterm Exam	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*			*	*	*																*					
Research Paper Outline	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*								*	*							*					
Writing Assignment	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*								*	*							*					
Research Paper	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*								*	*							*					

<b>10. Teaching staff associated with the module</b>
Name and contact details
Dr. Tina Mavrikos-Adamou, <a href="mailto:tadamou@act.edu">tadamou@act.edu</a>

<b>11. Key reading list</b>				
Author	Year	Title	Publisher	Location
Mark Kesselman	2019	Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas (7 <sup>th</sup> ed.)	Cengage	Toronto
John McCormick	2020	Cases in Comparative Government and Politics	MacMillan International, Red Globe Press	London

<b>12. Other indicative text (e.g. websites)</b>
Indicative resources/journals related with the class are available at the Bissell Library database: - Journal of Studies in Comparative International Development



- Journal of Comparative Studies in Society and History
- Journal of Comparative Politics
- Journal of Comparative Economic Studies
- European Journal of Comparative Economics
- European Journal of Comparative Politics
- World Politics
- World Affairs
- International Organization

Other online resources (reports, papers, statistics etc) available at the websites of:

[OECD](#) / [World Bank](#) / [UNDP](#) / [The Economist](#) / [The New York Times](#) / [European Commission](#) / The Atlantic / etc

### 13. List of amendments since last (re)validation

Area amended	Details	Date Central Quality informed

## **GRADING & ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **ASSESSMENT DEADLINES**

Students must submit work by the deadlines set in the module outline. Where coursework is submitted late and there are no accepted extenuating circumstances it will be penalised in line with the following tariff: Submission within 6 working days: a 10% reduction for each working day late down to the 40% pass mark and no further. Submission that is late by 7 or more working days is refused, mark of 0. Submission after the deadline will be assumed to be the next working day. Mitigating circumstances will be evaluated by the AS&PC

### **Assessment of non-degree students taking OU-validated courses (e.g., Study Abroad)**

Same method of assessment, i.e. only “summative” assessments determine final grade. However, since those students are not pursuing an OU degree, they are not subject to resits or second marking, and final grade is calculated as the (weighted) average of all “summative” assessments, without requirement of passing all summative assessments to pass the course.

**Revised Absence Policy – Effective Fall 2019****Maximum Allowed Number of Absences**

The maximum allowed number of absences for all ACT courses stands at **10 (ten) hours per course**.

**Successful Attendance**

A student is considered to have successfully attended a course if s/he has attended **75% of the course lectures**. Thus, for a typical ACT course with 42 hours of contact time, this translates to **10 hours per course**. This policy applies to all ACT students, degree-seeking and Study Abroad. **Please note that absences are counted on an hourly basis**. Absences due to participation in school-related trips and activities may count toward this limit.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All academic divisions at ACT, both undergraduate and graduate, will apply the following policy on academic integrity and be included in the syllabus: "A student committing an act of Academic Dishonesty in a given course will receive an F (0 percentage points) in the assignment where the academic infraction took place. If a student commits an act of Academic Dishonesty for a second time in the same course, this student will receive a failing grade in that course".

**Special Accommodations**

If you have specific physical, psychological, or any other learning disabilities that you believe may require accommodations for this module, you should visit the Dean's office by bringing the appropriate documentation.

The Learning Hub (1st floor, Bissell Library) is staffed by experienced English faculty and you are encouraged to use its services.

**GRADING SCALE**

Grade Description	UK points	US Letter Grade	US point grade
Excellent	70+	A	4.0
Very Good (high)	65-69	A-	3.67
Very Good (low)	60-64	B+	3.33

Good (high)	55-59	B	3.0
Good (low)	50-54	B-	2.67
Satisfactory (high)	45-49	C+	2.33
Satisfactory (low)	40-44	C	2.0
Fail	0-39	F	0