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

Module title	Pol 230 Comparative Politics		
Module tutor	Dr. Tina Mavrikos Adamou	**Level**	4
Module type	[e.g. taught, project, etc]	**Credit value**	15
Mode of delivery	[100% face-to-face, 100% distance learning or a % of each]		
Notional learning hours	[Breakdown of these e.g. tutorials, independent learning, lectures, etc] 150 total hours; 12 weeks • lectures/guest speaker: 35 hours • class discussions: 30 hours • class activities (debates, worksheets, and other interactive activities in the classroom): 35 hours • homework and readings from the textbook and other sources: 35 hours • assessments, formative and summative: 25 hours		

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

This level 4 required module studies and compares politics across states, by exploring several questions through research on similarities and differences among countries and within and

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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 and compare political phenomena and give them a foundation for level 5 and 6 modules.

As a part of the International Relations program, the module blends in with and complements knowledge and capacities built at level 4 (ex. POL 201, EUST 210, Econ 101, Social Science 210, and History 201).

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 a required module within the IR program, this course aims to lay a foundation for level 5 & 6 modules by assisting students to develop the tools to think critically, make comparisons between political systems, and understand the nature of political power and its distribution within diverse political systems.

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

Pol 101

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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**
At the end of the module, learners will be expected to: **A1**: be aware of the main concepts and ways to compare political systems, taking into consideration the history and culture of states, their role in state economic management, regime type (democratic, authoritarian, etc.), and the role of collective identities (gender, ethnic, religious, class)	A1, A2	Readings, class discussions, class activities, videos and other audio-visual resources, news media, group work
A2: understand the ways to compare political systems and place this within a wider context of international relations	A1, A3, A4	
A3: gain an understanding of contemporary historical and cultural foundations of states and the role this plays in the politics of the country	A3	
A4: understand contemporary political systems by applying the various tools provided by the comparative approach to these	A4	

B. Cognitive skills	**Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against**	**Learning and teaching strategy**
At the end of the module learners will be expected to: **B1**: Have a developed ability to process and synthesize information from different sources and produce rational conclusions	B1	Lectures, class activities involving critical thinking skills and applying concepts and theories of comparative politics
B2: Apply concepts, theories and methods of comparative politics to the	B2	

B. Cognitive skills	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
analysis of broader questions of international affairs		
B3: Identify and investigate problems, and formulate and advocate solutions by building reasoned arguments and exercising critical judgement in the process	B3	
B4: have the ability through utilizing the comparative method to comprehend contemporary globalization and how this affects particular states in specific ways, depending upon their regime type, economic systems, and other factors	B4	

C. Practical and professional skills	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
At the end of the module, learners will be expected to:		Student centred activities in the classroom, group work in the classroom, students demonstrating their understanding of key differences among political systems through brief comparisons of one aspect
C1: understand the role of civil society in states being invested, and the role of IGOs	C1	
C2: have an understating of ethical issues and how these concerns are different across various political systems, largely based on historical and political cultural factors	C2	
C3: demonstrate self management, by keeping up with the readings and being prepared to discuss the various country cases being taken up for investigation	C3	

D Key transferable skills	Programme Learning Outcome(s) this maps against	Learning and teaching strategy
At the end of the module, learners will be expected to: **D1**: demonstrate the ability to effectively manage their time in doing the readings, prioritizing how to cover the material assigned as homework and in the classroom **D2**: communicate effectively both in oral presentations and in written form, applying the means to compare and contrast political systems **D3**: work with other students in the classroom, either in pairs or in groups, and share their ideas with their peers and instructor	D1 D2 D3	Systematic use of information literacy, group discussions, research task, oral presentations

8. Indicative content.

Week 1: Introduction to Comparative Politics
Week 2: Ways to compare political systems
Week 3: History and Political Culture
Week 4: Regime types (democratic, authoritarian, monarchy, theocracy)
Week 5: Political institutions (executives, legislatures, judiciaries)
Week 6: Political institutions cont'd
Week 7: The economy in a globalized world
Week 8: Political actors and processes (political parties, the media, electoral systems, interest groups)
Week 9: Political actors and processes cont'd
Week 10: Making sense of turbulent times
Week 11: Conclusions and summation

9. Assessment strategy, assessment methods, their relative weightings and mapping to module learning outcomes

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Assessment Strategy:

The module assessment strategy is focused on evaluating knowledge and understanding, as well as cognitive, practical and transferable skills. The assessment for the course will be based on an in-class mid-term exam, a case study of a particular country selected by the student in consultation with the instructor leading to an in-class presentation and a written report.

Assessment Task	Weighting	Week submitted	Grading (Pass / Fail / %)	Module Learning Outcome(s) the assessment task maps to
1. Mid-term exam in-class (fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions)	25%	Week 5		See below
2. Case Study: oral presentation (recorded in class) either PPT or poster	20%	Week 8		
3. Written report based on the case study (a separate handout will be provided to students with the specific requirements of the assignment)	25%	Week 9		
4. In-class exam (short answer and essay questions)	30%	Week 11		

Assessment tasks	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	D1	D2	D3	

Assessment tasks	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	D1	D2	D3		
Midterm exam	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Oral presentation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X			
Written report	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X			
Final exam	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X			

10. Teaching staff associated with the module
Name and contact details
Dr. Tina Mavrikos-Adamou tadamou@act.edu

11. Key reading list				
Author	Year	Title	Publisher	Location
John McCormick	2020	Comparative Government and Politics	Bloomsbury Press	Bissell Library
John McCormick	2020	Cases in Comparative Government and Politics	MacMillan International, Red Globe Press	eBook

12. Other indicative text (e.g. websites)
Journals found in the Bissell Library: - 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

Websites:

Comparative Politics Dataset: https://www.cpds-data.org/

Overview of Comparative Politics:

https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/35474/chapter-abstract/303821086?redirectedFrom=fulltext

Scope Conditions podcasts: https://www.scopeconditionspodcast.com/episodes

University of Oxford: Comparative Politics Podcasts: https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/keywords/comparative-politics

*Other material will be uploaded on to the Moodle Course for this module.

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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 Spring 2017

Maximum Allowed Number of Absences
The maximum allowed number of absences for all ACT courses stands at **6 (six) hours per course**.

Excusing Absences
To excuse absences for good cause (such as medical reasons or personal crises), the student should contact the Registrar's office and, ahead of time or **at the latest within a week from the time the absences took place**, provide written proof of the cause of the absences. The documents submitted are then evaluated by the Associate Dean for Administration and Student Affairs, who decides whether there are valid grounds for excusing the absences.

Successful Attendance
A student is considered to have successfully attended a course if he/she has attended 75% of the course lectures. Thus, **the maximum number of absences (excused or not) stands at 11 hours per course**. In case of an unsuccessful attendance, the student is administratively withdrawn from the course. The student has the right to appeal the decision to be administratively withdrawn from a course due to excessive absences and seek reinstatement. In this case, the student, **within three working days**, must fill in a 'mitigating circumstances' form in the Registrar's office, where the reasons of the appeal should be explained. Following this, a formal hearing of the Academic Standards and Performance Committee (ASPC) takes place. The decision of the Committee is final.

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