

Non-AP Comparative Government and Politics Syllabus

Period 7 in Room 328
Contact: via Jupiter or 098-958-3000
<https://mrclaxtonocsi.weebly.com/>
Google Classroom Code: bookbp2

Course Description

Comparative Government and Politics is a semester class that provides students a concrete understanding on important political concepts, the qualitative and quantitative tools of data analysis and a genuine understanding of different communities around the globe through a general analysis of six different countries: the United Kingdom, Russia, China, Iran, Mexico and Nigeria. Because this course is not restricted to the above 6 countries, students are encouraged to investigate countries that interest them as well. The instructor will refer to the United States of America and/or Japan as familiar references when introducing certain concepts. While mastery over certain political concepts and domestic/international affairs are important, the goal of this course is to allow students to walk away confident in their skills of research, analysis, and argumentation.

Course Structure

Although this course is a non-AP course, as a class, we will roughly follow AP content thematically in the following order:

- Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments (Unit 1)
- Political Institutions (Unit 2)
- Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations (Unit 4)
- Political Culture and Participation (Unit 3)
- Political and Economic Changes and Development (Unit 5)

As we explore these five different units, students will explore different countries through various methods, including lectures, reading, activities, discussions, etc. This course will not be taught per country. As we will be addressing all six countries little by little throughout the semester, students are encouraged to take notes.

In addition, there are five big ideas that we will continually revisit throughout the semester:

1. Power and Authority (PAU);
2. Legitimacy and Stability (LEG);
3. Democratization (DEM);
4. Internal/External Forces (IEF); and
5. Methods of Political Analysis (MPA).

All five ideas will be taught through multiple units. The goal is for students to discover meaningful connections between course concepts.

Required Texts

- Kesselman, Mark, et al. *Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas*. 8th ed., Cengage, 2019.
- Required article readings from news sources such as BBC, Reuters, *The Guardian*, *The Economist*, CNN, *The New York Times*, Al Jazeera, Pravda, Russia Today, Xinhua News Agency, *South China Morning Post*, etc.
- Online sources such as Fragile State Index, CIA Factbook, Freedom House, the United Nations, Transparency International, the World Bank and videos from YouTube
- Supplementary reading provided by the teacher

Equipments

- Textbook & Chromebooks
- Note taking material. I recommend paper looseleafs and A4 Loose Leaf Binders or Clearfile, as students can reorganize their notes by country or theme when reviewing for in-class tests.

How you'll be graded...

Minor 40%: Homework, Quizzes, Data analysis, Debates/Discussions, etc.
Major 60%: DBQ, Unit Tests, Papers, Projects, etc.

Each assignment will be clearly identified as a minor or major grade.

Late Work Penalty (days include weekends and holidays)

- 1 day - 10% of grade earned
- 2 days - 20% of grade earned
- 3 days - 30% of grade earned
- 4-6 days - 40% of grade earned
- 7+ days - will not be accepted as credit

If there are situations that prevent students from submitting things on time (sickness, family issues, etc.), it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher.

I will be entering "7" into the gradebook to allow students to recognize which items are missing. Once submitted, your work will be evaluated with the late work penalty and you will be receiving a new grade.

Homework Policy: What to do When Absent and Fragment Answers

All assignments must be turned in on time. If a student is absent on a test/quiz day, he or she will need to reschedule a time for the test/quiz on another day, e.g. homeroom, study hall, lunch. **If a major grade, e.g. essay, is assigned on a particular day, I still expect the assignment to be submitted on the original date as all essay assignments can be digitally submitted.** However, if the student was absent due to a situation where he or she couldn't submit the assignment on the original date, the student will need to submit the assignment the day he or she comes back to school. **Students who are absent and/or out for a school event are expected to contact me in a timely manner via Jupiter (this could be a simple "I'm sick Mr. Claxton and I do not think I can finish so-and-so." etc.). No communication, no grade.**

The following are extremely important regarding submission due dates:

1. Assignments will be due at the beginning of class, but students should check Google Classroom for the submission date and time. Any assignments submitted after the deadline (e.g. beyond 5 minutes) will be counted as "late."
2. If there is a difference in due dates with Google Classroom and Jupiter (which will happen because I cannot select multiple days if we have a presentation week), **I am reminding you that Google Classroom's due date should be respected (e.g. different presentation slide submissions)**
3. Additionally, all my classes have a specific Google Sheets calendar, which can be accessed on Google Classroom's "Important Documents" Tab. Students can access what we will be learning this week, this month, and/or this year. **This calendar is your friend, bookmark it on your Chromebooks!**

I am willing to make exceptions for certain situations, e.g. COVID, unexpected tragedies in the family or in friend/social groups, etc.

All assignments must be completed in full sentences, not fragments. This rule does not apply to assignments that allow fragments/bullet points (clarified on assignment). Assignments submitted in fragments will be deducted 5% from the final grade.

Class Expectations

Our class rules are simple and can be summarized in one word: **Respect**. In order that we can all enjoy and grow in our understanding together, we will try to communicate and collaborate with the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control). I expect students not only to respect their teachers but also to respect their classmates, student body, OCSI community and the local community.

Communication is also key in this classroom. Without active communication, it will be hard for me to figure out whether I am going too fast or too slow with class content. I expect students to actively communicate and provide feedback so we can all thrive and grow not only in this subject but also as individuals.

Arriving to Class

Students should be in their assigned seats ready to learn when the second bell rings. If students fail to be in the classroom prior to the second bell, they will be marked as tardy.

Chromebook Usage Policy

Students are expected to bring their chromebooks to class. Students should not use their chromebooks unless the teacher asks them to do so. Usage other than class content and approved times can result in warnings and/or tardies. I will take away laptops unannounced if such an attitude continues (you may pick it up after school).

Students may not use their own devices, e.g. laptops, Macbooks, etc. The only exception to this rule is when there are group projects that require computer specs beyond chromebooks, e.g. video projects.

Cellphone, Food and Drinks

Students are not allowed to use their phones during class. If students desire to use their phones for group projects (e.g. filming), students must discuss with the teacher. Students are not allowed to consume food or non-water beverages in class unless they receive permission. Students are not allowed to eat lunch during class.

Plagiarism and Use of AI Technology

As written in the OCSI Handbook, academic integrity is crucial for your growth. Plagiarism is not only an offense to the original author but also a harm to your education. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, directly quoting without acknowledging the source (e.g., textbooks, primary and secondary sources, etc.), presenting an non-original idea as your own, copying each other's written assignments, missing Works Cited Page, etc. Students must acknowledge sources by using MLA Citation Format.

Students who are caught of any form of plagiarism will automatically receive a 0 on an assignment even if students unintentionally plagiarized, e.g. forgot to include in-text citations.

Students who admit to plagiarism can resubmit assignments with the following conditions:

1. Revised submission with proper citation
2. Submit a page long explanation why plagiarism is harmful or have a conversation with the teacher about plagiarism

Resubmitted work will be graded with a 50% grade deduction from the final grade.

Plagiarism is a serious offense in college and the business world and can get you expelled, fired or legally charged. Even if you plagiarize by mistake, colleges or companies have the right to proceed with legal consequences. Practicing proper citation is a way to protect ourselves from troubles with life impacting consequences. Please make the habit of properly citing your work!

Students are also strongly discouraged from using AI Technology (e.g. Chat-GPT) when completing minor and major assignments, e.g. writing essays. If a student is caught using AI to complete an assignment (e.g. generate an essay), the student will not receive credit. Keep in mind that we strongly discourage AI use because we want you to grow as a person.

You don't want to be replaced by AI in the future, so keep on sharpening your mind!

MLA Citation: Paper Format, In-Text Citations, Works Cited Page, etc.

As mentioned above, improper citations will result in life impacting consequences. While this warning will be on most major assignments, any written essays, presentation slides, etc. without a proper MLA format, in-text citations, and/or Works Cited Page will be **automatically late and be entered into Jupiter as "missing."** Papers with multiple MLA format mistakes will also be "missing." Because the paper is "missing," the lateness policy will start as well (10% to 40%). Students who lack confidence with MLA Format/Citations should visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab for assistance. Students should also ask their English teachers.

Purdue Owl (MLA):

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

Communication out of class

Students and parents can reach me via Jupiter message. I will respond to messages in a timely manner. I cannot guarantee an immediate response to messages after 9 PM and Friday night to Sunday night. If urgent, please contact me throughout the week as much as possible. I prefer that students not contact me via Hangouts unless it is urgent or a quick question that pops up during the school day. **I will not respond to emails that lack professionalism.** I receive a lot of unprofessional emails even from people who work in the "real world" - save my sanity, please!

In the case of online schooling...

In order to secure a smooth course experience, the teacher will be posting all materials on Google Classroom (other than quizzes/tests). Student work should be submitted in a timely manner. Students who decide to conduct online school will still be required to join classes via video call during normal classroom hours. In the case we go online, students should expect to join classes via Google Meets or Zoom (I will notify the students if this becomes a necessity).

When meeting via Google Meets or Zoom, I expect students to join with their cameras on. Students who fail to meet this expectation may see a lower grade for their participation grade. If there are concerns with privacy, please contact me at the beginning of the year.

By the end of this course, you will BE ABLE TO...

- Apply political concepts and processes in authentic contexts
- Compare political concepts and processes among the course countries
- Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps and infographics
- Read, analyze and interpret text-based sources
- Develop an argument that is supported by a defensible thesis, relevant evidence, coherent explanation, and refutation to alternative perspectives

What are my goals for you...

- 1.12f Perform analyses of quantitative historical data
- 1.12.g Evaluate historians' interpretations of the past using a variety of sources.
- 2.12b Analyze how cooperation and conflict influence political, economic, and social conditions
- 3.12e Evaluate the relationship between human societies and the environment

- 3.12g Assess the impact of cultural diffusion (globalization) on societies in different parts of the world
- 4.12.k Examine the epistemological complexities of the postmodern age.
- 6.12.a Explain the roots and historical development of contemporary political systems
- 6.12b Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of various kinds of political philosophies and ideologies
- 6.12.f Analyze how and why political institutions distribute benefits and burdens.
- 6.12.g Describe major responsibilities of political institutions for domestic/foreign policy.
- 6.12.h Examine the wide range of influences on policy makers.
- 6.12.i Evaluate various means of achieving specific political objectives.
- 6.12.j Discuss the significance of shared political and civic beliefs and values, and of economic prosperity, to the preservation of political organization.
- 6.12.k Examine the role of voluntary, community and non- governmental groups in society and their relationship to the functions of political organizations.
- 6.12.l Evaluate functions and responsibilities of, and challenges to, leadership.
- 6.12.m Compare and contrast the role of citizens in various forms of governance.
- 6.12.n Evaluate various ways different societies provide the judiciary function.

In addition to the above goals, it is my desire that you learn the importance of studying other countries and their political systems and understand the importance and responsibility of living as a citizen in a democratic country. It is also my desire that all of us can discuss and learn what it means to honor and love God and to love our neighbors in the realm of politics; (Matthew 22.37, 39, etc.); to pray for our leaders (Timothy 2.1-2, etc.); and to act responsibly in our communities (Philippians 2.1-11, etc.).

I look forward to all the discussion we'll have throughout the semester. I'm really excited to learn about political concepts and these 6 AP countries with all of you!

About the Teacher...

My name is Daniel Claxton. I have a B.A. in History and International Relations from Wheaton College, Illinois, a M.P.P. from GraSPP, The University of Tokyo and M.I.S. from GSIS, Seoul National University. This is my fifth year at OCSI. I am extremely excited that we get to study US History together and discuss the importance of studying history. I look forward to meeting all of you and learning together.

My child and I have read the syllabus and fully understand **Mr. Claxton's**:

- Class Expectations including equipments and food/drink policy
- Grading Policies
- Late Work Penalty
- Homework Policy, i.e. absence and fragment
- Classroom Culture of Respect and Communication In and Out of Class
- Consequences of Plagiarism and Use of AI Technology
- MLA Citation Requirements and Consequences
- Necessity of joining video meetings with their cameras on (in case of online school)

Student's Name (Print) _____ Parent's Name (Print) _____

Student's Signature & Date _____ Parent's Signature & Date _____