

*The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize inconvenient facts—I mean the facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions (Max Weber)*

INTA 3203 • Fall 2012 • Comparative Politics • Instructional Center 111 • T-TH 9:35 sharp to 10:55 • Dr. Kirk Bowman, [kirk.bowman@inta.gatech.edu](mailto:kirk.bowman@inta.gatech.edu), 404.894.6435 • TA: Amanda Meng  
Office Hours: By appointment or Wed. 1-2. Thur. 11-1 • 152 Habersham • 781 Marietta St.  
NOTE: Email only to set appointment or at request of professor  
NO OPEN PHONES, TABLETS, or COMPUTERS in CLASS

Comparative Politics is both the most interesting field in social science and also a method that helps us understand causation and make comparisons with inference. Comparative politics is a very broad field that includes international comparative research on democracy, gender, inequality, economic development, elections, authoritarianism, class, the state, and comparative policy. Why is Costa Rica richer and more democratic than Honduras? Why are some countries parliamentary democracies with prime ministers while other democracies have presidents and senates? Does it matter? Why is 40% of the Argentine legislature made up of women politicians compared to only 8% in Brazil? What are the causes and effects of binomial voting districts?

This class introduces the method and concepts of comparative politics. After mastering the method and concepts through a short textbook, we explore two groups of countries in two very different ways. First, we explore comparative politics in Latin America through a book on militarization and development. Second, we explore comparative political policy through a book on comparative health care. Finally, I will be sending two short *Economist* readings to the class each week.

**Books, required: (At Engineers' Books)**

1. *Comparative Politics* : David Samuels, ISBN 978-0-321-44974-0. Pearson: 2013
2. *Militarization, Democracy, and Development*: Kirk Bowman, Penn State Press: 2002
3. *The Healing of America: A Global Quest*: T.R. Reid. Penguin: 2009
4. Two readings sent out per week from *The Economist*.

Using the selected novel, course materials, and research resources, the student will produce an original and innovative analytical research paper comparing two countries on a selected topic.

8/21	Introduction	10/4	Samuels 13
8/24	Samuels 1	10/9	Midterm
8/28	Samuels 2	10/11	Reid Prologue and 1
8/30	Samuels 3	10/16	Fall Break.
9/4	Samuels 4	10/18	TBA
9/6	Samuels 5	10/23	Reid 2-3
9/11	Samuels 6	10/25	Reid 4-5
9/13	Samuels 7	10/30	Reid 6-7
9/18	Samuels 8	11/1	Reid 8-9
9/20	Samuels 9	11/6	Reid 10-11
9/25	Samuels 10	11/8	Reid 12-13
9/27	Samuels 11	11/13	Bowman 1
10/2	Samuels 12	11/15	Bowman 3

11/20	Research day	11/4	Bowman 7
11/22	Holiday	11/6	TBA
11/27	Bowman 4 (Film Assignment due)	December 13,	8-10:50 Final Exam.
11/29	Bowman 5		

#### Written Assignment:

Your written assignment will incorporate two foreign films set in different countries and the comparative method. You will select and watch two films that have a similar political theme. We will produce a list and put some films on reserve. You will give a one page comparative summary of the films and then 2 pages reviewing two academic articles dealing with your topic. Your paper will then feature 4 pages to explain a research project based on the theme that fits one of the two models of the comparative method. Finally, you are to include a 1-page conclusion; 7 compelling pages total. NO BINDER OR PLASTIC COVER NEEDED.

#### Grading:

Midterm:	30%
Participation:	20%
Final exam:	30%
Paper:	20%.

You are expected to come to class prepared and to do all of your own work in written work and exams. You are expected to properly cite ideas and data in your paper.