Fall 2019

Ms Seim

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**AP Comparative Politics Syllabus**

Welcome to the study of Comparative Politics.  The study of comparative government and politics is a critical to understanding the “flattened” world we live in today.  Knowledge of the history and development of these six countries allows student to make sense of their world through political science and offers a model to better comprehend our own political system as well.  By comparing political institutions, revolutions, economics and the role of the citizen in each country, students become better prepared to participate – globally – at a time when instantaneous news may not fully explain a current political crisis, policy issue, or economic shift.  Lastly, the reliance on current events and documentary history ensures a smooth alignment of the course with the common core curriculum.

**Readings:**    
Textbook:  Almond, Gabriel. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*.  9th Ed. (2008).

Supplemental readings will be assigned and student critiques of readings will be required.  We will use these readings as a basis of class discussion and participation points. 

**The AP Exam:**    
Students are expected to take the AP Comparative Government exam in May 2020.  The AP Comparative Government class ends in January so it is important to attend review sessions prior to the May exam.  We will finalize dates for these at the end of the course.

**Components of your grade:**

Homework (includes meetings, a graduation requirement) – 30%

Projects (includes community service project)– 20%

Participation – 15%

Quizzes—15%

Tests—20%

* Homework:

Homework will always be listed under the agenda on the board in class. It will also be listed on my website. As ***this is a college level class*** of seniors, you are expected to be responsible to get your homework done when assigned. Late homework will not be accepted.

* + Meetings:    
    Government meetings will be assigned for students to attend during the course.  Two (2) public meetings are required. You may substitute a meeting by attending a relevant lecture at any of the nearby colleges – please make sure you have prior teacher approval.
* Projects & Papers:

Both individual and team projects and papers will be assigned throughout the semester, including:

* + Government Service/Internship:    
    Students will be required to complete a 20 hour government-related service project.  This requirement is necessary for graduation. Service hours are due at the end of the 1st semester. Please see me for service ideas; in this course the service hours must be government related.
  + Country current event reports. At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned a country to report on. Approximately every 2 weeks, you will present a report on a current event article on your country as well as an analysis of those events in comparative context. You will submit a written analytical paper to me attached to your article.
  + In lieu of a final exam, students will be asked to write a comparative government research paper. This college-level paper is designed to help prepare you for the AP Comparative Exam. Students will develop a research question, research, and answer the question while presenting important arguments and evidence. You will also report to the class on your research findings.
* Participation

Students are expected to come to class prepared, not only with their homework completed, but ready to participate in the discussion and content of the day. You are expected to be respectful and considerate of all the people in the classroom so that people are comfortable expressing their opinions and we can all learn.

* + Students must read the newspaper and view various news programs daily.  The Economist, Washington Post, BBC, and New York times are recommended reading for this course and are available in the library.
* Quizzes:    
  There will be quizzes on readings, vocabulary, and class discussion/notes and they will be worth between 10-50 points. Advance notice will not always be given.
* Tests:    
  The tests are designed to prepare students for the AP exam and they will include Multiple Choice questions, and short response essays (FRQs) that include Definition and Description, Conceptual Analysis, and Country Context questions.  Tests are generally worth 50-100 points and advanced notice of exams will always be given.

It is my job to clearly communicate class expectations in order to ensure your success in this class—and I will! Similarly it is your responsibility to seek me out when you need extra help or assistance.  I can be found in Room 262 or the Social Studies Office next door.  I do check my email on a regular basis.

This class operates best when everyone has the opportunity to speak and share their thoughts and observations about governments around the world.  I will make this a safe environment to share insights and I look forward to learning from you and with you!

Countries

Iran

China

Great Britain

Mexico

Russia

Nigeria

Course Themes

Sovereignty, Authority and Power

Political Institutions

Citizens, Society and the State

Political and Economic Change

Public Policy