Jennifer Brick  
Introduction to Comparative Politics (PS106)  
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Department of Political Science  
122 North Hall  
Office Hours: Wednesday 12-1, Friday 10-11

Sections:  
106-306 Tuesday 9:55am 434 Education  
106-317 Wednesday 9:55am 55 Bascom  
106-310 Wednesday 11:00am 249 Education  
106-314 Thursday 9:55am 290 Van Hise

Course Guidelines:  
1) The title of the class indicates that it is an introductory level course. As we may cover some  
contentious issues in contemporary world politics, never hesitate to raise questions that have  
provoked you as you read or think about materials we cover during the course of the semester. This  
will be the first priority of discussion sections.

2) In addition to answering your questions, the basic structure of each section will be a brief lecture  
review followed by a review of the readings. Note: This will not be a repeat of the lecture.

3) Reading: Consider readings for sections to be mandatory. You should read all of the week’s  
assigned readings by the time section meets for that particular week.

4) Section Attendance: Section attendance is mandatory. It is essential to attend section in order to  
gain a greater understanding of concepts outlined in and in the readings. If you wish to attend any of  
my other sections due to inability to make your assigned section feel free to simply go to another  
section.

5) Exams/Essays: There are not any objectively “correct” answers for the essay exams. The best  
answers are the ones with the strongest argument based on the aspects of the readings most  
relevant for the particular question. Essays are due in lecture on Tuesdays of the week indicated  
on the syllabus.

6) Email: Please use email as your primary means of communication with me outside of  
section/lecture. I promise you a prompt response.

7) Writing: As an introductory class with several written response papers and limited space, clear  
writing is an important aspect of doing well. If you have questions or doubts about your writing  
abilities please talk/email me. You may find Strunk and White’s Elements of Style helpful.

8) Each week one of you will be responsible for presenting general materials on the country given  
below. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes basically outlining features of the  
country that we should know about as we think about the week’s readings. Tell us the basics, but  
don’t be shy to let us know what surprised/fascinated you about the country in your research.

9) Have fun. There are no right or wrong answers just convincing or unpersuasive arguments. Do not  
hold back your views because every argument based on the readings is feasible and I expect most  
will have different takes on the issues.

Week 1 (January 20): Why Compare?: Introduction  
Week 2 (January 27): Modern Polities: Cambodia  
Week 3 (January 30): The Modern State: Vietnam (essay 1 due)  
Week 4 (February 10): Totalitarianism I: Yugoslavia (essay 2 due)  
Week 5 (February 17): Totalitarianism II: Germany  
Week 6 (February 24): Comparative Political Culture/Muslim Societies I: Egypt (essay 3 due)  
Week 7 (March 3): Comparative Political Culture/Muslim II: Iran  
Week 8 (March 17): Comparative Political Culture/Muslim III: Nigeria  
Week 9 (March 24): Democratic Welfare State: France (essay 4 due)  
Week 10 (March 31): Failed States/Failed Development I: Liberia  
Week 11 (April 7): Failed States/Failed Development II: India (exam)  
Week 12 (April 14): Post-Communist Transitions: Russia  
Week 13 (April 21): Democracy and Globalization: Mexico  
Week 14 (April 28): Post-Modern Politics I: South Africa  
Week 15 (May 5): Post-Modern Politics II: South Korea