

Common Course Outline
POLS 131
Comparative Government and Politics
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County

Description

POLS 131 - 3 credits – Comparative Government and Politics introduces students to the systematic study of comparative government and politics as well as the primary concepts used by political scientists to study the development and outcomes of governments and politics in a variety of countries. By studying a variety of countries, students move beyond concepts to concrete examples and address the following question: Why are some countries stable democracies and not others?

3 credits

Prerequisites: ACLT 052 or ACLT 053

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. describe the origins, concepts, and purposes of the field of comparative government and politics;
2. investigate contemporary politics and political trends in selected countries and regions around the world;
3. identify countries in various geographic regions in the world;
4. analyze the development of the modern nation-state, including the organization of institutions that comprise the nation-state;
5. recognize the major elements of political culture as related to the evolution of political ideologies and ethics;
6. compare and contrast the basic elements of modern constitutional democracies, modern authoritarian states, and developing nations;
7. recognize the organizational structures of various governmental institutions at the executive, legislative, and judicial levels;
8. investigate historical, cultural, and geographical factors that have contributed to the economic development, educational policies, and governments of various countries;
9. assess how non-governmental agencies, including the media, political parties, interest groups, and individual citizens influence public policy
10. analyze the sources of conflict and political unrest in the world;
11. assess the diverse public policies countries have adopted to address common problems including the challenges of global diversity, globalization, human rights, preservation of natural resources, climate change, poverty, terrorism, and ethnic and religious tolerance;
12. compare and contrast the American political system to other nations;

13. find, evaluate, use and cite academic sources on contemporary, emerging issues related to comparative government and politics;
14. debate the reasons for the conflicts and compromises that occur within and among nations and governments, and
15. demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills using a variety of technologies and logical reasoning.

Major Topics

- I. The comparative study of government and politics
- II. The organization and function of national political systems
 - a. Political culture and environments
 - b. Interests groups, citizen participation, diversity issues
 - c. Role of political parties and voting systems
 - d. Executive and legislative leadership
 - e. Judicial Court systems
 - f. Domestic and foreign policy outcomes
- III. Contemporary political systems
 - a. Modern Constitutional industrial democracies
 - b. Transitional post-Communist systems
 - c. Authoritarian systems
 - d. Developing nations
 - e. Theocracies

Course Requirements

Grading/exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member, but will include the following:

- at least two examinations, both of which will include analytical essay questions
- participation in at least 5 of the following: debates, oral presentations, or online discussion forums about current political events and topics

Multiple assignments will infuse CCBC General Education Program objectives; at least one 5-page assignment worth a minimum of 10% of the total course grade will allow students to demonstrate at least 5 of the 7 General Education Program outcomes. Students are required to utilize appropriate academic resources.

Other Course Information

This course is approved as a General Education course in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. This course also meets the General Education Diversity requirement.

Revised 4/1/15