

TransPacific Hawaii College
Political Science 100*
Introduction to Comparative Government
1 October 2007 – 20 December 2007

Instructor: Vincent K. Pollard 3:50 - 6:00 p.m. Classroom 206	Office hours: Monday/Thursday, 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. By appointment (in our classroom) & on the Internet	Internet: pollard@hawaii.edu vincentpollard@transpacific.edu http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard
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Course summary. This 3-credit course provides students with opportunities to explore the government and politics of some of the major nations in the world as well as developing nations. Political structures, functions, processes and policies are compared with each other and with the United States government. Particular consideration is given to contemporary world problems with an emphasis on developing comparative analytical skills and abilities.

Course objectives. By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- a. Identify key governmental institutions and understand their functions;
- b. Identify and describe the historical factors that have shaped political institutions and structures;
- c. Describe the evolution of cultural norms, attitudes, ideologies and traditions that affect the way in which politics is viewed and conducted;
- d. Outline and be able to classify political forms, including the ways in which leaders are chosen and power is distributed and restrained;
- e. Identify the role non-governmental and social organizations, such as political parties and interest groups play, and the manner in which individual citizens participate in politics;
- f. Explain the patterns of political interaction among the various actors with regard to how they seek goals and exercise power, answering the questions of how policy is made and implemented;
- g. Evaluate and assess the political performance of a given state in terms of its policy outcomes, such as economic development, political stability, social equality, personal liberty and quality of life;
- h. Compare and contrast one country to another using structural functionalist or other comparative models, with regard to each of the above;
- i. Apply differing models and alternatives in political structures and policy approaches to a given problem, and evaluate their effectiveness and usefulness;
- j. Evaluate one's own political system, its strengths and its weaknesses, by comparing it to others.

Methods of instruction. Teaching-learning methods include the following: lectures; class discussion; viewing, understanding, appreciating and criticizing videos; country report presentation; data analysis; and writing and presenting a research paper.

* Course code 2074050.

Quizzes and final exam. Students will respond to reflective, persuasive, analytic and research questions in two papers. The questions will remind you of central themes and critical facts from our readings, discussions, lectures, guest presentations, and videos. Details and due dates will be announced in class. This syllabus includes a handout and URLs to two websites to remind you of the standards for clear expository writing.

To get maximum credit, papers should be submitted in a timely fashion.

With the course objectives in mind, questions on the semi-comprehensive final exam will be based on assigned readings and videos, as well as on lectures, in-class handouts, and materials announced or delivered online.

Absenteeism limits participation & interferes with your learning. Being an active, involved student in this course is the most visible sign of your commitment to yourself and to your classmates. Unless you are seriously ill, you are expected to be with us for each class. Only your performance is evaluated—not the reasons for nonperformance. How can you "make up" a missed discussion of a video by your classmates?

Students don't “earn” or “lose” a specific number of points for attending or failing to attend class. And it makes little sense to ask, “What is an acceptable excuse for missing class?” when you should be asking, “What learning experiences will I lose by missing class?”

Regardless of the reason, normally a total of six (6) absences (25% of classes) are cause for earning an “F” for the course. That is in line with the College’s policy. If missing a class is unavoidable, be an adult about it: Figure out how to catch up as best as you can.

Grading Criteria and Grade Reports. A 300-point system reflects the weight assigned to writing and other learning activities in this course. Below, you will keep track of your own progress. Do this first—before asking, "How am I doing "?

Creditable learning activities	Maximum points	Your points	Share of grade
2 papers @ 50 points, on topics and dates to be assigned ...	100		33 1/3 %
Average of 3 or 4 test scores	100		33 1/3 %
Final Exam (semi-comprehensive)	90		30 %
Overall personal effort, presence, punctuality, initiative, homework submitted in a timely fashion, performance on announced & unannounced quizzes, collaborativeness, involvement, intellectual growth & impact on the class.....	+ 10		3 1/3 %
<i>Maximum possible points</i>	= / < 300		100 %

Letter grades are computed in five bands of thirty points each: 271-300 points = an "A"; 241-270 = a "B"; 211-240 points = a "C"; 181-210 points = a "D"; and <181 = an "F."

Each 30-point band is subdivided into bands of 10 points each for purpose of assigning fractional (“plus”/“minus”) grades, for example, “C-plus,” “B-minus” and so on.

Language in the classroom. You have made the effort to study in an English-speaking society. Therefore, take advantage of the opportunity to use English as much as possible. Doing so will give you experience using the concepts helpful for understanding the political world.

To encourage you to do so, you are expected to use English as long as you are in the classroom. That includes our ten-minute breaks.

“Practice makes perfect!” So, make up your mind that you will be more fluent and proficient in English at the end of this semester than you were on the first day of the semester.

Plagiarism. *Plagiarism* is derived from a nasty Late Latin word meaning "kidnapper," "seducer," or "plunderer"! "Academic Honesty" matters! In your written work (papers), credit (cite) your sources precisely when you borrow words or ideas from newspapers, videos, books and websites. And if you are not sure, just ask.

Evidence of deliberate plagiarism results in a zero for the assignment and possibly an "F" for the course. But it is so easy to avoid this situation!

Assigned readings. In addition to in-class handouts and assigned articles on the Internet, students will need a copy of Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), ISBN 1-887985-83-2.

Below, please notice that the order of chapters from *East and Southeast Asia* varies from that of the author. Expect to receive additional assigned short handouts or online readings. These will help make our discussions more interesting to you. Any changes will be announced in class.

Schedule of topics & readings

Weeks 1-4

Orientation, introduction. Presidential & semi-presidential systems.

Monday, 1 October – Thursday, 25 October 2007

Skills review. Why should you take notes during class? To understand, to appreciate and to evaluate! How? Can you give an example of each of these?

How to make the best use of a textbook: What is the purpose of the table of contents? Maps? Photographs? The “Select Bibliography.....”

Basic assumptions. We have to start somewhere. So, let’s begin by asking: What are these large organizations called “official governments,” anyway? What do you already know about them? Where do they get their power? And what do you mean by *power?* And by *politics?*

What are some common *expectations* that people have about official governments? Common *complaints?*

Organizing concepts. In the twenty-first century, many governments claim to be “democratic” in some sense. The relevant questions are “Which people rule?” And “how do they rule” And many governments claim to be “republics,” that is, somehow selected by the people and, therefore, somehow “representative” of them.

Also, if we wish to clarify how power is shared in a government, we may classify (group) political systems according to how the chief executive (president or prime minister) is elected, i.e., *separately from* the national legislature (“presidential” systems) or *by* the members of the national legislature (“parliamentary” systems).

Similarly, if we are interested in the geographic concentration or dispersal of political power, we find that in some political systems, local governments are departments of national governments (“unitary” systems) while in other countries, local governments have more autonomy or self-rule (“federal” systems). Interestingly, almost every kind of political system can be found in East and Southeast Asia.

The differences matter. But you will also discover that there often are greater differences within each type of governmental system as there are between different systems! Sociologists call this “within-group” differences.

Assigned readings:

Handout on power distributions among different kinds of political systems.

Assigned readings (presidential and semi-presidential systems):

United States of America (handouts).

“South Korea,” in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 83-100.

“Philippines,” in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 179-192.

“The Republic of China, Taiwan,” in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 57-63.

Other online resources by Pollard that will help you research topics for your papers:

“13 questions,” section in “Evaluating Internet Credibility,” <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/critical.html>, updated, 1 October 2007.

“Asia, Comparatively,” <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/Asia.html>, updated 1 October 2007.

“Cartoons, Movies,” <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/cartoons.html>, updated 1 October 2007.

“Emerging Civil Society,” <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/civil.html>, updated, 1 October 2007.

“Skillful Internet Searching,” <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/search.html>, updated, 1 October 2007.

Recommended:

Vincent K. Pollard, "Philippines, Republic of," in Spencer C. Tucker (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Cold War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (Santa Barbara, Denver and Oxford: ABC-CLIO, forthcoming 2007).

Vincent K. Pollard, "Coordination Council for North American Affairs [Taiwan]," *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia*, Huping Ling and Allan W. Austin (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, forthcoming 2007 or 2008).

Vincent K. Pollard, "Taiwan Cross-Strait Directory," Asia-Pacific Digital Library, <http://apdl.kcc.hawaii.edu/~taiwan/> Updated 3 July 2007.

Vincent K. Pollard [with You-jeong Lee], "Korea, Republic of (South Korea)," In *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia*, eds., Huping Ling and Allan W. Austin (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2007 or 2008), forthcoming.

Weeks 5-7

Parliamentary Systems

Monday, 29 October – Thursday, 15 November 2007

Assigned readings:

"Japan," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 64-82.

"Australia," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 228-234.

"New Zealand," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 235-241.

"Malaysia," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 154-164.

"Singapore," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 193-198.

Recommended:

Vincent K. Pollard, "Okinawa," in Spencer C. Tucker (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Cold War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (Santa Barbara, Denver and Oxford: ABC-CLIO, forthcoming 2007).

Monday, 12 November 2007, is Veterans Day and is observed as a holiday.

Midterm advisory grades. On or before 13 November 2007, an advisory grade for each student will be reported to the administration of TransPacific Hawaii College.

Weeks 8-11

Political evolution & persistence of communist states Thursday, 19 November – Thursday, 20 December 2007

Thanksgiving Day, a holiday, is on Thursday 22 November 2007.

Assigned readings:

"The People's Republic of China," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 14-54.

"Vietnam," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 210-227.

Recommended:

Vincent K. Pollard, "Asian Nationalisms, Social Revolutions," <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/movements.html>, updated 1 October 2007.

Vincent K. Pollard, Chinese Cultures Abroad WWW Virtual Library, <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/chculture.html>, updated 25 June 2007.

Week 12

Islamic sultanate Monday, 17 December 2007

Monday, 17 November 2007: Last day of instruction.

Assigned readings:

"Brunei Darussalam," in Steven A. Leibo, *East and Southeast Asia*, 40th ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Post-Stryker Publications, 2007), pp. 113-117.

Vincent K. Pollard, "Brunei Darussalam," *The Encyclopedia of World Poverty*, ed., Mehmet Odekon, [Golson Books, Ltd.] (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Reference, 2006), pp. 92-93.

Advice on how to study for the Final Exam.

Final examination. The final exam will be held in our usual classroom at 3:50 p.m. on Thursday, 20 December 2007.

Comments and suggestions on writing and editing your papers and exams*

From reading and commenting on papers written by political science students and participants in my "Writing for Social Scientists" workshop, I have briefly summarized typical problems that arise in these efforts. And I can suggest some solutions.

Somewhat like reading, listening or reflecting silently to oneself, writing also is a form of thinking. And, yes, thinking can be hard work! Therefore, if you experience difficulty and frustration, that does not mean anything is wrong with your head. It's normal. Just be persistent. My comments on your writing should help you get better results from your efforts. Many of my comments, questions and suggestions apply only to your individual paper.

Below, I share some general observations that should be helpful to all of you. Use these suggestions as guidelines and reminders in peer-editing, as well as in revising your final drafts.

1. Please carefully read and directly answer the question that you are asked to answer. Answer all parts of every question. If you do not understand the question, please talk to me about it--before class, during class, or after class. Or if you prefer, make an appointment to discuss the matter in my office. Or e-mail me at pollard@hawaii.edu. After you have finished your answer, look at the question again. After you have written a coherent statement, make sure that it answers the question.

2. Write an introductory sentence or paragraph to summarize your central point. This should be the first sentence or the first paragraph—or very close to the beginning of your paper.

3. Select examples that support your argument. Avoid vagueness. Since two different people may sometimes interpret the same example in completely different ways, show precisely how your chosen example strengthens the point you are making. In a short paper, one or two well-chosen and well-explained examples can add a lot of power to your writing. Further, if you are developing an interpretation or line of argumentation that I hadn't anticipated, your examples will be helpful to me. Also, if your examples are clear but, perhaps, your point of view is less clearly expressed than it otherwise might be, then it is easier for me to write questions, comments or suggestions for you.

4. Say exactly what you mean. Your reader shouldn't have to "guess" your real meaning.

5. Be as concise as possible. Avoid "overwriting." Ask yourself: "Do I really need that sentence?" "Do I need those words?" Many of you may have noticed that I sometimes suggest a shorter way of expressing some thoughts.

* To use a checklist that includes these twenty points and others, download my editing grid at <http://www.teachingforsuccess.com/IssueSupport2/PollardWritAnalsGrid.pdf>

Sometimes when I make these kinds of suggestions, I also write: “Same idea/fewer words/more power.” And sometimes I will write an “equals” (=) sign followed by one or more words and a question mark. The comment will be {bracketed} with a word or expression from your essay. This comment means I am unsure of what you are trying to say. If you decide that my suggested alternative does not express exactly what you mean to say, then my comments are simply encouraging you to improve your own writing.

6. In face-to-face conversational language, our whole body, our facial muscles and our tone of voice “punctuate” and emphasize our spoken words. However, if we write down our spoken language, those written words are sometimes less effective than the same words if spoken aloud. Phrases slowing the reader down as she searches for your main point are words and phrases that do not belong in your writing. For example, in face-to-face conversation, we commonly use throw-away words like “actually” and “basically” for emphasis and transitions. In writing, try to find more precise transitional words and phrases.

7. Social science, as we are learning, is social! We often depend on the work of other people. But avoid plagiarism! Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that fails to acknowledge how we have used the writing of other people. So, use quotation marks whenever you are reproducing someone else’s words in your paper. Give page references or URL's when you are quoting someone's words or summarizing ideas s/he has expressed in books, articles or Internet essays.

8. Using extensive quotations should be the exception. Learn to summarize. Quote sparingly for added effect. And it demonstrates your understanding of what you have read.

9. Becoming “your own best critic” should be your goal. Ask yourself the questions that I ask when I comment on your paper. Acquire the skill of making better criticisms of your own writing than the criticisms made by other people.

10. Make sure subjects and verbs in your sentences “agree” with one another: that is, a singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject gets a plural verb. Also, pronouns refer back to the closest noun that agrees with them. Although this rule is violated in spoken language, clear writing requires accurate pronoun-noun “agreement.”

11. Ask yourself if your verbs would be more effective in the “active” voice. Usually, the “active” voice is more “lively” than the “passive” voice.

12. Turn long adjectival clauses into independent clauses or separate sentences.

13. Very long introductory adverbial phrases and clauses make it hard to tell what the main idea is. Consider three alternatives: a) Shorten these phrases or clauses; b) place them after the main clause; or c) turn them into separate sentences.

14. Continual suggestions (from me) on the need for more precise word usage probably indicate that you will benefit from using a better dictionary--one with several meanings for each word.

15. Careful use of transitional adverbs or adverbial phrases will enhance the coherence of your paper, that is, the way in which one part flows into another.

16. In proofreading your final drafts, please use the "spellcheck" software on your computer. Or use the "eyeball method." Large numbers of spelling errors distract from your main point. Also, some spelling errors change your meaning.

17. Show the "final" version of your paper to a friend who has not seen an earlier draft. Ask your friend to summarize your main point in one or two sentences. If your friend has difficulty giving you a clear summary, then you probably need to spend some more time revising the paper.

18. Never give up! Just keep telling yourself that, no matter how frustrating the writing sometimes becomes, you will absolutely refuse to give up. And get whatever help you need. Why? Sometimes the difference between a mediocre paper and a superb piece of writing is the result of revising your draft one or two more times.

19. The best editing technique for detecting and correcting deviations from standard English word order and for testing coherence and logic? Slowly read your paper aloud to yourself! This works equally well for advanced professional writers and for beginning second-language learners.

20. The best editing technique (for finding spelling and punctuation irregularities? Using a ruler to cover up the line above where you are reading, read from back to front!