

**Comparative Political Systems**

Credit – ½

Term(s) – 1 Semester

**Text:** *Comparative Politics, Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, Charles Hauss, 2013**Prerequisites:**

Students must pass the ICC entrance exam before enrolling in Comparative Political Systems. It is also highly recommended that students have taken Honors Civics and/or American Studies or Honors level Language Arts. These classes provide experiences in critical thinking, writing, and test-taking that will serve students well in Comparative Political Systems. The course is particularly geared for Seniors, though with the consent of the instructor, Juniors may be enrolled.

**Course Description:**

This course is a one-semester elective, which examines basic concepts, problems, and theories of political science and applies them in the examination of the national political systems of a variety of Industrialized Democracies, Current and Former Communist Countries and Developing Countries. While the course offers a comparative view of various nations, the stress of the course will be examining the following issues while discussing specific countries: the make up various political systems, the relationship between both history and culture and political philosophy in various nations, the influence of cultural factors such as customs, traditions, and language in the development of societies, the roles of various individuals and groups in the different societies and the impact of one nation's policies on other nations. Because this is an honors level course taught to seniors, the nature of the material clearly demands higher-level thinking skills and is oriented toward college bound students. Students in the course will be expected to read and comprehend material at a College level. The general approach to the units of study will include teacher-led discussions, student-led discussions, and both oral and written reports. High quality class participation will be expected of each student. This course is recommended for the college-bound student, and offers the student the opportunity to earn dual credit through ICC. This is a dual credit class with Comparative Political Systems 124 at Illinois Central College (three credit hours).

**Course Content:**

1. What is Comparative Politics?
2. The Industrialized Democracies
3. Communist and Former Communist Countries
4. The Developing World

**Course Format:**

This course includes a wide variety of presentation formats including: Full-class discussion, group activities and presentations, student-led discussions, multi-media presentations and role-plays.

**Course Expectations:**

Comparative Political Systems is a challenging, honors-level class that places a strong emphasis on higher order thinking skills. Students will be expected to read not only college-level textbook sections, but also, a wide variety of current country-specific on-line news selections. There is a heavy emphasis on the development of writing skills through essays on tests, group research presentations, as well as final exam creative project. Students will also be expected to regularly participate in full-class discussion and within small-group settings.

**Course Assessment:**

The heaviest assessment emphasis is on in-class participation and essay tests and a lesser emphasis is on daily homework and take-home essays. The final exam grade is based on the written and presented results of an intensive country study.