

## Faculty of Economic, Social and Political Sciences



### POLS1312 Comparative Politics

[45h] 5 credits

This course is not taught in 2005-2006

Language: French

Level: First cycle

#### Aims

By the end of the course, students should have acquired good knowledge of the comparative approach, both at the epistemological level (the type of specific explanation than it involves) and at the purely methodological level. They should be able to come up with a design for an empirical comparative analysis.

They will also be introduced to the principal comparative theories of political systems including in particular comparisons of institutional structures, electoral systems and party systems

#### Main themes

The course has three main components:

- to introduce students to comparative political analysis, at a theoretical and methodological level.
- to show its importance in Political Science, where comparison serves as a substitute for experimentation, both in terms of analysis and institutional engineering.
- to carry out a comparative analysis, for Western societies in particular, of the electoral and party systems, the parties as such, special interest groups, Parliaments and governments.

#### Content and teaching methods

Part I - A.-P. Frognier:

1. Political comparison as an intellectual device and as institutional engineering.
2. The methodology of comparative politics:
  - a. comparison in kinds of scientific explanation;
  - b. the strategies of comparative politics;
  - c. the logic of comparative politics;
  - d. time and comparison;
  - e. problems associated to quantification in comparative politics.

Part II - L De Winter:

- a. electoral systems (characteristics - effects).
- b. party systems;
- c. political parties;
- d. pressure groups;
- e. legislative assemblies;
- f. the formation and functioning of governments.

**Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)**

Prerequisite: Political Science

Evaluation: Written examination

Course materials: students are provided with a course handout