

AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

2007–2008

Professional Development
Workshop Materials

Special Focus:

**The Nation-State in the Twenty-First Century:
Successes, Failures, and Challenges**

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AP Comparative Government and Politics

Special Focus: The Nation-State in the Twenty-First Century: Successes, Failures, and Challenges

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Editor's Introduction

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AP® Comparative Government and Politics is one of the most interesting and challenging classes high school students can take, and the recent changes in the course (first reflected in the 2006 exam administration) make it even more exciting to teach. At first, I approached the new curriculum with a mixture of anticipation and trepidation. I suspect many of you felt the same way. Now that I have taught the revised course, I am pleased with my students' reactions. The emphasis on themes forces students to think more critically and analytically. As a result, our class discussions are more interesting, and students can make connections more easily between concepts and countries.

Requiring the study of Mexico, Iran, and Nigeria has expanded my students' horizons. Mexico has important ties to the United States, Iran often dominates the headlines, and Nigeria illustrates the economic and political problems facing many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This course offers students a frame of reference in considering these countries, as well as Great Britain, China, and Russia.

The theme of this collection is "The Nation-State in the Twenty-First Century: Successes, Failures, and Challenges." I chose this theme because one of the most difficult, but rewarding, aspects of teaching AP Comparative is keeping up with recent developments in the countries studied. Most textbooks do an adequate job of covering the basics. However, sometimes the world changes rapidly, and textbooks cannot possibly keep up with these breaking developments. The materials that follow focus on adding depth of knowledge and examining recent events.

An article by Prof. Caroline Beer, "The Mexican Elections of 2006 and the Political System," will help bring you up to date on politics in Mexico. The article addresses the development of a multiparty system in Mexico and the razor-thin victory of PAN in the 2006 presidential election. It also examines how Mexico's party and electoral systems have strengthened democracy in that country. This essay will not only be useful to students in understanding Mexico, it would also be appropriate in a discussion of party and electoral systems, as well as democratization.

Like Mexico, Iran has been in the news a great deal. Unfortunately, media coverage of Iran tends to be superficial, and the nuances of Iranian politics are complex. "Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Iranian Politics" by Prof. Farideh Farhi provides insight into the current political situation in Iran. This article addresses the internal political dynamics surrounding President Ahmadinejad's rise to power and the steps he has taken during his first year in office to consolidate that power. It also considers the challenges the Iranian president may face in the coming years. This essay will add depth to teachers' understanding of the complexities surrounding Iran. Information contained in the essay will be useful in

discussing several of the key themes of the course, including sovereignty, authority, power, and political change. The articles about Mexico and Iran will assist teachers in understanding recent and dramatic changes in these two important countries.

The second goal of these materials is to provide teachers with lesson plans that are rich in content, intellectually challenging, and student centered. Three teaching units are provided to actively engage the students in your classroom. “Single versus Multiparty Systems: A Comparison of Mexico and Russia,” by Benwari Singh, is designed to help students understand the development of multiparty systems by comparing and contrasting those systems in Mexico and Russia. These two countries provide interesting examples for comparison, because while Mexico is becoming more democratic, Russia is moving in the opposite direction. Students will compare and contrast the factors that have led to these trends. This teaching unit makes an excellent companion to Professor Beer’s article about Mexico. It can be used after both countries have been taught, or during the discussion of democratization, electoral systems, or party systems.

“Using Data to Study Development,” by Rebecca Small, contains two lessons designed to give students a better understanding of the concept of development. Students will use data to compare countries and test their assumptions about the level of development in each. As part of the lesson, students will study several key measures of development, including gross domestic product, the Gini Index, life expectancy, the death rate, and the Human Development Index. This will help students develop their skills in reading graphs and charts and extrapolating information to test theories and compare countries. These lessons can be used at the beginning of the course to introduce the countries, or during the discussion of development, or near the end of the class to make some final comparisons about the countries studied.

The last article, about teaching vocabulary, is a bit of a departure from traditional college-level lessons. Learning vocabulary is crucial in AP Comparative Government, and many of the terms are either completely new to students or their meanings differ from their common usage. “Let the Games Begin!” by James Wehrli describes both traditional and innovative methods for teaching students difficult vocabulary terms. In addition to vocabulary quizzes, students can learn through techniques borrowed from popular game shows, like *Family Feud*, *Password*, and *Jeopardy!* While AP classes are challenging and college level, our students are still teenagers. These strategies will add variety to your class, appeal to students with diverse learning styles, and let kids have some fun while they are learning.

The focus of these materials, then, is helping you stay on the cutting edge of comparative politics by providing in-depth knowledge beyond the textbooks. They will also prepare your students to use data, identify and explain trends, understand abstract concepts, and compare countries analytically. I hope you find these essays and teaching units useful and believe that if you use them in combination with the other materials provided by the College Board, the AP Comparative Government and Politics course will be an enriching and rewarding experience for you and your students.

The Mexican Elections of 2006 and the Political System

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Introduction

The presidential elections of 2006 profoundly tested Mexico's young democratic institutions. There were two top contenders for the presidency—Felipe Calderon of the National Action Party (PAN) and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). They were separated by less than 250,000 votes, representing only 0.06 percent of the total vote. Lopez Obrador refused to accept the official results, accusing the winning party of fraud and extensive violations of the electoral code. Supporters of Lopez Obrador launched protests to demand a vote-by-vote recount or an annulment of the election. After two months of uncertainty, the Federal Electoral Tribunal named Felipe Calderon of the National Action Party (PAN) the president-elect. The narrow margin of victory in the elections, coupled with the postelection conflict, led some observers to worry about the breakdown of democracy, but Mexico's governmental institutions were able to manage the conflict, prevent widespread violence, and demonstrate the resilience of Mexico's democracy. The 2006 elections further strengthened the multiparty nature of the political system with the federal legislature divided among three major parties and a handful of smaller parties.

Historical Background

Throughout most of the twentieth century, Mexico was governed by a one-party system in which the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) controlled almost all elected offices across the country. Mexico's transition to democracy was characterized by the development of a multiparty system. While opposition parties had always existed, it was only in the 1980s that they began to win influential elections. At first opposition parties won municipal elections, and then building on their experience as mayors and city councilors, they went on to win state elections. Finally in 2000 the opposition candidate from the National Action Party (PAN), Vicente Fox, won the presidential election. After a prolonged transition from one-party rule, the 2000 elections definitively established Mexico as a multiparty democracy.

Over the past few years there has been a strong resurgence of the Left in Latin America. Parties of the Left had been in decline across most of the region since the dirty wars of the 1970s, in which most activists on the Left were either killed or exiled. As it has become clear that the economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s have not improved the standard of living for the vast majority of people in the region, leaders on the Left have gained increasing support from the voters. There is a tremendous diversity among the new leftist leaders in Latin America. Hugo Chavez, a populist former military officer who intentionally antagonizes the United States and allies his country with Cuba, contrasts sharply with more pragmatic leftists such as Michelle Bachelet of Chile and Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva in

Brazil who have maintained good relations with the United States and continued to pursue neoliberal economic policies. The anticipated victory of Lopez Obrador in Mexico would have further strengthened this regional trend, but with Lopez Obrador's defeat, Mexico continues as an exception in the region (along with Colombia, which also has a rightist government). Since the elections in Mexico in the summer of 2006, the Left has continued to win important victories, including the election of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua and Rafael Correa in Ecuador.

Electoral and Party Systems

One-party systems are usually authoritarian, though there are some examples of one-party systems that are considered democratic. Mexico was considered democratic by many scholars in the 1950s and 1960s. The government was not more democratic in the 1950s and 1960s than it was later on, but the scholarly standards for democracy were lower, and in comparison to other countries in the region, Mexico appeared relatively democratic. Most one-party systems are communist, and they remain one-party systems because other parties are outlawed or severely circumscribed. Mexico was rather unusual in that it was one-party authoritarian but *not* communist. Mexico's one-party system was enforced through a complex system of patronage (using government resources to pay supporters), co-optation (using government resources to buy off opposition), and electoral fraud and repression if necessary.

In a democracy, one-party systems are uncommon, because it is rare that large majorities of the population agree about politics. Two-party systems usually emerge in countries with plurality single member district (SMD) electoral systems. SMD is the type of electoral system used in the United States. In this system of selecting legislators, the country is divided up into the same number of geographic districts as there are seats in the legislature. Each district elects one representative, and whoever gets the most votes wins the seat.

Countries that have plurality SMD electoral systems often only have two major political parties, because it is difficult for new parties to get a foot in the door. In the United States, for example, there is a small Green Party, which tends to be to the Left of the Democratic Party. It is difficult for the Green Party to grow or even survive because if the people on the Left of the Democratic Party split off to vote for the Green Party, then it is more likely that the Republican Party will win. Those on the Left would probably prefer to see the Democratic Party win rather than the Republican Party, so voting for a third party is seen as "wasting your vote." If, however, minorities are geographically concentrated, plurality SMD may not always produce a two-party system. Canada, for example, has a plurality SMD electoral system, but there are multiple parties. This is because the French minority is concentrated in the province of Quebec and can therefore support a party to represent their interests. If the French were spread out evenly across the country it would be more difficult for them to have a party, because they would not have enough votes to win in any districts. Because they are concentrated in one province, they have a good chance of winning in Quebec and gaining representation in the parliament.

Multiparty systems usually emerge in countries with proportional representation electoral systems (PR). In a PR system the country is not divided into separate districts, and voters do not vote for individual candidates for the legislature. Instead, voters vote for a “party list.” In a traditional PR system, the parties present lists that rank order their party’s candidates for the legislature. Voters vote for a party list rather than individual candidates, and parties win seats proportional to the percentage of the vote they receive. If there are 100 seats in the legislature, and Party A wins 30 percent of the vote, it will get 30 seats. The party will give the 30 seats to the top 30 candidates on its party list. This system tends to lead to more parties, because those who do not feel well represented by the major parties can form new parties and are likely to gain a voice in government. Usually parties have to win a certain percentage of the vote before they are eligible for a seat. In Mexico this threshold is 2 percent. Let’s rethink the above example of the USA’s Green Party in the context of a PR electoral system. If 5 percent of the voters on the Left vote for the Green Party, instead of throwing the election to the Republicans, the Greens would get 5 percent of the seats in the legislature. Their supporters would not have “wasted their votes.” In fact, they would actually have a voice in government. Thus, there are greater incentives and opportunities to form new parties in a PR system than in an SMD system.

The Mexican Electoral System

The electoral system in Mexico has undergone profound changes over the past 30 years. The PRI walked a fine line between controlling the electoral system to ensure their electoral victories and making elections fair enough so that opposition parties would focus on winning elections rather than working to topple the entire political system through protest or violence. As the opposition grew stronger, the PRI made more and more concessions by improving the fairness of the electoral system. Proportional representation was introduced in 1964 to give opposition parties a chance for representation in the national legislature. The number of seats distributed proportionally increased to 100 in 1977 and then to 200 in 1986. A federal electoral tribunal was established in 1986 to rule on electoral disputes. Previously, the legislature (which was controlled by the PRI) ruled on all electoral disputes. This court was granted more autonomy and power in subsequent reforms in 1990 and 1996. An independent institution, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), was set up in 1990 to oversee and monitor elections, taking these functions out of the hands of the executive. Subsequent reforms strengthened the independence of IFE. By the year 2000, most of the electoral laws and institutions had been thoroughly reformed, and elections were competently and fairly administered.

Mexico has a mixed PR-SMD system. In the lower house (Chamber of Deputies), there are 500 seats: 300 seats are allocated by single member districts and 200 seats are allocated by proportional representation. The country is divided into 300 geographic districts and one representative is elected from each district. Each party also prepares a list for the PR seats. Those 200 seats are allocated based on the percentage of the vote each party received in the single member district elections. In the Senate, each state (and the federal district) has three senators. Each party presents a list of two candidates. The party that wins the most votes

gets both senators from their list. The party that comes in second gets one senator. Another 32 seats are allocated through proportional representation.

Mexico's mixed electoral system provides incentives for more than two parties to form, because parties need only win 2 percent of the national vote to gain representation in the congress. As a result, since 1997 no party has had a majority in the national legislature. The divided government makes it difficult for any legislation to get through congress. Fox's administration (2000–2006) was characterized by deadlock and near paralysis. Because of the problems of divided government in presidential systems, many political scientists have suggested that a parliamentary system would be preferable. A parliamentary system is more stable because only the parliament is directly elected by the people and therefore only the parliament has democratic legitimacy. The prime minister answers to the parliament. In a presidential system both the president and the legislature have democratic legitimacy, so there is no clear democratic solution if the president and the legislature are in conflict. Moreover, the fixed terms of a president make presidentialism rigid and therefore less able to manage political crises constitutionally. In Latin America (though not in Mexico) political crises are all too often solved with military coups. If there were parliamentary systems, these crises might possibly be solved by votes of no confidence. (Linz 1990; Mainwaring 1993)

There are three major parties in Mexico: the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which ruled Mexico for most of the twentieth century and has an inclusive centrist ideology; the National Action Party (PAN), which is center-right and represents the Catholic Church and business interests; and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), a center-left party with ties to peasant organizations and some unions. A few smaller parties, including the Green Party and the Worker's Party, also have representation in the national legislature.

In addition to the electoral system, the history of one-party rule by a centrist party also helps to explain why Mexico has three major parties. Opposition parties formed both to the right and to the Left of the PRI during the process of democratization. If the PRI had been either clearly right wing or clearly Left wing, the opposition may have been united, resulting in only two parties. There is also a regional component to Mexico's party system. The PRD is strongest in Mexico City and the South, while the PAN is strongest in the North. This regional breakdown reflects the fact that the South of the country is much poorer than the North and also has a much larger indigenous population. The PRI has a strong presence across the whole country. The geographical diversity of the parties creates a situation where many states only have a two-party system (the PAN versus the PRI in the North and the PRD versus the PRI in the South) while national politics is characterized by three major parties.

Mexico's Three Major Parties

The PRI governed Mexico for over 70 years. The party was founded in 1928 in an effort to bring stability to the country after the revolution. The party has been inclusive, accepting almost anyone who wants to join the party, regardless of ideology. For most of

the twentieth century, politics was determined by competition among factions within the PRI. Today, the most important factions are the authoritarian old guard, known as the “dinosaurs,” and a more modern reformist faction.

The PAN was founded in 1939 as a reaction against the leftist policies of President Lazaro Cárdenas. While the ideology of the PAN’s leadership has varied over time, the party has been closely tied to business interests and the Catholic Church. For most of its history, the PAN played the role of the “loyal opposition,” agreeing to participate in elections so that the system appeared more democratic and accepting that there was little chance of ever gaining power. Even though the PAN promoted economic policies beneficial to business, large business interests supported the PRI, because they relied on good relations with the government for subsidies, contracts, and other benefits. In 1982, however, President Lopez Portillo responded to an economic crisis by nationalizing the banks (to nationalize a company means the government takes it from its private owners and runs it as a government-owned company). As a result of the bank nationalization, many business leaders left the PRI and began to support the PAN. The money and expertise they brought to the PAN provided the basis for the PAN’s success.

The PRD was formed after the presidential elections of 1988. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, son of the popular president Lazaro Cárdenas, along with other leftists from the PRI formed a faction called the “Democratic Current” to challenge the more conservative factions that were dominating the party. When Carlos Salinas, a more conservative figure in the party, was chosen as the PRI’s presidential candidate, members of the Democratic Current left the party and supported Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas for president. Salinas was declared the winner in an election that was marked by extensive electoral fraud. After the elections the coalition that supported Cárdenas formed the PRD.

During the administration of Carlos Salinas, the PRI-controlled government made alliances with the PAN in order to pass the neoliberal reforms favored by Salinas. At the same time the government repressed the PRD and many leaders and supporters of the PRD were killed. As a result the PAN was able to gradually strengthen its electoral position, while the PRD was greatly weakened. By the late 1990s, the repression subsided, and the electoral fortunes of the PRD began to improve. In 1997 Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas won the first ever election for mayor of Mexico City, the second most important elected office next to the presidency. Previously the mayor had been appointed by the president. The PRD also won 125 of the 500 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and PRD candidates went on to win a number of gubernatorial elections. The PRD, however, did poorly in the 2000 elections, winning only 51 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (down from 125). Their percentage of the vote for congressional elections dropped from 26 percent to 19 percent. Some leftist voters may have been more motivated by anti-regime sentiments than political ideology and therefore voted for Fox since he was the most likely candidate to unseat the PRI. Despite its losses in the congressional and presidential elections, the PRD’s Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador did win the mayoral elections in Mexico City in 2000. In 2003, the PAN had heavy losses in

the congress, and the PRD almost doubled its congressional delegation. See Table 1 for the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and percentage of the vote won by each of the three major parties.

The Elections of 2006

As early as 2004, the PRD's Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador was the front-runner for the 2006 presidential elections, before other parties had even chosen their candidates. A shopkeeper's son from the state of Tabasco, he had been a member of the PRI and was the state director of the National Indigenous Institute in Tabasco during the 1970s. In the 1980s he joined the Democratic Current of the PRI and then left the PRI to support Cárdenas' presidential campaign in 1988 and run against the PRI for the governorship of Tabasco. He led protests after the election and started a voters' rights movement in Tabasco. He ran again for governor of Tabasco in 1994 against Roberto Madrazo. There was fraud and considerable illegal spending by Madrazo. After massive protests in the state, President Zedillo tried to convince Madrazo to step down but was unable to do so. Lopez Obrador went on to organize the "Brigadas del Sol," a grassroots movement to build the base of the PRD by sending activists out door to door. He was elected mayor of Mexico City in 2000.

As mayor, Lopez Obrador became well known and enacted popular policies. He was known for his personal austerity, holding press conferences at 6:30 a.m. and driving himself around in an old Nissan. He promoted populist policies, such as taking back land in Chapultepec Park that had been illegally appropriated by wealthy residents with property adjacent to the park (Chapultepec Park is a 1,600-acre park that serves as the recreational and cultural center of Mexico City). He also provided a pension of about \$58 a month to every resident over 75. He attempted to win the support of the middle class as well with projects to renovate the historic district of the city and build a double-decker highway to relieve Mexico City's notorious traffic problems.

With Lopez Obrador far ahead in all the polls, the Fox administration brought charges against him related to a minor land dispute over an access road to build a hospital. In April of 2005, PRI and PAN representatives in the national congress voted to strip him of his immunity from criminal prosecution and essentially impeach him. Prosecutors charged him with the misdemeanor crime of failing to obey a court injunction. Under Mexican law anyone facing criminal prosecution is barred from running in an election, so the charges meant that the leading contender for the 2006 presidential elections likely would not be permitted to run. Many people viewed the legal case as a purely political maneuver to keep Lopez Obrador out of the race. After huge protests in support of Lopez Obrador, Fox backed down, fired the attorney general, and dropped the charges. Lopez Obrador returned to the presidential campaign with even more support than before.

Ultimately Lopez Obrador lost the election to Felipe Calderon of the PAN. Felipe Calderon won a surprise victory in the PAN's primary over President Fox's preferred candidate, Santiago Creel. Calderon is a lifelong member of the PAN and represents the more

traditional conservative Catholic faction of the party. His father was one of the founders of the PAN. He served as the president of the PAN, the leader of the PAN in congress, and was secretary of energy under President Fox. Roberto Madrazo won the PRI's primary to become the PRI's contender, but only after a bitter dispute within the party. Madrazo represents the old-style authoritarian PRI, and reformist elements within the PRI did not support his candidacy.

While Lopez Obrador was in the lead throughout most of the race, during the final few months of the campaign he began to lose support. He did not show up to the first presidential debate, and a lot of negative advertising against him seemed to turn middle-class voters away from him. The official election results gave Calderon 35.9 percent, Lopez Obrador 35.3 percent and Madrazo 22.2 percent of the vote. With a difference of less than 250,000 votes, this was the closest election in Mexican history. Before the final vote count was announced, both Calderon and Lopez Obrador declared themselves the winner. When the official results put Calderon ahead, Lopez Obrador and his supporters staged large protests and later blocked streets in downtown Mexico City demanding a vote-by-vote recount. In addition to allegations of fraud and error at the polling places, Lopez Obrador argued that the negative media campaign against him was illegally financed and that President Fox illegally intervened in the election. The Federal Electoral Tribunal called for 9 percent of the votes to be recounted. While some irregularities were found, the court declined to order a full recount. The Federal Electoral Tribunal expressed some concerns with the financing of the media campaign against Lopez Obrador and Fox's interventions but ultimately decided the infractions were not severe enough to merit annulling the election. Thus they declared Calderon the winner on September 5, 2005, more than two months after the election. On September 16 (Mexican Independence Day) Lopez Obrador declared himself the legitimate president of Mexico and vowed to create a parallel government. Calderon will face many obstacles in trying to unite the country and move forward with his policy proposals.

Consequences of the 2006 Elections

The main consequences of the presidential elections of 2006 for the party system are increased polarization among the parties, the weakening of the old guard of the PRI, and continued divided government at the national level. In contrast to Vicente Fox and most other elected leaders of the PAN, Calderon represents the base of the PAN. Fox was a businessman who joined the PAN in the 1980s after the bank nationalization. Calderon is a lifelong member of the PAN. His father was an important leader of the party, and the president-elect seems more committed to conservative ideology and the tradition of the PAN than Fox and others who only recently joined the party. The PAN suffers from a split between traditional, ideological members who have been long time activists in the party and the more recent converts who are more pragmatic. Fox belongs to the latter category. Fox's preferred candidate for the PAN's presidential bid, Santiago Creel, was also a relative newcomer to the party. Under Calderon's leadership, the party may return to its historic roots as a conservative Catholic party. The Left was also radicalized by the election. While

Lopez Obrador lost support in the months after the election, some of his core supporters remain convinced that the election was stolen and fear the PAN is trying to rebuild a one-party state. With the PAN moving away from its pragmatic leaders and back toward its base, and the Left disillusioned with the current electoral institutions, it is hard to imagine the PAN and the PRD working together in a divided Congress. Further deadlock is likely to continue. The growing polarization may open up an opportunity for the PRI to retake the ideological center and play both the PAN and PRD against each other as they each search for legislative allies, thus strengthening the PRI.

The resounding loss of Roberto Madrazo in the 2006 election symbolizes a decisive defeat for the old guard of the PRI. Madrazo represented the authoritarian elements of the PRI that are sometimes referred to as the “dinosaurs.” His defeat should lead to a resurgence of the more modern, reformist faction of the PRI, or else the PRI is likely to be marginalized altogether in the future. The aftermath of the 2006 elections has spelled trouble for a number of Madrazo’s allies. Most notably, Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, the governor of the state of Oaxaca, is a close ally of Madrazo. Madrazo’s imposition of Ruiz as the PRI’s candidate for governor caused a schism in the PRI with a number of prominent PRI leaders publicly supporting the opposition candidate. Ruiz’s administration has been marked by crisis since Ruiz used the police to end a teachers’ strike in the city of Oaxaca. As a result of his strong-arm tactics, the city was occupied for months by protestors demanding his resignation. The protests intensified in the months after the presidential election, and in late October, President Fox sent in federal troops to try to reestablish some order in the city. Madrazo’s waning power was also displayed when his favored candidate was not selected as the PRI’s gubernatorial candidate in the state of Tabasco, and in the PRI’s defeat in the gubernatorial elections in Chiapas.

The PRI also had massive losses in the national legislature. Its representation in the lower house dropped from 201 seats to only 106. The party’s percentage of the vote fell from 37 percent to 21 percent. Both the PAN and PRD picked up seats. The PAN increased its representation from 151 to 206 seats, and the PRD jumped from 95 to 127. The PRI went from having the largest share of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies to being outnumbered by both the PAN and the PRD. The PRI does have more seats in the Senate than the PRD (33 for the PRI versus 26 for the PRD), but the PAN has a large plurality with 52 out of a total 128. No party has a majority in either house of congress; thus, the divided government that characterized Fox’s tenure will persist.

The PRD’s electoral fortunes have fluctuated dramatically, depending upon the personal appeal of the party’s candidate. It does not have a strong infrastructure and membership base. Thus, with Lopez Obrador’s falling popularity, the party may lose some ground in the next elections. This already happened in the gubernatorial elections in Tabasco on October 15, 2006, when Lopez Obrador’s close ally lost to the PRI. The PAN is clearly the dominant party right now, controlling the presidency for the second time in a row and also having a plurality in both houses of congress. It has historically been weak in the South, but it is

expanding its infrastructure. If Calderon takes a sharp turn to the right, however, it may put off moderate voters and compromise the party's future. While the PRI was greatly weakened by the 2006 election, the party has a strong grassroots organization. It still controls the more local governments than the other parties, and if the reformists can take back the party, it may be able to stage a comeback.

In sum, the 2006 elections severely stressed Mexico's electoral institutions. No electoral system can perfectly count every single vote; machines malfunction and humans make errors. When the results are very close, it may be impossible to know which candidate actually won more votes. Still, Mexico's electoral institutions have been through constant reforms and have been rigorously examined for fairness and competency. The Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) and the Federal Electoral Tribunal (TRIFE) that organize, monitor, and arbitrate Mexico's elections are among the most modern and reliable in the world. Democracy is always a work in progress, and it is hoped the 2006 elections will inspire even more reform to further improve the fairness and accuracy of Mexico's elections.

Table 1: Mexican Party Vote Shares and Representation in Congress

Year	Congress	Seats in Chamber of Deputies			Percentage of the Vote		
		PRI	PAN	PRD	PRI	PAN	PRD
1988	LIV	260	101	{136}*	50%	17%	{27%}*
1991	LV	321	90	40	61%	18%	8%
1994	LVI	300	119	71	50%	26%	16%
1997	LVII	238	122	125	39%	27%	26%
2000	LVIII	209	208	51	37%	38%	19%
2003	LIX	222	151	95	37%	31%	18%
2006	LX	106	206	127	21%	42%	25%

*The PRD did not exist in 1988, thus the number in parentheses represents the group of leftist parties that supported the Cardenas coalition.

Source: Roderic Ai Camp, *Politics in Mexico: The Democratic Consolidation*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 206-209. The 2006 data is adapted from http://www3.diputados.gob.mx/camara/001_diputados/005_grupos_parlamentarios.

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Lesson Plan: A Comparison of Mexico and Russia

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Introduction

In AP Comparative Government and Politics, one of the most important skills for students to develop, and perhaps the one they struggle with the most, is the ability to retain knowledge about a country they have already studied and apply comparative concepts to a different country. This is especially true when the countries being compared, at least on the surface, do not have much in common. Russia and Mexico offer an opportunity to practice these important comparative skills.

These two countries have very different histories, but both countries have evolved from one-party states into multiparty states. The Communist Party in the Soviet Union, through patronage, intimidation, and force, maintained an iron grip on political and governmental power. This system began to crack in the mid-1980s under the weight of the economic and political reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet system finally collapsed in 1991, and a multiparty system sprang up almost overnight to fill the void. For a short time Russia functioned as a multiparty electoral system. However, since the start of the twenty-first century, Vladimir Putin has consolidated power through the limitation of civil liberties, restrictions on foreign nongovernmental organizations, and changes in electoral laws.

In Mexico the PRI, despite the presence of two other political parties (PAN and PRD), maintained control of the government through a complex system of patronage, electoral fraud, and co-optation of dissent. In 2000, Vicente Fox (PAN) became the first non-PRI candidate to win the Mexican presidency. The PRI's grasp on power had been slipping since the mid-1980s as a result of continued electoral fraud, an underperforming economy, and a series of missteps by PRI leaders in dealing with a catastrophic earthquake in Mexico City. Felipe Calderon, another PAN candidate, won the most recent presidential election in the summer of 2006. However, his election has been dogged by allegations of widespread electoral fraud.

Lesson Plan

This lesson can be used at several possible points in semester-long AP Comparative courses. In a course that uses a country-by-country approach, this lesson is appropriate to use after both Russia and Mexico have been studied. In a course that uses a thematic approach, this lesson could be used when studying differences between party systems. In either type of course, this lesson could be used as review in preparation for the exam in May.

The guiding question for this lesson is "Is Mexico's past, Russia's future?" Students will begin by analyzing election data from Russian elections since the collapse of communism, with the

goal of helping them understand that Russia's party and election systems are becoming less competitive. Students will then answer a set of questions about Mexico. This will help them understand that Mexico has moved in the opposite direction—toward more competitive elections, and has thus become more democratic. Finally students will compare Russia with Mexico to determine whether Russia is moving in the direction of Mexico's past—and toward one-party rule.

Place students in pairs and provide each pair of students with the election charts and questions provided below. One student should be assigned to study data from Russia, and the second student should be assigned to do the same for Mexico. Have the students complete the questions and then share their responses. Then have the students work with their partner to complete the comparative questions.

Russian Electoral Questions:

Use the election data provided, and your knowledge of Russian government and politics, to answer the following questions:

- 1) In the four Duma elections since the fall of communism, what is the trend in support for the Communist Party? What might account for the changing support the Communist Party receives in Duma elections?
- 2) What has happened to the number of parties gathering more than 10 percent of the overall vote in the Duma elections? How do you account for this?
- 3) What changes have been made in the way the Duma is elected? Why is it harder for smaller parties to capture seats?
- 4) How many presidential candidates captured more than 5 percent of the vote in each election shown?
- 5) What was the gap between Putin and his closest competitor in the 2004 election?
- 6) What trends can be seen in Russian presidential elections? What might account for these trends?
- 7) Based on the data, is Russia becoming more or less democratic? Identify and explain two reasons for your answer.

Answer Key—Russian Electoral Questions:

Answers may include some of the following information. The sample answers are by no means complete or exhaustive.

- 1) Support for the Communist Party of Russia followed a bell-curve-like pattern. In 1993, it was under 12 percent, then it increased to 35 percent in 1999, and then it decreased to fewer than 13 percent in 2003. Some factors that might account for this rise and fall are immediate disillusionment with communism after the 1991 coup, then growing disenchantment with democracy during the economic troubles under Yeltsin. Finally the decline might be attributable to Putin's popularity.
- 2) The number of parties garnering more than 10 percent of the vote in Duma elections has decreased. Factors that might account for this are new electoral laws that make it more difficult for minor parties to win seats, and a clampdown on the media that is critical of Putin.
- 3) Parties must now demonstrate nationwide support when registering with the election authorities. The single-member districts have been eliminated.
- 4) In 1996, five candidates received more than 5 percent of the vote. In 2000, three candidates received more than 5 percent, and in 2004, this number fell to two.
- 5) President Putin captured just under 60 percent more of the vote than his closest competitor. This means he won with a landslide.
- 6) Presidential elections are becoming less competitive in Russia. Government control of the media, Putin's popularity, and the political prosecutions of several of Putin's political rivals may account for the lack of competition.
- 7) Elections are becoming less competitive. Any number of factors from the tables can be used to prove this: the share of United Russia's vote, Putin's overwhelming margin in the last election, and the number of parties who received more than 10 percent of the vote in the last Duma elections. Factors not shown in the tables might include changes in electoral laws, government ownership of the media, and the crackdown on the oligarchs.

Mexican Electoral Questions:

Use the election data provided, and your knowledge of Mexican government and politics, to answer the following questions:

- 1) Describe one trend shown in the graph titled “PRI Support in Presidential Elections, 1934–2000.” What factors might account for this trend?
- 2) What is the relationship between voter turnout and the percent of the vote received by the PRI in each presidential election? Does this demonstrate causation or correlation?
- 3) In which presidential election was there the first significant challenge to PRI control? Support your answer with data.
- 4) Using the tables titled “Chamber of Deputies, 2006” and “Senate, 2006,” and your knowledge about the 2006 presidential election, discuss the relationship between the executive and legislative branches on the Mexican government. How is this different from previous administrations in the Mexican government?
- 5) Has the loss of PRI control been a positive development for the Mexican people? Why or why not?
- 6) Based on the data, is Mexico becoming more or less democratic? Identify and explain two reasons for your answer.

Answer Key—Mexican Electoral Questions:

Answers to the Mexico questions may include some of the following information. The sample answers are by no means complete or exhaustive.

- 1) Some trends might include a decreasing percentage of the vote for the PRI candidate, increasing—though uneven—voter turnout, and increasing support for PAN and other political parties.
- 2) The lower the voter turnout, the higher support for the PRI candidate. There seems to be a correlation between high voter turnout and decreased support for PRI.
- 3) The first significant challenge to PRI support occurred in 1994. This is the first year in which a non-PRI candidate polled more than 25 percent of the total votes (26.7 percent).
- 4) PAN controls the executive branch but does not have a majority in either the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate. This is different from the period of PRI control, because the PRI both controlled the executive branch and had an overwhelming majority in the legislative branch as well.
- 5) Answers will vary. Positive answers might include a greater voice for a wider number of people and interests in Mexican politics. A negative might be that gridlock is going to occur, because the PAN does not have a majority in the legislative branch and, therefore, the pace of legislation will slow down greatly.
- 6) Mexican elections are becoming more competitive. A number of factors support this observation. PAN won the last two presidential elections. The legislative chambers are divided among parties. The PRI candidate came in third during the most recent presidential election.

Comparative Questions:

Use the data provided, and your knowledge of Russian and Mexican politics, to answer the following questions.

- 1) Using your background knowledge and information from your text, briefly explain how the PRI stayed in power.
- 2) How did the electoral system in Mexico reinforce one-party rule? What are the similarities and differences to the electoral system in Russia?
- 3) Using your background knowledge and information from your text, briefly explain how institutional changes made Mexico more democratic.
- 4) How are current Russian institutions used to consolidate authority?
- 5) Is Russia or Mexico closer to being a true multiparty system? Identify and explain two reasons for your response.
- 6) Is Mexico's past Russia's future? In other words, is Russia becoming a one-party system similar to Mexico under PRI control? Why or why not?

Answer Key—Comparative Questions:

- 1) Answers should include discussions of patronage, electoral fraud, corporatism, and co-optation of dissent.
- 2) By using a mixed proportional/single-member district system in electing the Chamber of Deputies, PRI gave the impression of party competition while maintaining control of the government. Opposing parties won enough seats to make the system appear competitive but not enough to win majority control. Russia has recently moved to a proportional system for electing the Duma. Because United Russia is so strong, the elimination of single-member districts reduces the number of seats small parties can win.
- 3) Answers can include, but are not limited to, a discussion of the Federal Electoral Institute, which effectively oversees elections to prevent fraud,
- 4) Answers can include, but are not limited to, a discussion of government control of the media, elimination of single-member districts, and more stringent requirements for parties to place candidates on the ballot.
- 5) Factors that support Mexico may include the two PAN victories in recent presidential elections and increased distribution of seats in the legislature. Factors that support Russia are that there are still more parties in Russia than in Mexico, and that Putin's popularity may be fleeting (this is hard to measure, since critical media have been silenced).
- 6) Answers will vary. Students may point out Putin's overwhelming margin of victory in the last election and the decreasing number of parties who received more than 5 percent of the vote. This may indicate that Russia is moving toward a one-party system. In Mexico, PRI has lost popularity, and the close presidential election in 2006 demonstrates that a multiparty system has developed.

Assessment: Student Seminar

The health of multiparty systems in Mexico and Russia can be used as the basis for a student-led seminar. The advantage to this method of evaluation is that a seminar allows you not only to evaluate the specific content knowledge regarding Russia and Mexico but also the student's ability to build and support a cogent argument. The use of a student-led seminar forces students to defend a position with evidence and in the face of evidence that contradicts what they believe. It allows student's the opportunity to sharpen their reasoning for their position and to internalize the information in a way that makes understanding deeper than just the recall level.

A seminar could be used the day after the students have looked at the data and answered the questions. One seminar method that could be used is a fishbowl variation. Start by writing the focus question on the board: "Is Mexico's past, Russia's future?" Then place two pairs of desks facing each other and randomly place four students in them. These four students start the seminar off by addressing the focus question. However, they only stay in the center for about 30 seconds. Other students, as they have comments or questions, replace these students. A good basic rule for this type of seminar is that every student has to be in the fishbowl at least twice.

A second method of evaluation that could be used is a free response question (FRQ) from a previous AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam. A sample FRQ (modified from the 2004 exam) follows, along with a rubric.

Modified Free Response Question and Rubric:

The following question and rubric was modified from question four on the 2004 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.

Question:

- (a) Describe how Russia AND Mexico have experienced significant change since 1985 in their respective party systems.
- (b) Identify one factor that contributed to the change in single-party dominance in each country you described in (a), and explain how that factor contributed to the change.

Rubric:

6 points

- (a) (2 points) 1 point for description of significant change in single-party dominance in both Russia AND Mexico.
- (b) (4 points) 1 point for *identification* and 1 point for *explanation* of one factor that contributed to the change in single-party dominance in both Russia and Mexico.

Reference Tables: Mexico Election Results

Table 1: Voting in Mexican Presidential Elections, 1934–2000

	Votes for PRI Candidate	Votes for PAN Candidate	Votes for All Others	Turnout (percent Voters Among Eligible Adults)
1934	98.2	—	1.8	53.6%
1940	93.9	—	6.1	57.5%
1946	77.9	—	22.1	42.6%
1952	74.3	7.8	17.9	57.9%
1958	90.4	9.4	0.2	49.4%
1964	88.8	11.1	0.1	54.1%
1970	83.3	13.9	1.4	63.9%
1976	93.6	—	1.2	29.6%
1982	71.0	15.7	9.4	66.1%
1988	50.7	16.8	32.5	49.4%
1994	50.1	26.7	23.2	77.16%
2000	36.1	42.5	19.2	64.0%

Source: Mark Kesselman et al., eds. *Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas*, 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2007, 237.

Source for Tables 2-4 below: Federal Election Institute, www.ife.org.mx, accessed December 23, 2006, and checked against http://wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=5949&fuseaction=topics.item&news_id=143858.

Table 2: Presidential Election, 2006

Candidates—Parties	Votes	Percent
Felipe Calderon—National Action Party	15,000,284	35.89
Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador—Alliance for the Good of All (PRD, PT, Convergence)	14,756,350	35.31
Roberto Madrazo Alliance for Mexico (PRI, PVEM)	9,301,441	22.26
Patricia Mercado Castro—Social Democrat and Peasant Alternative Party	1,128,850	2.7
Roberto Campa Cifrian—New Alliance Party	401,804	.96
Write-in	297,989	.71
Blank/Invalid	904,604	2.16
TOTAL (Turnout 58.9 percent)	41,791,322	100

Table 3: Chamber of Deputies, 2006

Party/Alliance	Votes	%	FPP Seats	PR Seats	Total
PAN	13,876,499	33.41%	137	69	206
Alliance for the Good of All (PRD, PT, Convergence)	12,040,698	28.99%	100	60	160
Alliance for Mexico (PRI, PVEM)	11,704,639	28.18%	63	58	121
New Alliance Party	1,887,667	4.55%	0	9	9
Social Democrat and Peasant Alternative Party	852,849	2.05%	0	4	4
TOTAL	41,531,750	100%	300	200	500

Table 4: Senate, 2006

Party/Alliance	Votes	%	FPP Seats	SPP Seats	PR Seats	Total
PAN	14,043,213	33.63%	32	9	11	52
Alliance for the Good of All (PRD, PT, Convergence)	12,403,241	29.70%	22	4	10	36
Alliance for Mexico (PRI, PVEM)	11,689,110	27.99%	10	19	10	39
New Alliance Party	1,689,099	4.04%	0	0	1	1
Social Democrat and Peasant Alternative Party	796,102	1.91%	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	40,740,318	100%	64	32	32	128

Reference Tables: Russia Election Results

Source for Tables 5-11 below: Russia Votes, www.russiavotes.org, Centre for the Study of Public Policy and the University of Aberdeen, accessed December 23, 2006.

Table 5: Duma Elections, 2003

Party	% List Vote	# List Seats	# SMD Seats	% of total Seats
United Russia	37.57	120	102	49.3
Communist Party of Russia	12.61	40	12	11.6
Liberal Democrats	11.45	36	0	8
Motherland	9.02	29	8	8.2
Yabloko	4.3	0	4	.9
Union of Right Forces	3.97	0	3	.7
Agrarian Party	3.64	0	2	.4
Other Parties	11.56	0	6	1.3
Independents	—	—	68	15.1

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 6: Duma Elections, 1999

Party	% List Vote	# List Seats	# SMD Seats	% of Total Seats
Communist Party of Russia	34.9	67	46	25.1
Liberal Democrats	6	17	0	3.8
Yabloko	5.9	16	4	4.4
Union of Right Forces	8.5	24	5	6.4
Agrarian Party	—	—	—	—
Russia's Choice	2	—	—	—
Women of Russia	2	—	—	—
Russia Unity and Concord	.2	—	—	—
Our Home is Russia	1.2	—	7	1.6
Communists of the USSR	2.2	—	—	—
Congress of Russian Communities	.6	—	1	.2
Worker's Self-Government	.2	—	—	—
Forward Russia	.7	—	—	—
Unity	23.3	64	9	16.2
Fatherland-All Russia	13.3	37	31	15.1
Party of Pensioners	1.9	—	1	.2
For Citizen's Dignity	.6	—	—	—
Movement in Support of the Army	.6	—	2	.4
Nikolaev-Federov Bloc	.6	—	1	.2
Russian Socialist Party	.2	—	1	.2
Russian People's Union	.4	—	2	.4
Spiritual Heritage	.1	—	1	.2
Independents	—	—	114	25.3

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 7: Duma Elections, 1995

Party	% List Vote	# List Seats	# SMD Seats	% of Total Seats
Liberal Democrats	11.2	50	1	11.3
Russia's Choice	3.9	—	9	2.0
Communist Party	22.3	99	58	34.9
Women of Russia	4.6	—	3	.7
Agrarian Party	3.8	—	20	4.4
Yabloko	6.9	31	14	10
Russian Unity and Concord	.4	—	1	.2
Cedar	1.4	—	—	—
Our Home is Russia	10.1	45	10	12.2
Communists of the USSR	4.5	—	1	.2
Congress of Russian Communités	4.3	—	5	1.1
Worker's Self-Government	4.0	—	—	—
Forward Russia!	1.9	—	3	.7
Power to the People!	1.6	—	9	2
Union of Labor	1.6	—	1	.2
Pamfilova-Gurov-Lysenko Bloc	1.6	—	2	.4
Ivan Rybkin Bloc	1.1	—	3	.7
Stanislav Govorukin Bloc	1	—	1	.2
Independents	—	—	77	17.1

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 8: Duma Elections, 1993

Party	% List Vote	# List Seats	# SMD Seats	% of Total Seats
Liberal Democrats	21.4	59	5	14.3
Russia's Choice	14.5	40	30	15.6
Communist Party	11.6	32	16	10.7
Women of Russia	7.6	21	2	5.1
Agrarian Party	7.4	21	12	7.3
Yabloko	7.3	20	3	5.1
Russian Unity and Concord	6.3	18	1	4.2
Democratic Party of Russia	5.1	14	1	3.3
Movement for Democratic Reforms	3.8	—	4	.9
Civic Union	1.8	—	1	.2
Future of Russia	1.2	—	1	.2
Cedar	.7	0	0	0
Dignity and Charity	0	0	2	.4
Independents	—	—	146	32.5

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 9: Russian Presidential Election, 2004

Candidate	Votes	%
Valdimir Putin	49,565,238	71.3
Nikolai Kharitonov, Communist Party	9,513,313	13.7
Sergei Glazyev, Ind.	2,850,063	4.1
Irina Khakamada, Ind.	2,671,313	3.8
Oleg Malyshkin, Liberal Democrats	1,405,315	2.0
Sergei Mironov, Russian Party of Life	524,324	.7

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 10: Russian Presidential Election, 2000

Candidate	Votes	Percent
Vladimir Putin	39,740,434	52.9
Grigory Zyuganov, Communist Party	21,928,471	29.2
Grigory Yavlinsky, Yabloko	4,351,452	5.8
Aman-Geldy Tuleev	2,217,361	3
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Liberal Democrats	2,026,513	2.7
Konstantin Titov	1,107,269	1.5
Ella Pamfilova, For Citizen's Worth	758,966	1
Yuri Skuratov	319,263	.4
Aleski Podberezkin, Spiritual Heritage	98,175	.1
Umar Dzhabrailov	78,498	.1

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Table 11: Russian Presidential Election, 1996

Candidate	Initial Vote %	Initial Votes	Run-off Vote %	Run-off Votes
Boris Yeltsin	35.8	26,665,495	54.4	40,203,948
Grigory Zyuganov, Communist Party	32.5	24,211,686	40.7	30,102,288
Alexander Lebed	14.7	10,974,736		
Grigory Yavlinsky, Yabloko	7.4	5,550,752		
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Liberal Democrats	5.8	4,311,479		
Others	2.2	1,636,950		

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to invalid votes and votes against all.

Additional Resources:

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Analysis: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Iranian Politics

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A Note to Teachers

Teaching about Iran is difficult. Most students are unfamiliar with the country and its unique political culture. In addition, the structure of Iran's government is complex. Many students mistakenly assume Iran is wholly undemocratic. Others assume that religious clerics will always hold an iron grip on power. However, Iran is dynamic and defies easy characterization. My goal in writing the article that follows is to help AP teachers understand the nuances of power and politics in Iran. The primary purpose of this article is to increase the AP teacher's knowledge and understanding of Iran (although some sections might be assigned to students).

As you read this article with a view toward teaching students, there are several themes to consider. The first is the impact of the revolution of 1979. Among the countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Iran has experienced one of the most dramatic transformations of its governance structure. After the revolution of 1979, Iran was transformed from a monarch-dominated system to an Islamic republic. Internal competition and discord remain important features of the Iranian political system.

Another important factor to consider in teaching about Iran is the conflict among Iran's political elite over the course the country's future should take. There are deep divisions over the role of religion in governing the country and over the direction of economic and foreign policies. The population is used to participating in government, and their concerns cannot be ignored or simply wished away.

As you teach about Iran, remember that real political competition exists. An uneasy combination of nonelected clerics and nonclerics command many centers of economic and political power. Yet at another level, a type of unpredictable election-based politics, unknown to most of the region, has begun to shape the country in significant ways, ensuring the permanence of political competition. The surprising 1997 election of reformist Mohammad Khatami to the presidency and the subsequent victories of reform-oriented candidates affirmed the wide support the idea of political reform has among a significant segment of the population.

A final theme to consider in teaching about Iran is concern about two major problems facing the country: economic maldistribution and political corruption. In the 2005 presidential election, conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won by focusing on these issues, but they continue to plague his administration. Ahmadinejad's supporters have been accused of bullying opponents, instigating violence, and even committing some election day fraud. The president has also faced criticism for cronyism and worsening Iran's economic woes.

With these themes as a framework, and using the information provided in this article, I hope you will find that teaching about Iran is both a challenging and rewarding experience. I hope the information contained here will provide some insight into recent events in Iran and add depth to your lectures and class discussions.

Introduction

August 2006 marked the one-year anniversary of the passing of the Iranian presidency from reformist Mohammad Khatami to conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.¹ The latter's election in June 2005 had given rise to dire predictions about Iran's domestic and foreign policies. Indeed, the new president's rhetorical excesses about Israel and the Holocaust, Tehran's unyielding position regarding its nuclear program, and its steadfast support for Lebanon's Hezbollah and its leader Hassan Nasrallah have caused a tumultuous year for Iran's relations with the U.S. and the European Union. Yet Ahmadinejad was elected on a platform focused on domestic issues. Since his election he has used a combination of confident decision making and shrewd political calculation to increase his popularity for the 2009 presidential election. At the same time, he has quickly retracted once proposed economic policies when confronted with opposition. In addition, relatively favorable economic and regional conditions backed by high oil prices have allowed him and his supporters to claim success in relation to his main campaign slogans of government "in the service of people" and as "the promoter of social justice."

Despite the claimed success, however, personnel changes and policies pursued reveal an executive branch that remains weak at fulfilling promises and in conflict with other institutions and centers of power, including the conservative-controlled Majles (Parliament). It is only through the understanding of internal political dynamics that one can begin to make sense of Ahmadinejad's rise to power and the impact of the ninth presidential election since the Islamic revolution of 1979 on Iran's domestic politics and foreign policy.

Ahmadinejad's Rise to Power

Among the countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Iran has experienced one of the most dramatic transformations of its governance structure since the revolution of 1979, which heralded the change from a monarch-dominated system to an Islamic republic with multiple centers of power. This system of governance defies easy characterization. At one level, a powerful but not necessarily cohesive combination of nonelected clerics and nonclerics command many centers of economic and political power, including key political institutions, such as the Office of the Leader (*rahbar*), Guardian Council, and Expediency Council, parts of the judiciary, a multitude of intelligence operations within the military and security forces, revolutionary foundations, and paramilitary organizations. Yet at another level, a type of unpredictable election-based politics unknown to most of the region has

1. The use of the term "reformist" for someone like Mohammad Khatami is in keeping with Iranian parlance. The term is a literal translation of *eslahgara*, referring to the political camp in Iran that has made reform a priority since the election of Khatami in 1997.

shaped the country's politics in significant ways, ensuring that competing political factions and institutions remain permanent features of the Iranian polity (Moslem 2002).

This elite competition is assured by the divided nature of the state structure, which has entrenched political and economic competition among social and political groups, ranging from traditional trade-centered interests located in the bazaars to modern professional middle classes tied to more service-oriented interests of the new Iranian political economy to those whose economic power comes from smuggling, development projects, or the arms industry. Because of the control it has over the country's most important source of income (oil), the state, rather than becoming the autonomous medium through which competition among these groups is regulated, has developed into an institutional repository of these varied interests and an arena in which multiple claims over various parts of the state and resources are constantly negotiated, sometimes very acrimoniously, rather than resolved (Farhi 2003).

Historically, elections have played a significant role in highlighting these multiple claims through the rotation of personnel. And it is within this context that the election of Ahmadinejad in 2005 must be situated. The 2005 election came after two significant presidential elections in 1997 and 2001 when one section of the Iranian political elite, worried about being eliminated and relying on what turned out to be a popular campaign slogan of political reform, managed to take over the office of the presidency. Learning from this experience, Ahmadinejad's election was made possible by the reliance on yet another popular campaign slogan of economic justice as well as the strength of an organized, patronage-based political network.

Like all other candidates that competed in this election, Ahmadinejad, who at the time was the mayor of Tehran, ran on a platform of rejecting the status quo and affirming the need for change. He relentlessly critiqued the past 16 years of the Islamic Republic under the two previous presidents (Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami), successfully separating the government's policies, its institutions, and those who run them from the overall Islamic political order. He campaigned on the basis of three simple slogans regarding a "committed" Islamic government: It must be an efficient servant of the people whose simple Islamic way of life must be protected; it must promote social justice; and it must fight corruption. His campaign slogans were "conservative" insofar as they emphasized the conservation and promotion of "pure and simple" Islamic ways of life and commitments. But they were also "populist" in emphasizing social justice and the need to use oil-generated revenue on social spending to reverse the neglect of the poor and needy. Drawing on the dissatisfaction of the poorer parts of the population regarding the neoliberal economic policies of the two previous administrations, which at least rhetorically emphasized less interventionist even if not necessarily smaller government, private sector development, and economic liberalization, Ahmadinejad claimed that government and its committed employees could be a panacea for Iran's economic and social ills. This was both a clever campaign strategy and a statement of ideological belief.

The cleverness resided in the fact that he ran as an anticorruption, pro-justice, and anti-elite candidate while remaining totally committed to individuals, such as Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, who personify the establishment and are in many ways responsible for the policies that have led to corruption. But by relentlessly criticizing merely the past 16 years of the Islamic Republic, Ahmadinejad was able to successfully separate government's policies, its institutions, and those who run them on a day-to-day basis from the overall Islamic political order and posit the former as the source of economic injustices (Farhi 2005).

Luckily for Ahmadinejad, this clever campaigning strategy was underwritten by increases in oil revenues that would allow the push for more social spending in the name of social justice. But clever sloganeering was only one, albeit important, facet of his approach to the presidency. Ahmadinejad really does believe that the Iranian bureaucracy has become paralyzed and is in need of deep change. He believes in extensive change at the middle and higher levels of bureaucracy to bring about efficiency and combat corruption. And he believes that a real Muslim is a successful manager and leader and that there is no contradiction between the two. Such deep beliefs give Ahmadinejad a confident posture and "can-do" mentality that pushes him to be a micromanager, to work 19-hour days, and to be a risk-taker. They also shape Ahmadinejad's implicit trust in revolutionary-military institutions, such as the Construction Crusade, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and its militia unit, the *Basij*. In his mind, these institutions saved Iran during its eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s and have been relentless in assuring Iran's security and strengthening its infrastructure.

Ultimately such beliefs give Ahmadinejad a view of government as the authoritative body in the economic arena and as the body that should guide people toward justice, happiness, and prosperity. This view distinguishes him from the two previous presidents, Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami, whose slogans and beliefs, even if not policies, emphasized a mostly supervisory or administrative instead of a guiding role for the government. Rather than being a member of either contending economic camp in Iran, who are at times facetiously divided between "God-worshipping liberals" and "God-worshipping socialists," Ahmadinejad's populist solution to the ills of the Iranian economy and society seems to be neither liberalization nor nationalization but further entrenchment of the government role in all arenas as facilitator and guide for the prosperity of humble men and small business.

Ahmadinejad's campaign focus on the question of socioeconomic justice was obviously significant in getting him elected. At the same time, his election jolted the Iranian political landscape for its unexpectedness and the political future it foretold. Since the early 1990s various players and forces in Iranian politics have expressed public worries about the possibility of what in the Iranian political vernacular is described as "unified governance." By that they meant the control of all elective and nonelective institutions by the conservative political camp. According to this narrative, the planned conservative takeover of all government institutions was patiently and carefully planned in the 1990s through the

step-by-step control and redirection of radio and television, appointment of conservative Friday prayer leaders,² and elevation of lower and more conservative officers within the IRGC and *basij* militia. It should be noted that all these institutions are constitutionally under the direct supervision of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. According to this narrative, the reformist victories in the late 1990s and early 2000 delayed this takeover but did not dampen conservative ambitions. If anything, their aspirations intensified, partly for the sake of control of the state but also for the sake of bringing some sort of coherence into the very fractious decision-making process.

With the municipal election of 2002 and the parliamentary election of 2004, and the victory of a new conservative party called *Abadgaran* (Developers) in these elections, a new twist was introduced in this narrative. This new twist essentially was that a "third force" supported by Ayatollah Khamenei and heavily populated by members of the IRGC was about to set aside the traditional rivalry between the Left and Right, or reformers and traditional conservatives, and essentially begin to dominate Iranian politics and limit elite competition. The prominent place given to the military and security components of the Iranian state was important because presumably it is only these forces that can put an end to or limit elite competition in Iran.

Ahmadinejad's election underscored this narrative. For the first time since the revolution it allowed the takeover of the executive branch by a conservative president, making the end to elite competition a real possibility. Ahmadinejad has faced opposition to his personnel changes as well as policy proposals. This suggests a continuation of conflict between the executive branch and other institutions and centers of power, including the conservative-controlled Majles. But in the realm of policy, the fundamental contradiction of Ahmadinejad's government is the placing of a "revolutionary" head on top of the bureaucratic/technocratic body of the Iranian executive branch itself, which is proving itself weary of the trial-and-error ways of the early days of the revolution. Many of Ahmadinejad's policies and decisions are seen as too rash and his political appointees as too inexperienced—as in the early days of the revolution, learning on the job. In addition, Ahmadinejad's reliance on a very close circle of friends and their family members has opened him to the charge of cronyism. Finally, his "paranoid" style of politics portrays himself and his close associates as the only ones that are righteous and not corrupt. Everyone else in the private sector and government are viewed as plunderers. This has rattled the bureaucracy that is ultimately in charge of implementing the new president's agenda. In short, the conservative control of all elective and nonelective institutions has not put an end to the factional conflicts that have characterized Iranian politics since the revolution. Indeed, the particular type of political cronyism in which Ahmadinejad has engaged and the perceived inexperience and incompetence of his team have ironically created a predicament for the new president that is not much different from that of Khatami.

2. Friday prayers have become formal occasions, held in every city since the revolution, and are led by appointed Friday prayer leaders.

Like the previous president, Ahmadinejad is a man with a message who is having a hard time delivering on his promises through proposed policies. Learning from Khatami's experience, however, Ahmadinejad has chosen the route of selling himself as a successful manager of the economy and servant of the people through loudly touted social and economic programs. In effect, he is constantly campaigning.

Ahmadinejad as President

Ahmadinejad has lost very little time in proposing extensive change to areas where Iran's executive branch has quite a bit of leverage: budgetary allocation and personnel.³ Given his campaign focus on socioeconomic justice, most of his announced policies have been based on embracing economic populism, ranging from a proposed national school renovation program to increasing the minimum wage for all workers to granting loans to newlyweds to forcing banks to lower their interest rates to the distribution of "justice shares" of various factories to the poorer sectors of the population. In order to implement these programs, Ahmadinejad's 2006-07 budget called for huge increases in public expenditures as well as operating expenses. His budget not only entailed close to a three-fold increase in withdrawals from the oil revenues account but also increased government expenditures substantially in a very selective fashion. Increases in the budget of the Guardian Council and for the administrative staff of the clerical Council of Experts in many ways reflected Ahmadinejad's desire to buttress important conservative institutions. Also proposed were substantial increases for various clerical organizations located in the religious city of Qom as well as increases in the government's development budget, which was accompanied with the precondition of *basij* forces acting as important contractors for various government projects on a fee for service basis.

Ahmadinejad's presidency has also led to extensive personnel changes at the national and provincial levels, but this is not something necessarily new, since a similar dynamic was at play during the Khatami era as well. Ahmadinejad's major political innovation has been ministerial provincial trips to resolve the issues of each province "on the spot." These trips arise from his populist idea of taking the government to the people, with the explicit desire to increase his personal popularity. This is why he holds cabinet meetings in the provinces, particularly the poor ones. Since he became president, the cabinet had made approximately 20 provincial trips and visited more than 160 cities. What are identified as "dispossessed regions," or more simply poorer provinces, have been particularly targeted to emphasize Ahmadinejad's desire to redress economic injustice and serve the poor through decentralization and budgetary allocation away from the capital city of Tehran and more toward the provinces. These cabinet trips follow a consistent pattern. They begin with the travel of the president and his cabinet members to the capital of the province. After attending

3. The office of the president as conceived in the postrevolutionary constitution (as amended in 1989) is rather weak. On the one hand, the president is eclipsed by the Supreme Leader, who is considered the highest official in the Islamic Republic. The president also is limited by the Majles and the Guardian Council, which hold power over legislation. Finally, on significant foreign policy matters, it is ultimately Ayatollah Khamenei who makes the decision through a process of interaction with the National Security Council. The president is a member of the National Security Council and can influence its deliberations, but so do many others.

and speaking at large public rallies in several of the provincial cities, a cabinet meeting is held on the last day of the trip and decisions about allocations for development projects are made. Along these lines, Ahmadinejad has also attempted to relocate many government agencies to the provinces they serve. Furthermore, he has also proposed to transfer the highly centralized budgetary supervision practiced by the Management and Planning Organization's provincial branches to provincial governments.

In all these proposals and attempts, Ahmadinejad has acted with speed and without much consultation with other branches of the government. The result has been resistance not only on the part of other bodies, particularly the Majles, but also the technocratic bureaucracy of the executive branch itself. Many of the new government's policies that were abruptly imposed in a top-down fashion by his ministerial appointees, such as increases in the minimum wage and some price controls, have been retracted in a rather speedy fashion once their ramifications became evident. In the case of unilateral minimum wage increases for temporary workers, for instance, large numbers of layoffs were reported by the Majles Research Center, ultimately leading Ahmadinejad's government to relent and allow direct negotiations between employers and temporary workers. In addition, several cabinet ministers and high-ranking economists at the Management and Planning Organization have either resigned or been fired because of policy disagreements.

The main worry of all of Ahmadinejad's detractors relates to what still constitutes the backbone of the Iranian economy: oil revenues. There is a real concern in the Majles as well as within the government bureaucracy itself about the increased reliance of the government on oil revenues for its operating costs and development projects, particularly during times of worries about potential United Nations sanctions. There are also concerns about the possibility of the "Dutch disease," or hyperinflation, caused by a direct and massive infusion of the oil money into the economy. Hyperinflation has yet to happen because the government has attempted to counteract such a possibility through price controls and cheap imports. Yet real worries remain within the parliament as well as the bureaucracy.

Ahmadinejad has also faced criticism on other fronts. His provincial trips have received positive marks for understanding Iran's varied provinces, identifying needs, and ultimately responding to some of them, but they have also been criticized for the cost of such trips for the cabinet. The ever-increasing expectations and demands of the people are also a serious concern. The worry is that these provincial visits heighten popular demands and increase the load on all those active in the implementation of government policy, particularly at the provincial levels.

Finally, Ahmadinejad has faced criticism for his personnel appointments. As mentioned, one of Ahmadinejad's main campaign slogans was about the need to cleanse various government ministries of corrupt officials and "mafias." But while Ahmadinejad's rhetoric about the "plunderers" and "corrupt officials" in the government and the private sector has rattled many civil servant and domestic entrepreneurs, it has yet to lead to concrete policies

regarding government openness and accountability. If anything, the appointment of close associates to positions for which they seem unqualified and the awarding of a series of no-bid contracts to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) have brought forth charges of cronyism and excessive economic payback to political supporters.

Iran's Foreign Policy under Ahmadinejad

There is no doubt that Iran has taken a turn toward a more hard-line foreign policy since Ahmadinejad's presidency. At the same time it is important to note that this turn was made possible by the dynamics that have shaped negotiations with the European Union and the United States over Iran's nuclear program as well as the changed circumstances in the region. Since the Iranian hard-line leaders, such as Ayatollah Khamenei, abandoned hope, momentarily developed at the end of the Iran-Iraq War in the late 1980s and then immediately after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, that the United States will forsake hostility toward Iran and its desire for regime change, Iran has essentially pursued a nuclear policy of flexibility at the last moment and only if absolutely necessary to keep Western Europe, Russia, China, and Japan interested in continued engagement with Iran (Farhi 2006). Ayatollah Khamenei, after extensive consultation with various players in Iran, has the final say on foreign policy matters. For Iranian leaders the objective remains one of survival and regional projection of power. It is worth remembering Tehran's initial decision to engage with the three representatives of the European Union (France, Britain, and Germany, known as the EU-3) over its nuclear program. This came in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and fears that Iran would be next on Washington's hit list. The EU-3 used these fears to suggest negotiations as a means to deflect U.S. animosity. Iran's nuclear program was seen as a point of entry for discussion and hence an opportunity for engagement.

But the inability of the EU-3 and Khatami's reformist government to reach an agreement before Ahmadinejad's election strengthened the hands of hard-liners who had argued from the beginning that negotiations with the EU-3 were useless because the Europeans would ultimately not be able to take an independent position from the United States. Even more significant in strengthening the hand of hard-liners has been Iran's dramatically improved regional standing since negotiations began with the EU-3 in 2003, thanks to factors and events external to Iranian decision making. Rightly or wrongly, because of events in Afghanistan and Iraq and the rise in oil prices, the hard-liners now see Iran as a force to be reckoned with in the region and would like to keep the situation the way it is. In this context, Ahmadinejad's public statements—regarding Iran's steadfast stance on its nuclear program, Israel and its occupation of the Palestinian territories, and the supposed use of the Holocaust to suppress Palestinian national aspirations—must be seen as calibrated attempts to maintain or even improve Iran's regional standing

Turning Iran's nuclear program into a statement about national sovereignty and rights did not occur during Ahmadinejad's presidency. It was something that happened because of the nature of the negotiations with the EU-3 during Khatami's presidency. These negotiations pressured Iran to suspend uranium enrichment permanently, a demand that went well

beyond Iran's obligations to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and set the stage for a nationalist reaction (Ansari 2006). Due to the changed dynamics in the region and the falling American fortunes in Iraq, however, Ahmadinejad has not only been able to play the nationalist card domestically, he has also improved Iran's popularity in the region by representing the country as the only one able to stand up against American adventurism in the Middle East. So long as the United States maintains an acrimonious stance toward the government of Iran, the hard-line leadership in Iran will also keep its anti-American/anti-Israel trump card for domestic purposes and regional projection of power.

Conclusion

As Ahmadinejad goes through the second year of his presidency, he commands a political and economic landscape concerned about Iran's external relations, a technocratic bureaucracy weary of repeating the trial-and-error ways of Iran's early revolutionary days, and members of political and civil society worried about impending political closures. Ahmadinejad has benefited from international pressure on Iran's nuclear program. His pursuit of populist politics through a permanent campaign mode strategy is likely to keep him popular, if he is able to keep inflation within reasonable limits. In addition, his policies of economic, political, and moral support for forces such as the IRGC and its poorer sister, the *basij* militia, must be seen as a calculated and coordinated strategy with other powerful players in Iran to fortify the foundations of the Islamic political system during a time of threatened physical attacks and economic sanctions.

At the same time, the dissatisfaction that now engulfs the Iranian elite and managerial ranks is bound to be a stumbling block for the implementation of most of Ahmadinejad's proposed policies. The results of the December 15, 2006, provincial councils and Assembly of Experts elections are likely to strengthen the hands of those opposed to Ahmadinejad's policies. In these elections, a coalition of reformist parties, representing reformers and technocrats, did well in many cities, although a conservative coalition representing more traditionalist clergy and bazaar merchants also did well. Ahmadinejad's supporters, who refused to be part of the conservative coalition, did badly in both elections.

Ahmadinejad, as the head of the executive branch, has the capability to block the further implementation of economic programs set into motion by the previous administrations. Irrespective of whether Ahmadinejad's economic decisions are correct or incorrect, the main challenge the executive branch will face in the remainder of Ahmadinejad's presidency is the perceived lack of effectiveness in the light of lofty promises. Ahmadinejad's detractors and potential competitors have shifted their focus away from the deleterious consequences of conservative control over all elective and nonelective institutions to a critique of his "wrong-headed" policies and his administration's inability to implement the "correct" policies.

This shift is the logical extension of internal political developments in Iran. By tying his hard-line revolutionary ideology to earthly objectives of economic justice and government service, Ahmadinejad has risked the rejection of his version of Islam and revolutionary

ideology by his own political base if he is unable to deliver or, worse, if he ends up being deemed a political opportunist. As such, Ahmadinejad's path is no different from that of his predecessor, Mohammad Khatami, who came to office with loudly touted promises and slogans. Like Khatami, he will end up further smoothing the path, albeit haltingly, for the ascendance of the electoral process as the real arbiter of whether campaign slogans and promises are turned into implemented policies. No one knows this better than Ahmadinejad himself, who has spent most of the past year behaving as though he is still on the campaign trail, trying hard to take credit for every single economic improvement in people's daily lives throughout the country. Ultimately, however, it is not permanent campaigning that will determine the success of Ahmadinejad's presidency but the fulfillment of some of his promises.

The only factor that will prevent or delay judgment about Ahmadinejad's policies through an electoral process is actual or increased threat of military action or harsh economic sanctions. Military or economic interventions will prevent or delay judgment about Ahmadinejad's policies and may even increase his electoral support. They will allow him to deflect criticism of his policies and their consequences for government effectiveness. Iran's emphasis on security threats will also provide the pretext for increased repression of political competitors and further consolidation of power by President Ahmadinejad and his hard-line supporters.

Additional Resources

- Ansari, Ali. 2006. *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East*. New York: Basic Books.
- Farhi, Farideh. 2006. "Negotiating and Looking Tough: The Mirrored Policies of the U.S. and Iran." *Foreign Policy in Focus*, <http://www.fpip.org/fpiftxt/3560>.
- Farhi, Farideh. 2005. "What Does the Ninth Presidential Election Say About Iranian Politics?" In Haleh Esfandiari, ed. *Iran After the June Presidential Election*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
- Farhi, Farideh. 2003. "The Politics of Reform in the Islamic Republic of Iran." In Shahram Akbarzadeh and Abdullah Saeed, eds. *Islam and Political Legitimacy*. New York: Routledge Courzon.
- Moslem, Mehdi. 2002. *Factional Politics in the Post-Khomeini Era*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Lesson Plans: Using Data to Study Development

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Introduction

The two lessons that follow are designed to give students a better understanding of the concept of development, and for students to have some hands-on practice comparing the level of development in countries covered in the AP Comparative Government and Politics curriculum. Development is a complicated concept for students to grasp, because it is multifaceted in nature. There are many variables that can impact the level of development within a country. Moreover there are many variables that can be used to measure development. These variables include life expectancy, infant mortality, death rates, literacy, education levels, and population distribution. Countries can be developed in one area but not another. Additionally, students may find themselves surprised that countries that are considered developed may not have data to support that they are developed in all areas, and countries considered not as developed may have data to suggest that they are developed in other areas. In sum, these lessons will ask students to use data to test commonly held assumptions about the level of development within countries and will inevitably lead to surprises. Ideally, these surprises will provoke useful classroom discussion and analysis.

Before beginning each lesson, make sure students have been introduced to and can give basic definitions of the key terms below. I would suggest introducing these terms formally in the classroom after students have read and/or defined them from their textbooks. Additionally, you may use the Democratization Briefing Paper (available on AP Central® as a reference for you and your students). I would also suggest verbally testing students to be sure they are familiar with the key socioeconomic measurements of development before beginning. You can test for student understanding of these measurements by simply asking students what they would expect of each measurement in countries with certain socioeconomic conditions. For example, ask students: is life expectancy generally high or low in a developed country? What about in an underdeveloped country? Is infant mortality generally high or low in a developed country? What about in an underdeveloped country? Obviously, students should respond that they expect developing countries to have low life expectancy and high infant mortality.

You can ask students to explore the relationship between the factors (literacy rate, GDP, and income distribution) and democratization. Ask students whether these connections represent causation, correlation, or neither. This is a good way to reinforce the key concepts of correlation and causation. As you go through the list with your class verbally you should be able to get a sense of whether or not your students grasp the idea of development or if more review is necessary.

The definitions of the key terms on the following page can be found in many comparative politics textbooks, but it is likely that you will have to consult a variety of sources, as no one textbook includes definitions of all of the key terms. Keep in mind that the definitions of these concepts may be slightly different in different textbooks, as political scientists tend to disagree on all elements of a key concept or term. Additional sources such as the CIA World Factbook (available online at <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>; select “The World Factbook” under “Library & Reference”) may also provide appropriate definitions of many of the key terms.

Student Handout: Development Key Terms

Political Measures of Development:

- 1) Political development
- 2) Social development
- 3) Economic development
- 4) Developing country
- 5) Third World country
- 6) Income distribution
- 7) Democratization
- 8) Newly Industrialized Country (NIC)
- 9) Import substitution
- 10) Structural adjustment
- 11) Industrialization
- 12) Neoliberalism

Socioeconomic Measurements of Development:

- 13) GDP (agriculture, industry, service)
- 14) GNP
- 15) Gini Index
- 16) Life expectancy
- 17) Death rate
- 18) Literacy rate (male/female)
- 19) Infant mortality rate
- 20) Civil liberties and rights
- 21) Women's rights
- 22) Education levels (male/female)
- 23) Population distribution (urban/rural)
- 24) UN Human Development Index
- 25) UN Gender Equality Index
- 26) Transparency International data on corruption
- 27) World Values Survey

Lesson One: Income Distribution

Reference: The CIA World Factbook, accessible at <https://www.cia.gov/> (see the link under “Library & Reference”)

Sequence: You may present this lesson any time after students are familiar with the key terms on the handout above.

Objective: Students will compare income distribution patterns in country case studies covered in the AP Comparative Government and Politics curriculum. Students will generate country specific reasons for the patterns observed.

Materials needed: Pass out the attached table entitled “Gini Coefficients and Income Distribution in Selected Countries,” as well as newsprint, markers, rulers, and tape. See the Student Instructions handout. Students need to understand the concept of Gini Coefficients to complete this exercise.

Time needed: Approximately one hour of classroom time.

Step one: Divide students into six groups and assign each group to one of the following countries (all are case studies on the Comparative Government and Politics curriculum).

- 1) United Kingdom
- 2) Russia
- 3) China
- 4) Mexico
- 5) Nigeria
- 6) Iran

* United States (optional—divide your student, into seven groups, instead of six, and assign one group to the United States. While the United States is not a case study country on the AP Comparative Government and Politics curriculum, collecting data for the United States may provide a useful means of comparison).

Step two: Pass out the Student Instructions handout and go over the instructions with the class.

Step three: Give each group newsprint, markers, and a ruler. Ask students to turn their newsprint so that the long side of the page is horizontal. They should label their newsprint at the top with the name of their country clearly. Students should write the Gini Index number for their country and circle it on their newsprint. Students should then use the rulers to create a graph with an *X* and a *Y* axis. They should convert the Gini Index quintiles into bars on the

graph, with one inch in height representing one unit (the bar itself should also be one inch wide). Ask students to use the markers to color in the five bars they created on their graph. On the back of the graph, have students describe income distribution as relatively equal or unequal. For the countries you have studied so far, ask students to use specific information from their previous reading or classroom discussion to list reasons for the level of income distribution. They should cite government policies, economic reasons, and historical reasons.

Step four: Each group should tape their newsprints on the chalkboard or around the room. Students should go back to their chairs to look at the graphs. The teacher should ask the class the following questions:

- Which country has the highest Gini Index?
- Which has the lowest?
- Which country's Gini Index surprises you the most and why?
- How do you account for the variations in the Gini Index in the UK? Russia? China? Mexico? Nigeria? Iran?
- (*If students have looked at the United States*) How do you account for the Gini Index in the United States when comparing it to the UK and the other countries?

Suggested Assessment: Go to AP Central and access the 2003 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam free-response question 2. This FRQ is about income distribution in developing countries. You may want to modify this question by taking out the bar in the graph that refers to India.

Handout: Gini Coefficient and Income Distribution in Selected Countries

The **Gini Coefficient** (or **Gini Index**) measures the relative degree of socioeconomic inequality within a country. **Perfect equality** equals zero: All individuals (or households) receive the same annual income; there is zero inequality. **Maximum inequality** equals 100: Only one individual (or household) monopolizes all (100 percent) of society's income and everybody else gets nothing. Any number between 0 and 100 represents the degree to which society's income distribution pattern deviates from perfect equality.

The quintiles indicated in the table below demonstrate the amount of total wealth owned by the citizens in each quintile.

Country	Year	Gini Coefficient	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Third 20%	Fourth 20%	Highest 20%
People's Republic of China	1995	41.5	5.5	9.8	14.9	22.3	47.5
Islamic Republic of Iran	1998	43	5.1	9.4	14.1	21.5	41.9
Mexico	1995	53.7	3.6	7.2	11.8	19.2	58.2
Nigeria	1992-93	45	4.0	8.9	14.4	23.4	49.3
Russia	1996	48	4.2	8.8	13.6	20.7	52.8
United Kingdom	1999	36.0	6.1	11.4	16.0	22.5	44.0

Source: *The World Development Report 2005: A Better Investment Climate for Everyone*—http://devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2005/Table2_7.htm, accessed June 27, 2007 and *The World Development Report 1999/2000: Entering the 21st Century: The Changing Development Landscape*—<http://www.worldbank.org/wdr/2000/pdfs/engtable5.pdf>, accessed June 27, 2007.

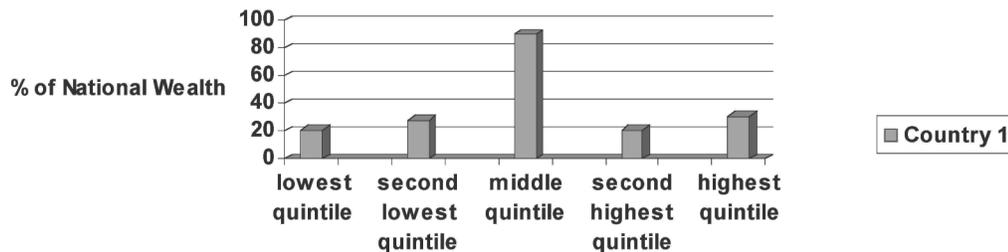
Student Instructions

Country assignment: _____

Directions

- (1) Turn your newsprint to a landscape alignment.
- (2) Use your markers and write the name of your country clearly at the top of the page.
- (3) Write the Gini Index number of your country in the corner and circle it (see attached table).
- (4) Create a graph with an X and Y axis. Your graph will eventually look like the one below.
- (5) On the Y axis, you will create five bars and each bar will represent each of the quintiles on the table attached. The bars should also be approximately 4 inches in width and be spaced 1 inch apart. On the x axis, make marks every 3 inches. Each mark represents 10 percent.
- (6) Underneath each bar that you created, label the appropriate quintile (first, second, third, etc.).
- (7) Color in the bars.
- (8) On the back of the page, answer the following questions:
 - ▶ Is the level of income distribution in this country relatively high or low?
 - ▶ Use country specific information from your reading and class discussion to explain the level of income distribution. Reasons should be drawn from the history of the country, government policies, and other factors discussed in the course. This information is commonly found in public policy sections of country specific chapters.
- (9) Tape your newsprint on the board.
- (10) Return to your seat. With your teacher, compare each of the graphs created and the reasons for the income distribution in each country.

Sample Country Gini Index Chart



Lesson Two: Assessing Levels of Development

Sequence: You may present this lesson at any time during the course after students are familiar with the key terms above.

Objective: Students will review and analyze data to determine the level of development of countries in the AP Comparative Government and Politics curriculum. Students will learn that development is a multifaceted concept and that countries can be more developed in some areas than in others.

Materials Needed: Access to a computer lab.

Time: Approximately two blocks of classroom time, or 180 minutes.

Step one: Divide students into six groups and assign each group to one of the following countries:

- 1) United Kingdom
- 2) Russia
- 3) China
- 4) Mexico
- 5) Nigeria
- 6) Iran

Step two: Take students to the computer lab and have students sit at the computers with their group. Students will be responsible for filling in the chart on the handout below and answering the questions. They should visit the two Web sites indicated at the top of the chart to get the information they need.

Step three: Students return to the classroom when they have completed the information. Students will then “jigsaw” to share the information. Form new groups so that each new group will have one student from each of the countries. Students should complete the large chart in the new groups. Students should answer the questions that follow in the new groups.

Note: Teachers should review the nature of the data to be sure they understand the formulas before students complete analysis. For example: Freedom House ranks countries that are the most free with lower scores, while the HDI ranks countries that are more developed with higher scores.

Step four: Debrief the activity with the entire class. Which countries did you select as more developed and why? Did all groups come to the same conclusion, for example with the

comparisons between Russia and China, or between Mexico and Nigeria? What surprises did you encounter? What assumptions did you find to be correct?

Suggested Assessment: Download the 2005 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam free-response question 1 from AP Central and use in the classroom.

Assessing Levels of Development

Student Handout 1

Name _____

Web Sites to Access:

- 1) www.freedomhouse.org
- 2) www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/Index.html
- 3) www.humanrightsdata.org
- 4) www.undp.org/
- 5) www.transparency.org/cpi

Country Assignment: _____

Political Development

- 1) Go to the first Web site (Freedom House). What is Freedom House? Click on “analysis.” Click on “comparative scores.”
 - Describe the measurements of freedom applied to countries.
 - What is your country’s score on Political Rights? _____ Civil Liberties _____?
 - Why do you think your country was given each of these scores?
 - What does this score tell you about the level of development in your country?

Social and Economic Development

- 2) Go to the second Web site (CIA World Fact Book). Click on “select a country or location.” Write down information about your country:
 - a) GDP per capita _____
 - Agriculture _____
 - Industry _____
 - Service _____
 - b) Life expectancy _____
 - c) Death rate _____
 - d) Infant mortality _____
 - e) Literacy _____ (male _____ female _____)

Women’s Rights

- 3) Go to the third Web site (CIRI Human Rights Data Project). This Web site contains research-based information on a variety of countries. According to the site, “It is

designed for use by scholars and students who seek to test theories about the causes and consequences of human rights violations.” You will have to create an account, which will take a few minutes. Click on “register here.” When you are done, click “create a dataset.” Check the boxes for country, women’s economic, political, and social rights, and click “next.” Select the region where your country is located, and click “next.” Select 2004, and click “next.” Name your dataset, then review your data set.

The coding given is as follows: (0) There are no rights for women. (1) There are some rights for women under the law but the government does not enforce the laws consistently. (2) There are some rights for women under the law, and the government enforces some of the laws but tolerates a low level of discrimination against women. (3) All or nearly all of women’s rights are guaranteed by law, and the government enforces these rights and tolerates almost no discrimination against women. (999) No data.

- What is the level of women’s economic rights?
- What is the level of women’s political rights?
- What is the level of women’s social rights?

Human Development

- 4) Go to the fourth Web site (UN Human Development Index).
 - What does the index measure?
 - What is a “high” score and what does a high score mean? What is a “low” score and what does a low score mean?
 - Click on “statistics,” “get data.” Click on “data by country.” For your assigned country, click on “data.”
 - What is the relationship between geographic location and HDI? How do you account for this?
 - What does the education index measure?
 - What is the education index for your country (the highest score is 99)?

Corruption

- 5) Go to the fifth Web site (Transparency International Data on Corruption). Click on “policy and research.” Click on “Corruption Perceptions Index.” Click on the most recent year.
 - What does the corruption index measure?
 - What is a high score and what does that mean?
 - What is a low score and what does that mean?
 - What is your country’s corruption index? What is the relationship between corruption and poverty?

Name _____

**Assessing Levels of Development
Student Handout 2**

Directions for students: Now that you have completed research on your country, you will be asked to compare the data you gathered with data gathered from the other countries. Your teacher will divide your country group and ask that you join a new group with at least one student per country. Complete the chart and answer the questions below.

	Freedom House Score	GDP: (a) Per capita: (b) Agriculture (c) Industry (d) Service	Life Expectancy	Death Rate	Literacy (Male/Female)	Infant Mortality Rate	Education Index	HDI Index	Corruption Index
	PR	CL							
United Kingdom									
Russia									
China									
Mexico									
Nigeria									
Iran									

Name _____

Assessing Levels of Development—Questions for Students

Review the table you created and answer the following questions:

1. Does the United Kingdom appear to be the most developed overall? What variables support this? Are there any variables that surprised you about the UK?
2. After the UK, which country appears to be the most developed? Identify 2–3 variables that caused you to make this selection.
3. Which two countries appear to be the least developed overall? Identify 2–3 variables that caused you to choose these two countries.
4. Compare Russia to China.
 - (a) In what areas is Russia more developed than China?
 - (b) What are reasons for what you observed above?
 - (c) In what areas is China more developed than Russia?
 - (d) What are reasons for what you observed above?
5. Compare Iran to Nigeria.
 - (a) In what areas is Nigeria more developed than Iran?
 - (b) What are reasons for this?
 - (c) In what areas is Iran more developed than Nigeria?
 - (d) What are reasons for this?
6. What is the relationship between development and democracy? Identify the two development-related factors that are most important in causing a country to democratize.

Additional Resources

Annual Editions: Developing World 06/07. 2005. McGraw Hill Contemporary Learning Series.

O’Neil, Patrick. 2003. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. New York: WW Norton & Company.

Powell, G. Bingham Jr. *Democratization Briefing Paper*. AP Central.

Sodaro, Michael. 2004. *Comparative Politics: A Global Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill.

United Nations Development Report. <http://www.undp.org/>

2005/World Development Indicators. http://devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2005/Table2_7.htm

Transparency International. <http://www.transparency.org/cpi>

Let the Games Begin! Effective and Interactive Teaching Methods in the AP Comparative Government and Politics Classroom

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The longer I teach AP Comparative Government, the more I am convinced that one of the main jobs of teachers is to translate the arcane/foreign language of political science into something comprehensible to students. This is a course where memorization matters. In addition, students have to understand that terms (“liberal,” for example) may have different meanings in different contexts.

All disciplines have their own special lingo and vocabulary, but the difference for government teachers is that, in some ways, the barriers to student understanding are harder to overcome. Important political science terms may look like everyday, ordinary words that people have used in other contexts (or, often wrongly in the context meant by social scientists). For example, “corporatism” has a unique meaning in politics, and students are often confused by the term. So, students, because they are already familiar with these words, think they know their meanings. Instead of learning a new, exotic word, government teachers first have to deprogram or have the students “unlearn” the definitions they already know. In this way, we have a harder job than science or math teachers. When chemistry students, for example, learn the phrase “exothermic reaction,” or statistics students learn about heteroskedasticity, this is most likely the first time they will have encountered these words. But when political science students hear the terms “power,” “authority,” or “nation,” for example, they have already formed an impression of what these terms mean. Another hurdle for government teachers and their students is that even in the field, there are disagreements as to precise meanings. For example, some political scientists make more of a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes than others.

Now that I have presented the problems, how can they be solved, or at least attacked successfully? Of course, just like learning vocabulary in other disciplines, reading and more reading is probably the best solution, but many students keep reminding me they are taking other courses and cannot devote all their time to reading for mine. Another solution, and one that I also recommend, is regular vocabulary quizzes. I have even experimented with dividing the glossary of their textbook into 20-word sections alphabetically, providing them with definitions, and then having them come up with the correct word or phrase. As the semester goes on, and they grow more comfortable with the assignment, I give them the words and have them write the definition just like they will have to on the Short Answer Concept portion of the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam in the spring.

The weakness, or possibly the strength, of this approach is that by doing it alphabetically they are learning words out of context. Especially in the beginning of the semester, they will

be seeing many of the terms for the first time. Before the quiz, I ask the students if there are any words that they would like me to discuss in more detail. When we actually come to those words in the unit, they have already seen them at least once before.

Although these are all effective methods, you and your students will probably not enjoy them tremendously. To liven things up, and engage students more, try some of the games explained below. Some require more preparation or class time than others, so use them wisely and sparingly. Overuse of these games will be just like the PowerPoint phenomenon, which loses its luster over time.

Password

Most students will not be familiar with this game show, but some of the more veteran teachers will remember it. In the traditional game, there are two teams of two people each. The players giving the clues sit facing the chalkboard, where the word or phrase is written. The players doing the guessing face their partner (and the rest of the class) with their backs to the chalkboard. On each team, one player knows the word or phrase, and he tries to get his teammate to guess it by using synonyms, antonyms, or other strategies, such as voice inflection, or hand gestures. The play goes back and forth between the teams until one gets it correct. In the original game, the person giving the clues can only use one word on each turn, but this can be modified if the students find this too difficult. In a classroom setting, in order to get more students involved, the guessers and the “guessees” can keep rotating after each turn. In another, more chaotic version, there can be two people suggesting the clues and the rest of the class is divided into two and tries to figure out the answer. Depending on the number of words or phrases you want the students to learn, this game can take up any amount of time.

Family Feud

In the actual game, two families have to guess what are the most popular answers to surveys given to 100 people. If one team does not get all the answers before they make three wrong guesses, the other team gets one chance to get one of the remaining correct answers.

For purposes of this game, the class can be divided into two teams. One player from each team faces off against each other and tries to be the first to come up with one of the correct answers after the question is read. For example, the students might be asked, “What are some elements that demonstrate a country is a liberal democracy?” or “What are some indications that a regime is legitimate?” The player who answers it correctly wins the opportunity to decide whether to try to figure out all the answers or let the other team make the attempt.

This game requires more preparation than *Password* because you might have to collect some data. Some of this information can be found right in the texts and other types can be found in magazines (such as *The Economist*, *Time*, or *Newsweek*), the Eurobarometer, or other surveys or polls answered by citizens of different countries. You can also use “except” questions from previously released AP Exams, or from your own test bank. Alternatively, as homework,

teams of students can be assigned particular aspects of content and prepare questions for other teams. For very large classes, this game might prove to be unwieldy and might be saved for a day when a group of students are not there because of field trips or athletic events.

One of the other problems that might arise is that if you have multiple sections you might have to come up with different questions for each class depending on how much inter-class communication there is.

This game could also be played with questions that have more than one answer. You could ask the students for all the synonyms for patron-client relations or the five characteristics of a nation-state. For this version of the game, you have to be sure that you know all the answers or be able to adjust for other correct answers. Perhaps they could even get more points for thinking of answers you did not provide.

Jeopardy!

Another time-honored classic in classrooms everywhere is *Jeopardy!* This requires a significant amount of preparation on the part of the teachers, though I have actually had students prepare questions and topics either to be used by another period or for the next year. This forces students not only to evaluate the level of difficulty of terms and concepts (i.e., for the different point values) but also makes them gain a better understanding of these terms and concepts.

In the traditional game, there are six sets of questions with five questions in each category. The further down the list, the more points (dollars) the questions are worth and the more complicated the questions become. In the actual game show, the contestants' answers have to be in the form of a question, but I don't require that of my students (the only reason for it on the actual game show is a take-off on the game show scandals of the '50s, in which contestants were supplied answers by the shows' producers. The show's creator, Merv Griffin, tells the story that his wife suggested giving the contestants the answers and making them come up with the questions).

This game can be high- or low-tech depending on your familiarity with technology or its availability. Some teachers simply write categories on the board with 100-point increments in each column. More adventurous teachers have created PowerPoint programs that accomplish the same task. To prepare for the game, for each box on the *Jeopardy!* gameboard, write the definition of a vocabulary word. To keep track of answered questions, the "emcee" puts a Post-it Note in that box on the screen. If you would prefer a PowerPoint presentation format but do not have the time to create a template, there are many generous teachers out there who would be willing to share theirs if you submit a request on an electronic discussion group. Several Web sites are listed below that you might want to try.

In the actual game, a coin toss determines who goes first and that person picks a category and dollar amount. The question is read and whichever contestant rings in first has the opportunity

to answer. If that person gets it correct, he goes again. If he gets it wrong, the other contestants can each try once until someone gets it right. For a classroom, depending on the size, you can divide the class into two or three groups. And for each question, each team gets to send up the next student in the lineup. Another approach is to have the groups discuss the answer and either shout out the answer or have a designated person provide the team's answer.

Jeopardy Game Board

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500

Suggested Questions for *Jeopardy!* [answers in brackets]

UK	Russia	China	Nigeria	Mexico/Iran
Leader of the majority party in parliament who stepped down in 2007 [Tony Blair]	Current president of Russia who has been criticized for centralizing power [Vladimir Putin]	Current leader of China who established the “Eight Do’s and Don’ts” to reestablish a moral code [Hu Jintao]	Major religion in Northern Nigeria [Islam]	Dominant political party for most of Mexico’s since the founding of the United Mexican States 1917 [Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)]
Major regions of the UK [England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland]	Economic reform instituted by Mikhail Gorbachev [<i>perestroika</i>]	Members of China’s bureaucracy [cadres]	Term length for offices of president, senate, house of representatives [4 years]	
Principle in which cabinet members can debate in private but must abide by cabinet decisions in public or resign [collective responsibility]	Number of regions represented by the Federation Council [89]	Perestroika without Glasnost refers to the Chinese policy of [economic reform without political reform]	Islamic law [<i>shari’a</i>]	Political party of Mexico’s president and a plurality in both houses of congress [National Action Party (PAN)]

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued).

UK	Russia	China	Nigeria	Mexico/Iran
Current leader of the Conservative Party [David Cameron]	The very wealthy and powerful segment of the “New Rich” [oligarchs]	System in which members of government elect other government officials—widely used in China [indirect elections]	Nigerian term for extreme form of patron-client relations [<i>prebendalism</i>]	Form of Islam followed by majority of Iranians; the religious affiliation of most Mexicans [Shiism; Roman Catholic]
Ultra-nationalist political party [British National Party]	The political party which most strongly supports the current president of Russia [United Party]	Chinese version of patron-client relations [<i>guanxi</i>]	The current president’s party and the majority party in both houses [People’s Democratic Party]	Names of the current Presidents of Mexico and Iran [Felipe Calderón and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad]

Bluff

This game combines a good understanding of vocabulary and concepts with a certain amount of strategy. Divide the class into two opposing groups (A and B). The moderator poses a question to team A and students who think they know the answer or want the other team to think they know the answer stand up. Team B decides which person on team is bluffing (i.e., does not know the answer) and calls on that student. If the student on Team A knows the answer, it gets a score based on the number of students who stood up, but if the student does not know the answer, Team B gets that number of points (e.g., seven students stand up from Team A, and it gets it wrong. Team B gets seven points). The next question is then given to Team B and the play alternates back and forth until a certain score is reached or a certain number of “innings” (defined as each team having a turn) have been played. To start the game, a coin toss decides if a team wants to play or pass.

When I first heard about this game, I was afraid that students would zero in on certain students, making them an object of ridicule, but because students do not have to stand up if they do not know the answer, this does not happen. And, as teachers know, students can be quite adept at bluffing. If this does seem to pose a problem, you can make a rule that students can only be called on once unless there is no other choice.

Charades/Pictionary

In these two versions of similar games, a student either acts out or draws the concept and the other students attempt to figure out the answer. In both versions, the student posing the question is not allowed to speak, and in the *Pictionary* version the student cannot write

down any words, letters, or symbols—only drawings. The easiest way to prepare for the game is to make a list of vocabulary terms on index cards and have the student playing pick a term to act out or draw. This is actually a very challenging game, because much of the vocabulary in AP Comparative Government is conceptual.

As we are all aware, students learn in different ways, and these games are an attempt to address some of those variances. Though they cannot take the place of the individual studying and reading that students must do, they can be a fun way to reinforce the difficult vocabulary and concepts addressed in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course.

Additional Resources

Educational game templates online:

Jeopardy Powerpoint. www.graves.k12.ky.us/tech/jeopardy_instructions.htm

Educational Resources for Teachers. www.jmu.edu/madison/teacher/jeopardy/jeopardy.htm

PowerPoint Activities. teach.fcps.net/trt10/PowerPoint.htm

Jeopardy Games Created by Teachers www.elainefitzgerald.com/jeopardy.htm

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