# Fair Lawn High School

## Social Studies Department Elective Program

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<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>AP Comparative Government &amp; Politics</th>
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<td>Pre-Requisites</td>
<td>AP or Honors History (with a B- or better) sophomore and/or junior year</td>
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## Course Description

This course is designed as an **introduction to the comparative study of politics and government in the modern world.** The AP Comparative program is designed to provide students with the necessary tools to evaluate common types of governments and cultures, compare and analyze their governments and societies, and describe their interactions in a global environment.

## Syllabus Overview

During the year, we focus on the governments of six countries and compare their structure with that of the United States and each other. By studying the governments of **Great Britain, Russia, Mexico, Nigeria, China and Iran** students gain a better understanding of both commonalities and differences among modern political systems.

## Student Expectations

Students are expected to meet due dates, be self-motivated, and have a genuine interest in current events and world politics. No background knowledge on international politics is required. However, students are expected to know the basics of US government.

**Student Evaluation**

1. Units tests (combination of multiple choice and free-response) and quizzes
2. Weekly current events
3. Outlines & written homework assignments
4. Analytical essays
5. Country presentations / group website
### Resources, Student Work

<table>
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<th>Books</th>
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| **Comparative Politics Today: A World View, 10/E**  
  G. Bingham J. Powell, Jr., *University of Rochester*  
  Russell J. Dalton, *University of California, Irvine*  
  Kaare Strom, *University of California, San Diego* |
| **Good Society, The: An Introduction to Comparative Politics, 2/E**  
  Alan Draper, *St. Lawrence University*  
  Ansil Ramsay, *St. Lawrence University* |

### Current Events
Students use any of the following resources for their current events:
- Foreign Affairs
- **The Economist (we receive a copy each week)**
- U.S. News & World Report
- The New York Times
- Wall Street Journal

### Sample Homework Topics
- Compare written U.S. Constitution in U.S. with unwritten constitution of UK
- Compare specific leadership transitions in China, Iran, Mexico, U.S., UK
- Look at public opinion polls in U.S. and UK and compare
- Show elected and non-elected institutions in Iran and discuss how citizens participate
- Compare media control by reading about Putin’s crackdown in Russia, China’s crackdown on the Internet, and discuss the effect based on reading about the impact of media in the U.S.
- Examine the role of political parties in democracies and consider how it is the same and different in Russia and China
- Participate in “Mock Congress” designing bills based on research into policies in comparative countries,
- Create “how a bill becomes a law” charts for each comparative country to compare to U.S.

### Outlines and Team Work:
Outlines are individually completed outside of school; however students work with a team on most homework assignments, projects, research, essay writing, country presentations, website development, etc... in class; students collaborate in teams of 3 (teams are created in the beginning of the year, and students work with the same team throughout the year).