Economies in Transition
ECON 380
Summer 2020
Tuesday, 4:30 – 7:00 P.M.; Friday, 9 – 11:30 A.M.
Class Location: Arlington Campus, Van Metre Hall (formerly Founders Hall) 111

Professor Rosolino Candela
Office Location: Arlington Campus, Mercatus Center, 4th Floor of Metropolitan Building
(across from Van Metre Hall)
Office Hours: Meetings to be scheduled by appointment
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Please note this is a draft syllabus and changes will be made leading up to the summer..

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:
This course investigates the foundations of comparative economic systems. Broadly defined, comparative economic systems refers to the study of human interaction under alternative institutional arrangements. The overall objective of this course, therefore, will be to use the basic foundations of economic and institutional analysis to understand, across time and place, how individuals have been able to transition from poverty to wealth. More specifically, however, the focus of study and the particular debates in the field of comparative economic systems has evolved over time across three phases. Before 1989, the core of comparative economics was an examination of the differences in economic, as well as political, performance between capitalism and socialism. During the 1990s and into the early 2000s, the main focus of interest of comparative economists has been the transition from socialism to capitalism. In recent years, mostly as a result of the transition experience of China and India, a new orientation of comparative economics has emerged that focuses on the comparison of the economic effects of the various institutions of capitalism. Both the lectures and assigned readings will reflect the overall scope of this field of study as well as the particular phases of emphasis.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Books


COURSE STRUCTURE & GRADING:
Courses will be a mix of lecture and open discussion. Students are responsible for taking notes. I do not make my lecture notes available. If a student misses class, it is their responsibility to obtain the lecture notes from a classmate.

Your final grade is based on quizzes (25%), a midterm exam (30%), and a final exam (45%). No additional credit is available.

**Quizzes:** The quizzes will test your knowledge of the content of the required readings for the class as listed above. There are no makeup quizzes, and students must be on time to receive a quiz. Once collected, quizzes will not be distributed to latecomers.

**Midterm exam:** The midterm exam will be administered in class on July 9, 2019. The exam will include *all* material covered up until that point in time.

**Final exam:** The final exam will be administered on Tuesday, July 30, 2019 from 4:30-7 P.M. This exam date and time is set by the University and is non-negotiable. The final exam is comprehensive and will include *all* material covered throughout the semester. Your letter grade will be assigned based on the weighted value of your exams and final project as follows:

- A+ 96-100; A 91-95; A- 90-86
- B+ 85-81; B 80-76; B- 75-71
- C+ 70-68; C 67-65; C- 64-60

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:**
If you require any special accommodations, please see me immediately following the first class so that we can work together to make sure that you have what you need to succeed in this course.

**POLICY REGARDING AUDIO/VIDE0 RECORDING & PICTURES:**
For the privacy and comfort of your fellow students, audio and video recordings, as well as photography, is strictly prohibited during class.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**
Cheating will not be tolerated and can result in a failing grade, dismissal from class, and expulsion from the university. If I suspect you of cheating, I will seek the appropriate punishment under George Mason University guidelines. Please review the George Mason University Honor System and Code.

**Readings and Class Lecture Schedule**
Please be sure to read all materials before class every week. You are required to complete all assigned readings before the class date in which we will discuss them. Your quizzes will reflect what we will discuss that day and you coming prepared.
SCHEDULED OUTLINE OF COURSE EVENTS

1. Introduction into Comparative Institutional Analysis (June 9)

2. Institutions and Entrepreneurship (June 12)

3. The Socialist Calculation Debate (June 16)

4. The Soviet Experiment with Socialism (June 19)

5. Transitional Political Economy in Post-Soviet Russia (June 23)

6. The Chinese Experiment with Socialism (June 26)

7. Transitional Political Economy in China (June 30)

8. No Class, University Closed (July 3)

9. Midterm Exam (July 7)

10. Market Reform in India (July 10)

11. The Case of Latin America (July 14)

12. **Transitional Political Economy in Africa (July 17)**


13. **“Socialism” and Market Reform in Sweden (July 21)**


14. **Conclusion: Why Institutions Matter (July 24)**


15. **Final Exam (July 28)**