

**COVENANT UNIVERSITY  
NIGERIA**

*TUTORIAL KIT  
OMEGA SEMESTER*

**PROGRAMME: POLITICAL  
SCIENCE**

**COURSE: POS 325**

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## **POS 325: COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**Lecturers: Dr. S. Oni; Mr. K. Shodipo and Mr. U. Abasilim**

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Explain the concepts of Comparative Government and politics.
2. Is there any usefulness of studying comparative government and politics? Discuss.
3. What are the types of studies that students of Comparative Government and Politics engage in?
4. How scientific is the study of comparative government and politics and why do we compare?
5. How is the legislative process of passing bills in Nigeria similar to that of the United States?
6. Identify the similarities and differences between the legislature in the United States of America and Britain.
7. How will you compare the Nigeria's presidential system with the British parliamentary system?
8. Examine the areas of convergence and divergence in both the presidential and parliamentary system of government.
9. Examine the differences and similarities between the Nigerian federal political structure and that of the United State of America.
10. Attempt a comparison of the Nigerian and the British Civil Service.
11. Using Britain and United States as case studies, examine the differences in the parliamentary and presidential systems of government.
12. Explain the focus of comparative public administration.
13. Critically compare and contrast the civil service of Nigeria and Britain.
14. Why study comparative public administration?
15. Examine the Indian Parliamentary democracy.
16. Examine the challenges of comparison in comparative public administration.
17. With detailed illustrations, define the term democracy
18. Why are some countries democratic and others not?
19. Examine the similarities and differences between in the French and Nigeria Local Government systems.

20. In what ways can specific electoral systems and power sharing arrangements help to promote democracy and contain the potential for (ethnic/religious) conflict?

### **MODEL ANSWERS IN ALTERNATE SEQUENCE (ODD NUMBERS)**

#### **Question 1**

Comparative government signifies the study of legal instrumentalities of government and of political processes conceived as a result of the interaction between the properly constituted organs of government, namely, the electorate, the legislature, the executive, the administration, and the courts.

Comparative politics as a comparative study of politics- a search for similarities and differences between and among political phenomenon, including political institutions (such as legislatures, political parties, or political interest groups), political behaviour (such as voting, demonstrating, or reading political pamphlets) or political ideas (such as liberalism, conservatism, or Marxism). Similarly, Michael Sodaro posits that comparative politics is an examination of political realities in countries all over the world.

Comparative government and politics is a subfield of political science that focuses on the comparative study of constitutions, systems of government, and political developments. It involves the systematic study and comparison of the world's governmental and political systems. It seeks to explain differences between as well as similarities among countries.

#### **Question 3**

Students are to give a brief introduction, defining the concept of comparative government and politics.

They are also expected to explain the types of studies in comparative government and politics as follows

- i) Studies of one country - or a particular institution (Political parties, militaries, parliaments, interest groups), political process (decision making), or public policy (for instance, labour or welfare policy) in that country.
- ii) Studies of two or more countries. This is very important intellectually because it is in knowing and writing about two or more countries that students can begin to make genuine comparisons.

- iii) Regional or area studies. Involve groups of countries that may have several things in common – for example, similar histories, cultures, languages, geographic locations, legal systems, religions, colonial backgrounds, and so on.
- iv) Studies across regions. Such studies might involve comparisons of the role of the military in Africa and the Middle East or of the quite different paths to development of the East Asian countries and Latin America.
- v) Global comparisons. With the improved statistical data collected by the World Bank, the UN, and other agencies, it is now possible to do comparison on global basis.
- vi) Thematic studies. Comparative politics focuses on themes. For example, some scholars may be interested in such themes as dependency theory, national development, etc.

### **Question 5**

Students are to give a brief introduction of what a bill is.

They are to give the similarities between the legislative process of passing bills in Nigeria and United States of America as follows

- Introduction of bills in the House
- Referring bills to committees for investigation
- Proper deliberation on bills in the floor of the House
- Voting for or against bills in the floor of the House
- Upper and lower Houses go through the same process in considering bills
- Presidents assents on bills to become acts
- Presidents power to veto bills
- Legislatures' power to override veto by 2/3 vote by a quorum of members in both the House and Senate.

Students are to give a brief conclusion

### **Question 7**

This question requires that students give brief introduction, perhaps stating the fact that there are basically two systems of government – the presidential and parliamentary system. While some countries also adopt a hybrid – semi-presidential system. A classical model of presidential system is the United States of America which Nigeria patterns its system along. A classical model of the parliamentary system is the British Westminster parliamentary model.

The body of the work should be discussed using the defining characteristics of the two systems the units of analysis, i.e.,

- i. Single and dual executive head
  - ii. Tenure of office of the executive
  - iii. Separateness of election process of the executive and legislature
  - iv. Separateness of the arms of government
  - v. Collective and individual responsibility
- etc

### **Question 9**

**Process of Formation:** The American federalism was established through a process of aggregation i.e. coming together of formerly separate independent territorial entities. Nigerian federalism evolved through a process of segregation/devolution.

**Revenue Allocation:** Nigerian federalism has always vested the responsibility for the collection of a large proportion of national revenue in the Federal Government, a situation that tends to enrich the centre at the expense of the federating states. Though the national government has risen to prominence as a major feature of the fiscal landscape of American federalism, the increase does not come primarily at the expenses of state and local governments

**Resource Control:** Nigeria revenue allocation over the years has been bedeviled by warped formulas. One of the major problems of Nigerian federalism especially since 1999 is the derivation principle of revenue allocation which has come to be term resource control. States and localities are differently favoured by this revenue allocation principle. The experience of American federalism with respect to resource control has been described as a competitive federalism. The various states of the American federation have more control of their resources from where they are expected to generate revenues to provide the bulk of public services including public education, police protection, road and sanitation public welfare and health and hospital especially those that falls under the Unfunded Mandate.

**Public policy initiative:** The case in Nigeria federalism is such that the federal government dominates public policy making initiatives while the federating units are merely co-opted in to it. In the American federalism on the other hand, states are responsible for most public policies. They have played the role of policy innovators, devising public policies that, if successful serve as models for other state to follow

### **Question 11**

Students are to give a brief definition of the parliamentary and presidential systems of government.

They are to explain the basic features of the presidential system using USA as a case study:

- Separation of powers, checks and balances

- Describe the election process (separate and direct elections of the executive and legislature)
- Fixed tenure of office for the president
- Advantages and disadvantages of the system
- Then, they are to explain the features of the parliamentary system of government using Britain as a case study:
- Fusion of Powers/checks and balances
- Direct elections only for parliament, Executive head election by parliament and Cabinet members election by executive head
- Prime minister's tenure of office
- Advantages and disadvantages

Then, they are expected to give a brief conclusion.

### **Question 13**

Students are expected to give a brief general definition of civil service, origin and historical development in Nigeria and Britain.

They are to compare and contrast the civil service in both countries based on the following:

- Appointment/Recruitment into the civil service
- Training
- Accountability
- Differences in how the term is applied in both countries Students are to give a brief conclusion.

### **Question 15**

### **Question 17**

Students are to give the basic definition of democracy as given by Abraham Lincoln

Then, they are to mention and explain the following schools of thought on what democracy should be:

- Joseph Schumpeter

- Samuel Huntington
- Robert Dahl
- Democracy as it is practiced in India

They are to give a brief conclusion.

**Question 19**

Students are to define the concept of local government.

Then, they are to compare and contrast the local governments in both countries based on the following:

- Origin
- Structure
- Financing
- Problems

Students are to give concluding remarks