For the past two decades, democratization has been one of the most prominent topics in the study of comparative politics. During that time, a variety of theories and approaches have been put forward to explain why some countries become democratic but others do not, the timing of the transition from authoritarian rule to democracy, and why attempts at democratization succeed or fail. Different scholars have identified economic factors, cultural factors, institutional arrangements, the interplay between the authoritarian state and the political opposition, and other factors as explanatory variables. Despite the attention given to these issues, there is no uniform agreement on the causes of democratization or a model that can satisfactorily explain the majority of cases.

Most of the readings for this class are empirically grounded in one or more regions of the world, but they are not simply descriptive case studies. All aspire to provide generalizable findings. One of our tasks is to determine which approaches are most useful in explaining multiple cases of democratization, and also to identify the limits of the different approaches.

The following books are available for purchase in the GW bookstore:


In addition to these books, other required readings are available on Blackboard (identified with an *).

Assignments:

1. **Active participation** in the class discussion is required of all students, and you cannot participate if you have not done the readings. Each week that you do not write a paper, you will submit 2-3 questions to me via email on that week’s readings. One of those questions can be for clarification (i.e., you did not understand something), the rest should be analytical questions for class discussion. Questions are due by 9 a.m. the day of class.

2. During the semester, all students will write **two short papers** based on the weekly readings. Papers should analyze and critique the assigned readings; you are not expected or required to do additional outside reading. There will be no assigned topics; instead, students will use their own discretion in selecting paper topics, so long as they respond to the readings in some way. Your papers do not have to cover all the readings in a particular week, but they should identify and analyze a main theme, debate, or puzzle from that week’s readings. A good paper should do the following things:

   C it may compare and contrast several of the readings, provide an in-depth critique of just one of the readings, or analyze a basic approach (e.g., the utility of rational choice, political culture, or path dependency in explaining democratization).

   C it should not simply summarize the readings; your paper should make an argument and convey a point of view. You should provide your own analysis of the events or issues discussed in the readings, or provide an alternative argument not offered in the readings.

   C it should critique the readings. A critique is not necessarily negative. Whether or not you like an author’s argument, you still must critique it: is the argument clearly stated? Is the evidence offered relevant to the argument and convincing, or is it biased in some way? Are alternative explanations ignored or addressed? etc.

   C it should give credit where credit is due: always cite the sources for key information, and always provide page numbers for quotes.

   C **it must be double spaced and no more than five pages long.**

   C it may link the readings to current events or policy debates, but the paper should not just be an opinion piece. Instead, it should link the insights or approaches from the assigned readings to political events.

   **The papers are due by 9 a.m. the day of class.** You may deliver them in person to my mailbox in the political science department, fax them to 202-994-7743, or send them as an email attachment. Out of fairness to your classmates, late papers will be penalized.
3. **A research paper.** This may be an in-depth case study of a country or a region to test one or more of the prevailing theories of democratization presented in the assigned readings. Alternatively, it could be a broader comparative study that looks at the impact of one or more factors in a variety of settings. All topics must be approved by me in advance.

C Feb. 2: paper topic due
C March 2: annotated bibliography due
C April 13: first draft or outline due
C May 8 (Monday): final paper due

4. **A take-home final exam.** This exam will be a series of essay questions, and you will be given a choice of questions from which you choose several to answer. The exam will be passed out the last day of class and due by Monday, May 15.

All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. They must be original (i.e., written by you) and unique (i.e., not also submitted for another class).

**Grading:**

- Class participation 20%
- 2 short papers 20%
- Research paper 30%
- Final exam 30%
1. January 19 - Introduction

   **A. Modernization, Development, and Democracy**

2. January 26


   * Bruce Buena de Mesquita and George W. Downs, “Development and Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 84, no. 5 (September-October 2005), pp. 77-86.

3. February 2


4. February 9


   * Nancy Bermeo, “Rethinking Regime Change,” *Comparative Politics* vol. 22, no. 3 (April 1990), pp. 359-77.

3: *Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1986), pp. 47-63.


5. February 16


**C. Institutional Choices**

6. February 23


D. Consolidation

7. March 2

Huntington, *The Third Wave*, pp. 208-316.


E. Civil Society and Civic Values

8. March 9


Read at least one review:


March 16 — SPRING BREAK

9. March 23


F. Quality of Democracy

10. March 30


11. April 6 — NO CLASS — TO BE MADE UP AT END OF SEMESTER

12. April 13


G. Promoting Democracy

13. April 20

Carothers, *Critical Mission*, pp. 1-166

H. Democratic Peace

14. April 27

I. Islam, Iraq, and Democracy

15. May 4


* Larry Diamond, “What Went Wrong in Iraq?” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 4 (September/October 2004),


TBA

RESEARCH PAPER DUE: MONDAY, MAY 8, 12 NOON

FINAL EXAM DUE: MONDAY, MAY 15, 9 A.M.