Global Perspectives on Democracy
Spring 2015

George Washington University, Department of Political Science, PSC 2334
T/Th 2:20-3:35, Duques 251

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Office Hours: Thursday 3:45-5

Course Overview: How and why has democracy spread across the globe and will this continue? Is democracy a good thing? How can international actors help to encourage the spread of democracy? This course will teach students about various aspects of democracy in a comparative and international context. We will read about cases of democratization, the major theories on the modes of democratic transition and breakdown, the country-level and international factors that predict democracy, and the impact democracy has on war, governance, and economic growth.

Learning Outcomes: As a result of this course, students will be able to:

• Understand the importance of democracy in history and modern global politics.
• Discuss essential facts on democracy's spread across time, region, and economic conditions.
• Assess the major theories on modes of democratic transition and breakdown, the prediction of democracy, and the effects of democracy based on empirical evidence and examples.
• Analyze a particular country case and how it fits with broader theories of democracy.
• Analyze potential approaches to democracy promotion.

Readings: There are two required texts:


Additional readings are posted on Blackboard.
Assessment: Students will choose a specific case of democratization to research through independent study and reading. Expectations are roughly one article/chapter every other week throughout the semester. Suggested choices and resources for research are below. Students will then write two essays concerning this case and are encouraged to discuss it in class.

The first essay should cover the *how* of democratization, specifically the process/mode of democratization, the significant events, and the major actors involved. The second essay should cover the *why* of democratization, meaning the general country factors (such as economic, cultural, or political characteristics) that explain it and help to predict other transitions. Instead of listing a series of facts, the essays should make a substantive argument that relates the case to more general theories we discuss in class. Does the case fit a particular theory? Does it not fit any theory? The work will be judged on how well it interprets and analyzes the case and fits it into the broader history and literature on democratization. A more detailed description is available on Blackboard (Essay Assignments).

- **Two Short Essays (40%)**: ~1000-1200 words each, both on the same country case
  - First due Tuesday of Week 7 (2/24), Second due Tuesday of Week 13 (4/14)
  - Essays can be submitted in printed form in class or in my mailbox in Monroe 440.
  - Late penalty without excused extension is 3% per day.
  - Aim for at least four sources (not counting the readings from class).

- **Two Reports on News Articles (10%)**: ~250 words each, on a news or magazine article
  - Identify the news article, briefly describe the event, and discuss how it relates to or illuminates something we have discussed in class.
  - Aim to submit these throughout the semester, but the first is due by Tuesday of Week 8 (3/3) and the second by Tuesday of Week 11 (3/31).
  - Same submission guidelines and penalties

- **Class Participation (10%)**: Students should come to class prepared to discuss the week's readings and suggested questions and should be engaged participants in group activities.

- **Final Exam (40%)**: Essay questions and short responses (sit-down exam)
Course Schedule

What? The Definition and Spread of Democracy

Week 1 (1/13 & 1/15): What is democracy?

Week 2 (1/20 & 1/22): Historical spread of democracy
Questions: Has democracy become a universal value? How has democracy's historical spread varied? Will it eventually spread throughout the world?
- Debate: Joshua Kurlantzick vs. Miller, Boix, & Stokes. *Foreign Policy*. (3 pages)

Week 3.1 (1/27): Dictatorship
Questions: How do modern dictatorships hold on to power and prevent popular opposition? What are the major types of dictatorship?
- Dobson, *Dictator's Learning Curve*, p.13-34, 90-103. (Russia, Venezuela)
- Halpern, Micah D. *Thugs*. (Stalin, Mao, Saddam, Niyazov) (12 pages)

How? Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns

Week 3.2–4 (1/29 & 2/3): Major actors and motivations (No class on 2/5)
Questions: Who are the actors that make democratization possible? What is the role of leaders vs. the masses? Is protest effective at taking down regimes?
- Dobson, *Dictator's Learning Curve*, p.149-64, 224-51.
- Sharp, Gene. *From Dictatorship to Democracy*. (23 short pages)

Week 5 (2/10 & 2/12): Modes of democratic transition
Questions: What are the major types of democratic transition? Which is most likely to lead to democratic stability? What is the role of violence vs. negotiation?
- Sparks, Allister. *Tomorrow Is Another Country*, p.36-39, 120-24, 179-96. (South Africa)

Week 6 (2/17 & 2/19): Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring
Questions: How did Eastern Europe democratize after the fall of the Soviet Union? How have the countries of the Arab Spring fared since 2011 and why has democratization stalled?
- Ash, Timothy Garton. *We the People*, p.78-94, 101-11, 123-30. (Czechoslovakia)
- Sebestyen, Victor. *Revolution 1989*. (Fall of the Berlin Wall) (10 pages)
- Dobson, *Dictator's Learning Curve*, p.172-86. (Egypt)
- Berman, Sheri. “The Promise of the Arab Spring.” *Foreign Affairs*. (7 pages)
** First Essay (due 2/24) **

**Week 7 (2/24 & 2/26): Modes of democratic breakdown**  
Questions: How does democracy break down? What is the role and responsibility of citizens?  
   Why did Hitler choose a legal/electoral path to dictatorship?  
   - Paxton, Robert O. *The Anatomy of Fascism*, p.87-102. (Germany, Italy)

**Why? Predicting Democracy**

**Week 8 (3/3 & 3/5): Economic development and democracy**  
Questions: What is modernization theory and why have scholars rethought it? Why is economic development conducive to democracy? What does this imply about China's future political development?  
   - Berman, Sheri. “Readings on Modernization Theory.” *Foreign Affairs*. (3 pages)  
   - Dobson, *Dictator's Learning Curve*, p.252-57, 267-87. (China)

**Spring Break (3/9 – 3/13)**

**Week 9 (3/17 & 3/19): Other economic factors • Inequality • Oil**  
Questions: Why are certain types of economic wealth considered negative for democracy? Is economic and social equality necessary for democracy to work? Why do oil-rich countries tend to be dictatorships?  
   - Walt, Vivienne. “The Dictator's Son with a Malibu Mansion.” (Equatorial Guinea) (3 pages)  

**Week 10 (3/24 & 3/26): International factors • Democracy promotion**  
Questions: How does the international system relate to democracy? How has this accelerated after the end of the Cold War? Does democracy promotion work?  

**Week 11 (3/31 & 4/2): International norms and diffusion • Religion**  
Questions: Has democracy become a universal norm? Are certain cultures and religions a better fit for democracy or is this an accident of history?  

**Week 12.1 (4/7): Social capital • Civic culture**  
Questions: What is social capital? Why has it declined in the United States? What is the role of civic culture in promoting and sustaining democracy?
So What? The Consequences of Democracy

Week 12.2–13 (4/9 & 4/14): Policies, outcomes, and well-being (No class on 4/16)
Questions: How does democracy affect economic growth and policy outcomes? Are citizens always better off in democracies? Are there any trade-offs?

- Siegle et al. “Why Democracies Excel.” Foreign Affairs. (6 pages)

Week 14 (4/21 & 4/23): War • Democratic peace • An end of history? • Course review
Questions: Why do democracies not fight each other? Why are democracies so good at fighting wars? Can we look forward to an 'end of history' with the world full of peaceful, liberal democracies? When will China democratize?

- Fukuyama, Francis. “After the End of History.” (6 pages)
Case Studies

Suggested Cases

- Argentina 1973
- Portugal 1976
- Ecuador 1979
- Bolivia 1982
- Nicaragua 1984
- The Philippines 1986
- Poland 1989
- Czechoslovakia 1990
- Portugal 1996
- Brazil 1977
- Nigeria 1979
- Argentina 1983
- Bangladesh 1986
- Pakistan 1988
- Chile 1990
- Mongolia 1990
- Romania 1991
- Madagascar 1993
- Taiwan 1996
- Mexico 2000
- Kenya 2002
- Ecuador 2003
- Liberia 2006
- Pakistan 2008
- Bangladesh 2009
- Tunisia 2011

Case Study Resources

Journals (or search Google Scholar)

- Journal of Democracy
- Democratization
- World Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Comparative Political Studies

Books with case studies

- Collier, Ruth. Paths Toward Democracy. (Europe, Latin America)
- Diamond, Larry, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour M. Lipset. Democracy in Developing Countries.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo, et al. Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. (several volumes)
- Bermeo, Nancy. Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy. (Europe, Latin America)

Other resources

- Lexis-Nexis, Keesing's Record of World Events
- New York Times, The Economist, and Associated Press archives
UNIVERSITY POLICY ON RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS
1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
I personally support the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
• crisis and emergency mental health consultations
• confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
  http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

SECURITY
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.