

GOVT 157: Democracy and Dictatorship: Politics in the Contemporary World

Fall 2018

Instructor:	Kelly Senters	Lecture Time:	T/R 8:50 – 10:10a.m.
Email:	ksenters@wesleyan.edu	Lecture Place:	TBD
Office:	PAC 121	Office Hours:	4:15-5:15p.m. W, 1:30-2:30 R or by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of substantive topics comprising the subfield of comparative politics and a survey of the wide-reaching methodological approaches that scholars employ in their research. Through attending lectures, actively participating in discussions, engaging with course readings, and completing course assignments, students will learn to parse, evaluate, and critique political science texts and to communicate these assessments both orally in class discussions and in writing exercises. Additionally, students will be provided with a guided hands-on opportunity to implement independent political science research. Following an introductory session, the course is organized into five primary units.

The first unit examines the organizational structures of political units (with an emphasis on the state) and considers state-building in the European context and, subsequently, in the developing world. This first unit establishes the foundation for the study of political regimes in the second unit of the course. The second unit introduces democratic and authoritarian political regimes, both substantively and empirically. In addition to studying the measurement of democratic and authoritarian political regimes, this unit reviews predominant explanations of regime type and investigates the influence of political regime type for economic development, for example. In this unit, students will have the opportunity to investigate political regime trajectories in countries of interest to them and to explore relationships between political regime type and economic development, for example, in select countries. It concludes with an overview of the vast literature accumulated on political regime transitions.

The third unit provides an introduction to democratic political institutions and explores the variation in electoral systems, for example, across democratic countries. After broadly investigating variation in majoritarian, proportional, and mixed electoral formulas, students will work in groups to evaluate electoral system reform in a country of their choosing. The fourth unit extends the study of elections beyond the mechanics surrounding vote tabulations to consider what scholars know about voters and political behavior. Specifically, it reviews conventional micro- and macro-level explanations of turnout in elections and considers less conventional mediums through which voters participate in politics. Following a brief interlude on identity politics, the course concludes with a fifth unit that considers some of the most pressing contemporary challenges to democratic governance. This unit examines corruption, political populism, and democratic recession.

Course Objectives

This course has two primary objectives. The first objective is to introduce students to the wide array of topics and relationships examined in comparative politics. The second objective is twofold. It is to familiarize students with social science approaches to research and to equip students with basic analytical tools to begin inquiry of the substantive relationships studied.

Learning Outcomes

-Upon completion of this course, students should have an understanding of the comparative politics subfield and a sense of the types of concepts and research questions that scholars of political science study.

-After this course, students should be able to document and compare political regimes (and the institutions comprising them) across select countries. Students will be able to discuss measurement issues pertaining to political regimes and to produce explanations for various observed disparities across democracies and autocracies.

-Upon completion of this course, students should be able to describe participatory patterns and contemporary challenges to democratic governance. They should be able to identify countries confronted with these challenges and to propose innovative solutions to addressing declining turnout, corruption, political populism, and/or democratic recession.

-After this course, students should be able to parse, evaluate, and critique classic political science texts and communicate these assessments both orally in class discussions and in writing exercises.

-Following the completion of this course, students should be able to identify basic approaches to political science research and be able to implement basic quantitative assessments.

Classroom Behavior

Students are expected to attend class regularly, complete all readings and other assignments on time, and to actively participate in discussions. Students are asked to contribute to an environment conducive to learning by treating their professor and peers with respect and by voicing disagreement productively.

Course Assignments and Policies

Class participation: Students are expected to attend all course lectures and discussions. Students are permitted three unexcused absences without penalty. Excused absences include medical and family emergencies and absences for university-approved activities. If extenuating circumstances require you to miss more than three class sessions, you should contact the instructor as early as possible to make accommodating arrangements. Every unexcused absence after the three permitted will result in a one-percentage point deduction from your participation grade.

Participation grades depend not solely on attendance but also on engagement and contribution in lectures and course discussions. Prior to each session, students are expected to have engaged with assigned material and should come to class prepared to respond to the following:

- What are the main concepts?
- What is the primary argument?
- What type of empirical evidence does the author introduce to substantiate his/her claims?
- Do you find this evidence compelling? Why or why not?
- How does this contribution relate to other course content and/or current events?

- Do you see any ways to extend or refine this research? If yes, please explain.

Reading Questions/Short Writing Exercises: Students will be invited to complete several formative assignments throughout the course. These include posing and responding to questions on reading material (see above) and completing short in-class writing exercises. These items are designed to assess student comprehension of assigned readings and will be graded as either “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.”

Exploratory Exercise: Students will be asked to complete **one exploratory exercise**. This exercise will serve as a guided approach to implementing basic quantitative research. Specifically, the instructor will provide students with a series of questions to be answered using data(sets) popular among political scientists. This exploration will be introduced and disseminated in-class on Tuesday, September 25, and students will have an opportunity to collaborate on the assignment in an in-class laboratory session. The due date will be one week later on Tuesday, October 2. Students will be provided with a rubric and an example of excellence to use as a model.

Democratic Country Report: Each week, beginning in Week 7, students will be prompted to respond to several simple questions relating to the topic of the week for a particular democratic country to which they are randomly assigned. The specific questions to which students are asked to respond are listed under the week-by-week sections on the course Moodle website. Students will record their responses to posed questions before the Tuesday class session. Students will review their peers’ posts and reply to one post before the Thursday class session. In replies, students should report commonalities between and, ideally, disparities across their assigned countries and the countries discussed in their peers’ posts. Students should discuss anticipated effects of observed differences on the basis of course material.

Exams: This course will have a **mid-term exam** and a **final exam**. The mid-term exam will take place in class on Tuesday, October 16. The final exam will take place on Friday, December 14 from 9:00am-12:00pm for Section 1 and on Thursday, December 13 from 9:00am-12:00pm for Section 2. Both the mid-term and final exams will be cumulative and will consist of fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, and short answer questions. Exams will include content from lecture, readings, and other assignments. In order to perform well on these exams, students should complete all course assignments (including readings), be attentive and active participants in class, and seek help from the instructor as needed. In-class review sessions will be held prior to both the mid-term and final exams.

Assignment Policies: Students are expected to complete and submit assignments in accordance with deadlines outlined in the syllabus. If extenuating circumstances prevent students from completing assignments by the assigned due date, students should be in communication with the instructor in advance of the deadline to make alternative arrangements and accommodations.

Grading

Course grades will be calculated as follows:

Class participation = 10%

Reading Questions and Short Writing Exercises = 10%

Exploratory Exercise = 15%

Democratic Country Report = 20%

In-class Midterm Exam = 20%

Final Exam = 25%

Total = 100%

Additional Items

Electronic Devices: Note taking on computers and other electronic devices is permitted. However, taking notes by hand is highly encouraged. Multiple studies find that taking notes by hand improves the comprehension and retention of material (see Mueller and Oppenheimer 2014).

Students are asked to refrain from using electronic devices including cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. for personal use during course lectures and discussions. These devices can be disruptive to the instructor and hamper other students' abilities to learn.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity and honesty is expected of all students. In short, students are expected to complete all course assignments independently. While students are encouraged to discuss course content and topics with others, all graded assignments should reflect the work of individual students. With questions, please consult:

<http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/plagiarism.html>

Students who do not adhere to these standards may fail the entire course.

Students are not expected to conduct outside research for any course assignments, but if they choose to do so, students are required to cite considered sources appropriately. Students are asked to reference Wesleyan's library guidelines (<http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing>).

Disability-Related Accommodations: Wesleyan University is committed to the learning of all students. To that end, the university provides accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities. Students requiring special accommodations should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible as accommodations cannot be provided retroactively. For information and direction, students should reference <https://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/Student/requesting.html> and set up a meeting with Accessibility Services. The instructor will collaborate with Accessibility Services to provide appropriate accommodations for students who require them.

Readings: There are no textbooks required for this class. All required readings are available on the course website, online, or through Wesleyan's Library.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Course, Discipline, and Methods

Tuesday, September 4: Introduction/Presentation of Syllabus/Pre-Course Survey

Thursday, September 6: Comparative Politics and Approaches to Research

Assignments:

Thursday:

Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. 2007. "Introduction." In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds. p. 3-23. Available <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199780199/9780199566020-e-1>.

"What is Science?" 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics* William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, eds. USA: SAGE Publications Inc.

Week 2: The Organization of Political Units/State Building Around the World

Tuesday, September 11: States, Nations, and Nation-States/Origins of the European State

Thursday, September 13: Colonialism and State-Building Beyond Europe

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Charles Tilly. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., pp. 169-191.

Thursday:

Brian Taylor and Roxana Botea. 2008. "Tilly Tally: War-Making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World." *International Studies Review* 10 (1): 27-56.

Ryan Saylor. 2014. *State building in boom times: Commodities and coalitions in Latin America and Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3: "Striking State Building due to Chile's Double Boom, 1848-1883."

Week 3: Political Regimes: Democracies as the "Gold Standard"

Tuesday, September 18: Introduction to Political Regimes, Democracy and Its Measurement

Thursday, September 20: Modernization Theory and Cultural Determinants of Democracy

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Robert Dahl. 1972. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1. Available on Wesleyan Library website.

Fareed Zakaria. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76(6): 22-43.

José Antonio Cheibub, Jennifer Gandhi and James Raymond Vreeland. 2010. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited," *Public Choice* 143 (1-2): 67-101.

Thursday:

Amartya Sen. 1999. "Democracy as a Universal Value." *Journal of Democracy* 10(3): 3-17.

Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel. 2009. "How Development Leads to Democracy: What We Know about Modernization." *Foreign Affairs* (March/April): 33-48.

Week 4: Unpacking the Residual Category: Authoritarian Regimes

Tuesday, September 25: Authoritarian Regimes Overview *Political Regime Exploration Assigned*

Thursday, September 27: Single-Party Regimes and Military Dictatorships

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Barbara Geddes. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 115-144.

Juan Linz. 2000. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Selected Readings.

Thursday:

Beatriz Magaloni. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1: "Equilibrium Party Hegemony." Available on Wesleyan Library Website.

Tulia G. Falsetti. "Varieties of Authoritarianism: The Organization of the Military State and its Effects on Federalism in Argentina and Brazil." *Studies of Comparative International Development* 46: 137-162.

Week 5: Does Regime Type Matter?

Tuesday, October 2: In-Class Work on Exploration Exercise

Thursday, October 4: Consequences of Regime Type and Democratic Survival

Assignments:

Tuesday:

"Democracy or Dictatorship: Does It Make a Difference?" 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, eds. USA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Thursday:

Adam Przeworski. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selected Readings.

Watch: Eric X. Li. 2013. "A tale of two political systems." *TEDGlobal 2013*. https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_x_li_a_tale_of_two_political_systems. 1035792.

Week 6: Democratic Transitions/Midterm Review

Tuesday, October 9: Democratic Transitions, *Political Regime Exploration Due*

Thursday, October 11: Midterm Review

Assignments:

Tuesday:

"Democratic Transitions." 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, eds. USA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Andreas Schedler. 1998. "What is Democratic Consolidation?" *Journal of Democracy* 9(2): 91-107.

Thursday: None.

Week 7: Midterm Exam/Presidential Versus Parliamentary Systems

Tuesday, October 16: In-Class Midterm Exam

Thursday, October 18: Presidential Versus Parliamentary Systems

Assignments:

Tuesday: None.

Thursday:

José Antonio Cheibub. 2006. *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch 1. ("Introduction."), pp. 1-25. Available through Wesleyan Library website.

Week 8: Elections and Electoral Systems

Tuesday, October 23: Fall Break. No Class.

Thursday, October 25: Elections and Electoral Systems

Assignments:

Tuesday: None.

Thursday:

Pippa Norris. 1997. "Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems." *International Political Science Review*, 18(3): 297-312.

Choose two case studies from the following: *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook (IDEA)*. 2008. Andrew Reynolds, Ben Reilly, and Andrew Ellis, eds. <https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/system-design-new-international-idea-handbook>.

Week 9: Political Parties, Party Systems, and Voters

Tuesday, October 30: Political Parties and Party Systems, *Response Paper Assigned*

Thursday, November 1: Voters and Declining Turnout in Democratic Elections

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Daniele Caramani. 2008. *Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 13: "Party Systems"

Arend Lijphart. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Selected Readings. Available through Wesleyan Library.

Thursday:

Henry Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Scholzman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 271-94.

Abdurashid Solijonov. 2016. "Voter Turnout Trends around the World." *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)*. Stockholm: International IDEA.

Week 10: Unconventional Forms of Democratic Political Participation and Political Involvement in Authoritarian Regimes

Tuesday, November 6: Unconventional Forms of Political Participation: Social Movements and Protests, *Response Paper Due*

Thursday, November 8: Elections and Participation in Authoritarian Regimes

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Debra Javeline. 2003. "The Role of Blame in Collective Action: Evidence from Russia." *The American Political Science Review* 97:107-121.

Watch: Zachariah Mampilly. 2017. "How protest is redefining democracy around the world." *TEDGlobal 2017*. https://www.ted.com/talks/zachariah_mampilly_how_protest_is_redefining_democracy_around_the_world

Thursday:

Jennifer Gandhi and Ellen Lusk-Okar. 2009. "Elections in Authoritarian Regimes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 403-422.

Allyson Lucinda Benton. 2016. "How "Participatory Governance" Strengthens Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Electoral Authoritarian Oaxaca, Mexico." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 2: 37-70.

Joshua Keating. 2013. "Why Protests Can Be Good For Dictators." *Slate*. http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_world_/2013/09/11/why-protests-can-be-good-for-dictators/

Week 11: Identity Politics: Gender and Ethnicity

Tuesday, November 13: Gender and Politics

Thursday, November 15: Ethnic Politics

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Melanie M. Hughes, Pamela Paxton, and Mona Lena Krook. 2017. "Gender quotas for legislatures and corporate boards." *Annual Review of Sociology* 43: 331-352.

Bruce Douglas and Simone Preissler Iglesias. July 10, 2018. "Ghost Candidates Plague Brazil's Push for Women in Politics." *Bloomberg LP*. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-10/phantom-candidates-plague-brazil-s-push-for-women-in-politics>.

Jasmin Lorch and Bettina Bunk. 2016. "Gender Politics, Authoritarian Regime Resilience, and the Role of Civil Society in Algeria and Mozambique." *GIGA Working Papers* 292.

Thursday:

James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2007. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101 (4): 709-25.

The Daily. 2018. "Unearthing the Truth in Myanmar." *The New York Times*. Podcast.

Week 12: Contemporary Challenges to Democratic Governance: Political Corruption

Tuesday, November 20: Corruption, *Response Paper Assigned*

Thursday, November 22: Thanksgiving Break. No Class.

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Susan Rose-Ackerman. 2012. "Corruption in Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Select Readings. Available through Wesleyan Library website.

Sonia Goldenberg. 2018. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?" *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/democracy-corruption.html>.

Week 13: Contemporary Challenges to Democratic Governance: Political Populism and Democratic Recessions

**Submit country report in class.

Tuesday, November 27: Political Populism, *Response Paper Due*

Thursday, November 29: Democratic Recession, Debate Topic and Side Assigned

Assignments:

Tuesday:

Ken Roberts. 2018. "Populism and Political Development." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Politics of Development*. Carol Lancaster and Nicolas van de Walle, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cas Mudde. 2015. "The problem with populism." *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/populism-syriza-podemos-dark-side-europe>

Weyland, Kurt. 2017. "There are 4 big barriers to the populist model in America (and your democracy is safe)." *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/08/11/there-are-4-big-barriers-to-the-the-populist-model-in-america-and-your-democracy-is-safe/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.fed

Thursday:

Pippa Norris. 2017. "Is Western Democracy Backsliding? Diagnosing the Risks." *Journal of Democracy* 28(2): 1-24.

Javier Corrales and Michael Penfold. 2014. "Manipulating Term Limits in Latin America." *Journal of Democracy* 25(4): pp. 157-168.

Week 14: In-Class Discussion of Country Reports, Final Exam Review

Tuesday, December 4: Ted Talks Discussion: *What if we replaced politicians with randomly selected people?*

Thursday, December 6: Final Exam Review

*Assignments:*Tuesday:

Watch: Brett Henning. 2017. "What if we replaced politicians with randomly selected people?" *TedxDanuvia*. https://www.ted.com/talks/brett_hennig_what_if_we_replaced_politicians_with_randomly_selected_people

Thursday: None.

Final Exam:

Section 1: Friday, December 14 9:00am-12:00pm

Section 2: Thursday, December 13 9:00am-12:00pm