Course Overview

In the last 40 years, a wave of democratization has spread across the world. Countries in Southern Europe, Latin America, East Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa transitioned from authoritarian to democratic rule under pressure from domestic actors and foreign governments alike. More recently, this wave spread to North Africa and the Middle East, though success stories are hard to discern at this time. In Ukraine and other ‘semi-democracies,’ a different struggle has recently been playing out – the struggle to become more democratic than they currently are. Opposing these movements are forces both internal and external.

Up until the moment of change, many of these countries were thought to have had little chance for democracy. Democracy – or rule by the people – is generally seen as a normatively good outcome for society. What factors, then, might cause or contribute to democratization movements? Given the path of China, Singapore and others, we also must consider: is democratization truly a normative good for society? And, given the rise of populist and illiberal democratic movements in Europe, particularly, we must also consider: does liberal democracy always provide the best outcomes for society? Is liberal democracy always what ‘the people’ want?

This course offers an introduction to the extensive literature on democratization. It includes a combination of classic works on democratization as well as more contemporary work. It also addresses both domestic and international influences on the cause of democratization, as well as its effects. This will primarily be a seminar-style course. It is my intention to make each of the sessions as engaging as possible for as many as possible. To accomplish the study of this topic, I will employ a mix of lectures, discussions and group simulations. We will also practice clear written communication, which is an essential skill in evaluation and explanation of political phenomena. Therefore, I am counting on everyone to have read the materials, and to be ready to contribute to the discussion. With that in mind, short response papers and a larger policy paper (described below) will be the bulk of your assessment for the semester. Along with those response papers, you should think of two or three discussion questions to bring to our discussion.

Required Texts

This course is heavily readings based, both from the textbook and supplementary materials, which are posted on our Desire2Learn course page. The required book is:

Course Requirements
1. You must complete the readings in a timely fashion and participate actively in class discussions. Please note that, although the readings are often not very long, they often require careful attention. Class participation counts for fifteen (15) percent of your grade.

2. Over the course of the semester, you will write at least six (6) weekly response papers, which should be clear, concise, and thoughtful. The paper should be one single-spaced page (normal font, normal margins), and it must be turned in to me at the end of Friday’s class.

Your paper should accomplish three things. First, you should summarize one of the most important claims advanced by the author or authors whose work we are reading. You should paraphrase this claim, and also explain how the author advanced and supported it, and why you think it is important. Second, you should respond to this claim, for example by endorsing or critiquing it, comparing it to claims advanced by another scholar whose work we have read, or applying it to some political issue that interests you. Third, and perhaps most important for class discussion, you should write several questions that you have about the reading. These can be critiques of issues raised in our readings, issues you do not understand, issues you would like to be discussed further, etc.

You will have the opportunity to write a response paper each week. Your top six count for 30 percent of your grade. No late submissions will be accepted.

3. We will have a midterm exam and a final exam. The midterm and final will account for 30 percent of your grade (15 percent each).

4. You will write a policy paper (12 pages, double-spaced) describing the outlook for democratization and steps needed to establish democracy in one of the countries listed below. Further details will be provided during the second week of class. The paper will account for 25 percent of your grade.

The Policy Paper
For the policy paper, please choose one of the following countries: Cuba, Russia, Ukraine, Venezuela, Singapore, Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Libya, China, or another country of your choosing with my permission. Further details on the content of the paper will be provided during the second week of class.

Key dates for paper:
February 5th (Friday): Choose country (email me)
April 15th (Friday): First draft due. I will return with feedback within one week.
April 29th: Discussion on preliminary findings.
May 6th: Final papers due.

Please note that all four elements above are incorporated into your final paper grade. Take all deadlines and activities seriously.

Late policy: Barring an extraordinary excuse, all late assignments will be marked down a third of a grade (i.e., from A to A-) for each day following the due date.
**Grading Scale**
A: 90 and above  
B: 89 to 80  
C: 79 to 70  
D: 69 to 60  
F: Below 59

**Student Conduct**
We are all expected to behave as adults and as professionals, and we all have the right to expect the same of our peers and fellow classmates, as well as the instructor. I have adopted the following policies on in-class behavior.

- Disruptive behavior in class: Discussion among students not directed toward the class and outside of discussion periods is not permitted. Egregious disruption of the class will cost the participation points for the day.
- Use of Cell Phones: Use of cellular phones and other electronic communications devices are not permitted. Texting is also not permitted in this class. I will make an exception in the event of an emergency. If there is some pressing reason that you need to keep your cell phone turned on, please notify me before class. Otherwise, cell phones, pagers, etc. are to be kept off during class.
- Use of Laptops and Tablets: I permit the use of laptops and tablets for note taking purposes only. Students are on the honor system with regards to proper usage of these devices. Use of laptops for purposes other than taking notes during class will result in loss of participation points for the day.
Course Outline

PART I: WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

Week 1 (January 20 and 22): Introduction

** January 20th:** Introduction. No Reading.

** January 22nd:** Lecture & Discussion: What is Democracy?

Week 2: Theories of Democratization (January 25, 27, and 29):

** January 25th:** Discussion: What is Democracy? Read:
The Economist, “Courting Disaster.”
Consider: Is democracy something *substantive*, or simply something *procedural*?

** January 27th:** Lecture: Democratic Theory. Read:
Haerpfer et al., Chapter 6.

** January 29th:** Lecture and Discussion: Democratic Theory. Read:

Week 3: (February 1, 3, 5): Measures of Democracy

** February 1st:** Lecture. Measuring Democracy. Read:
Haerpfer, Chapter 3.

** February 3rd:** Lecture: The First Wave of Democracy.
Haerpfer et al., Chapter 4.
Consider: Why did democracy start in some areas, not others? Was this true democracy?

** Email me the country you would like to evaluate for the final paper by February 5th! **

** February 5th:** in-class exercise (this will count as one of your 6 papers). Using your selected country, write a short report about its current democratization by consulting:

1. Freedom House: 
2. Polity IV: 
   [http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4x.htm](http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4x.htm) (Polity IV Data Series 1946-2013)
3. Jose Cheibub Democracy-Dictatorship scores: 
   [https://sites.google.com/site/joseantoniocheibub/datasets/democracy-and-dictatorship-revisited](https://sites.google.com/site/joseantoniocheibub/datasets/democracy-and-dictatorship-revisited)
5. Tatu Vanhanan’s Index:
   [https://www.prio.org/Data/Governance/Vanhanens-index-of-democracy/](https://www.prio.org/Data/Governance/Vanhanens-index-of-democracy/)
Week 4. Transitions to Democracy: Life in a Dictatorship (February 8, 10, and 12)

**February 8**: In Class: Film: *The Lives of Others*.


PART II. Drivers of Democratization

Week 5: Economic Factors (February 15, 17, and 19)


**February 17**: Discussion of Economic Factors. Reading:

**February 19**: Acemoglu and Robinson. *Why Nations Fail*. Ch. 3.

Week 6: Current Democracy and Development (Feb. 22) & Domestic Actors (Feb. 24, 26)

Note: This will be a discussion of contemporary democracies: Does a liberal democracy of free markets lead to too much inequality, which undercuts democracy?

**February 24**: Lecture & Discussion. Reading:

**February 26**: Discussion.

Week 7: The Third Wave and Beyond (February 29, March 2 and 4)

**February 29**: Lecture. The Third Wave. Read Haerpfer, Ch. 5.

**March 2**: 1989 and Beyond: The Color Revolutions. Read:

**March 4**: Lecture & Discussion. The Fourth Wave? Read:
Week 8
March 7th: Review for midterm exam.

MIDTERM: March 9th.

Week 9: March 14, 16, 18 – Spring Break

Week 10: Foreign Aid/Assistance (March 21, 23, and 25)
March 21st: The International Context. Reading: Haerpfer et al., Chapter 7


March 25th: TBA

Week 11: Electoral Systems and Institutional Design (March 28, 30, and April 1)

March 30th: Lecture and Discussion. Reading: Cusack, Iverson, and Soskice. 2007. “Economic Interests and the Origins of Electoral Systems.” American Political Science Review. Caution! This reading is very complex – try to get the main argument (ignore the math they use to prove their point).


Week 12: The Rule of Law

April 6th and 8th: Film: NO! (OR: Our Brand Is Crisis). And discussion.

Week 13: Electoral Fraud and Electoral Monitoring (April 11, 13, 15)

April 13th: Free day to work on papers.

April 15th: Turn in First Draft of Policy Paper.
**Week 14: Democratization’s Effects (April 18, 20, and 22)**

A. Democratization’s Effect on War. Reading:

B. Democracy’s effect on the economy. Reading:

**Week 15: Discussions regarding papers. (April 25, 27, 29)**

**Week 16: Failed Democratizations (May 2, 4, and 6)**

**May 2nd:** Lecture. Failed Democratization.
Haerpfer et al., Chapter 17.

**May 4th:** The Future of Democracy.

**May 6th:** Review for Final Exam.

**Final Paper Due May 6th by 11a. No Late Submissions!**

**Final Exam, Friday, May 13th, at 10:15a.**