

POL 437: Democracies, Emerging and Evolving

Summer Session

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Course Description and Objectives

On November 3, 2020, voters across the United States of America will travel to polling places to cast ballots identifying the individuals each voter believes should serve in local communities, state governments, and federal offices. If a candidate for positions in any of these levels of government accrue more votes than other candidates for the same position, the elected official will be imbued with the authority of their office likely within two months of the election. This authority may extend to decisions regarding the installation of traffic lights, zoning restrictions, or recreational venues at the local level to issues of national security, tax policy, or healthcare at the federal level. Elected officials will leverage these powers to render decisions on issues of public importance until their term expires, upon which time they will likely stand before the community, once again, advocating for re-election.

The electoral process described in this vignette is often conceived to be the *sine qua non* of democracy, that is, without elections there can be no democracy. Yet, elections appear to presuppose competition among different candidates that facilitates a choice for voters, yet candidates sometimes run unopposed. Political parties may facilitate more competitive elections by cultivating and offering potential candidates willing to stand for election; however, the capacity of parties and candidates to advocate for their fitness for office depends on the protection of their abilities to express their positions and create their organizations. Thus, rights of expression and association seem integral to the functioning of an electoral system. The election of a designated official also involves the delegation of authority; however, should the scope of this power allow officials in one state to influence or dictate policy in another? How should elected officials in local communities interact with state or federal officials? Thus, democratic governance may involve electoral processes, civil and political rights, and clear boundaries of delegated authority.

As we think through these dynamics of democratic governance, the understanding of democracy becomes murkier, generating a number of questions that have beguiled political scientists for years. How do we define this form of governance? Is it merely a set of institutions directed toward selecting political leadership or does it involve a larger array of beliefs, norms, rights, and institutions? How can we distinguish between modes of democratic rule and non-democratic practices? Do these distinctions matter, that is, will democracy yield better outcomes relative to non-democratic rule? If there are benefits to democratic governance, is democratization a process that states and the international community should encourage? If so, what pathways lead to greater democratization? If democracy can grow and be strengthened, can it also be diminished and extinguished? If so, what processes erode democratic practices?

We will discover through this course that answers to these questions are not as intuitive as they may seem. For this reason, the nature of democracy, its outcomes, and the processes underlying its creation, growth, or erosion continue to be analyzed, debated, and described by political scientists. Although we are unlikely to arrive at definitive answers to the questions enumerated in the previous paragraph, our journey through this course will enable us to navigate the landscape of knowledge illuminating the dynamics of democracy unveiled by scholars past and present.

Course Format and Materials

(1) Course Readings

In this course, we will be engaging with readings from the relevant literatures concerning the many dimensions of democracy and democratization. Each week has approximately two-to-three readings and the majority of the readings are articles available through the University of Arizona Library's electronic system. Alongside articles, there will also be excerpts from several books and periodicals; however, as with the assigned articles, these materials are available through the Library's electronic system.

The assigned readings are separated into two categories: (1) required and (2) recommended. Students will only be expected to read those denoted as "required"; however, the recommended readings will provide interesting background information that greatly assists in the reading and analysis of the required readings and understanding of the lectures.

Each of these readings approaches their subject matter from a scientific perspective, however, they do not all use similar empirical methodologies, that is, some of the readings leverage qualitative methods and others incorporate quantitative methods. For this course, the important aspects of these works are the research questions they are investigating, the theories each author constructs to answer these questions, and the conclusions the authors draw. Neither the questions nor the exams will include questions about the methodologies employed in the assigned readings.

(2) Course Assignments

(A) Lecture Quizzes

Throughout the course, students will be expected to complete a number of lecture quizzes. Although five quizzes are assigned during the course, the final course grade will only take into account each student's four highest quiz scores of the five quizzes. These quizzes will be 10-20 questions in length and will be completed through the University of Arizona's D2L system. Each quiz will consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching or ordering of terms, or fill-in-the-blank questions. Students will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz. The lecture quizzes are open-notes assignments, however, students may not discuss the questions or answers with any other student.

Quizzes one through four will cover material covered in the lectures and required readings for each week, whereas quiz five will derive questions from any of the subjects covered in the course. In this way, quiz five will assist students in preparing for the final exam. As noted in the forthcoming table, each student's overall grade will incorporate only four of the five quizzes; however, if students complete all five quizzes, the overall grade will incorporate only the four highest scores among the quizzes. Please see the Course Schedule in the syllabus and the D2L page for the specific due dates for each quiz.

Each quiz will become available on the D2L page at the beginning of the week on Monday mornings and each must be completed by the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

(B) Course Papers

In this course, students will be required to complete two papers: a short paper due at the outset of the course and a final paper due at the conclusion of the course.

For the short paper, students will be required to address the following question: What is democracy? As we will discuss throughout the course, democracy can encompass a broad array of features, including, but not limited to, different modes of governance, specific institutional arrangements, and outcomes. Before delving into these dynamics in the course, students writing the short paper should describe their definition and conceptualization of democracy with an accompanying explanation arguing in favor of the paper's thesis. **The short paper should be between 300 and 500 words, and it is due July 12, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. (pst) on D2L.**

The final paper will require students to address two, related areas of inquiry. First, students will revisit the question: What is democracy? In this assignment, each student should describe whether the course's readings or lectures have led to a new or amended conceptualization of democracy or whether the student's definition of democracy from the short paper remains unchanged. The final paper should also include an argument that explains why the student's definition has remained the same or been revised. The second aspect of the final paper should address **one** of the following two topics:

Topic 1: Using the student's conceptualization of democracy, the student will undertake a critical examination of the benefits or drawbacks of this system of governance. In terms of potential benefits, the paper should describe whether these benefits should be expanded and, if so, the practices and institutions that can facilitate this process. With respect to drawbacks, the paper should similarly argue whether any practices or institutions can ameliorate or overcome such drawbacks.

Topic 2: The student will address whether democracy, as conceptualized by the student, is facing a recession in the twenty-first century. If the paper argues that democracy is experiencing backsliding among states in the international community, the student should provide evidence supporting the argument and offer at least two methods to limit or reverse backsliding. If the paper's argument is that democracy is not faced with a recession, the student should similarly provide evidence in support of the argument and identify at least two means by which democracy can be strengthened to limit the potential of backsliding.

The final paper should be between 800 and 1000 words, and it is due August 21, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. (pst) on D2L.

In terms of formatting, both papers should be double-spaced and students should include their names in the header of each page and page numbers in the footer of each page. For the final paper, students should use the materials covered during the course; however, students may also utilize outside sources that may be applicable to their paper's topic. With respect to any source used in each paper, both papers should be accompanied by a bibliography that includes citations to those works cited in the final paper. The bibliography does not count toward the word limitation.

(C) Weekly Discussion Assignments

In order to facilitate class discussion regarding the concepts and readings we will encounter in this course, students will be required to participate in four class discussions via the discussion boards on D2L. The discussions will consist of two parts. First, students should select one of the topics addressed in either the weekly lectures or readings, and write a two-to-three paragraph reaction to selected topic. The short essay should briefly identify the topic being discussed, the student's assessment of the topic in its ability to help us understand democracy and democratization, any potential shortcomings of the topic, and any possible additions or extensions of the topic. **Each student's written reaction should be posted to the class discussion boards on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on each Friday of the course.**

The second part of the weekly discussion assignments requires students to respond briefly to one classmate's postings. This response should be one-to-two paragraphs in length and written in a courteous and professional manner. **The response to be written and submitted by students must be posted to the class discussion boards on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on each Sunday of the course.**

The fifth discussion assignment differs from the previous four. For the fifth assignment, students can (but are not required) to send the instructor through D2L a post that includes a request for a lecture or greater explanation of a topic previously discussed during the course or a topic the student would like discussed. The instructor's intention is to collate these requests and construct a lecture around selected topics to be posted on D2L during the sixth week of the course.

Similar to the lecture quizzes, the overall grade will incorporate only the highest four of the five discussion assignments. Therefore, students may use the optional fifth discussion assignment as a means to substitute its score for one of the previous four discussion assignments.

(D) Final Exam

Students will be required to complete a final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive and exam questions may incorporate material from any of the concepts and topics included in the course lectures and readings. **The final exam will become available on D2L on the morning of August 14, 2020 and it will be due on August 21, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.**

(E) Extra Credit

Students will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points for this course by selecting a news media article and writing a short paper relating one of the concepts we have discussed in this course to the subject of the article. The short paper should be at least 1 page in length (double-spaced) but not more than 2 pages and it should include the following components:

1. A brief summary of the article, including a link or citation to the article;
2. A description of the relevant concept from the course; and
3. A discussion as to how the concept relates to the article.

The extra credit assignment must be turned in on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on August 21, 2020.

Grading and Evaluation

Students overall grades for the course will be derived from four categories of assignments: (1) lecture quizzes, (2) weekly discussion assignments, (3) course papers, and (4) a final exam. The grade breakdown between the course assignments are presented in the following table:

Lecture Quiz 1 (Required)	5%
Lecture Quiz 2 (Required)	5%
Lecture Quiz 3 (Required)	5%
Lecture Quiz 4 (Required)	5%
Lecture Quiz 5 (<i>Optional</i>)	5%
Weekly Discussion 1(Required)	5%
Weekly Discussion 2 (Required)	5%
Weekly Discussion 3 (Required)	5%
Weekly Discussion 4 (Required)	5%
Weekly Discussion 5 (<i>Optional</i>)	5%
Short Paper (Required)	10%
Final Paper (Required)	20%
Final Exam (Required)	30%
Extra Credit (<i>Optional</i>)	Up to 3 percentage points on the overall grade

Grading Scale:

- 90%-100% A
- 80%-89% B
- 70%-79% C
- 60%-69% D
- 59% and below E

Course Schedule and Assignments

Week 1: July 6 – 10, 2020 (What Is the Study of Democracy? Why Study Democracy? What Are the Implications of Democratic Governance?)

Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course

- Reading(s):
 - (**Required**) Course Syllabus

Lecture 2: The Scientific Study of States and Their Characteristics

- Reading(s):
 - No assigned readings associated with this lecture

Lecture 3: Regime-Type as an Independent Variable

- Reading(s):
 - (**Required**) Mitchell, Sara M. “Norms and the Democratic Peace.” In *What Do We Know about War?* Edited by John A. Vasquez (2012). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 167-188.
 - (**Required**) Davenport, Christian. *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace* (2007). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 33-44 & 175-180.
 - (*Recommended*) Ross, Michael. "Is Democracy Good for the Poor?" *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4) (2006): 860-874.

Lecture 4: Democracy in the Post-Cold War World

- Reading(s):
 - (**Required**) Paxton, Pamela. “Women’s Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 35(3) (2000): 92-111.
 - (*Recommended*) Diamond, Larry. “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession.” *Journal of Democracy* 26(1) (2015): 141-155.

Assignments:

- Short Paper 1

Week 2: July 13 – 17, 2020 (What Is Democracy? What Does It Mean for a State to be Non-Democratic? How Should Democracy Be Conceptualized and Understood?)

Lecture 5: Defining Democracy – Part 1

-Reading(s):

-(*Recommended*) Dahl, Robert A. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (1971). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1-16.

Lecture 6: Defining Democracy – Part 2

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky. “Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research.” *World Politics* 49(3) (1997): 430-451.

-(*Recommended*) Coppedge, Michael, et al. “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9(2) (2011): 247-267.

Lecture 7: Classifying Non-Democracies

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Geddes, Barbara. “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 115-144.

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

Lecture 8: Bringing Concepts Together – A Framework for Assessing Democratization

-Reading(s):

-No assigned readings associated with this lecture

Assignments:

-Lecture Quiz 1

-Discussion Assignment 1

Week 3: July 20 – 24, 2020 (Counter-Majoritarian Institutions)

Lecture 9: Institutional Features of Democracies

-Reading(s):

-(*Recommended*) Cheibub, José A. *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy* (2007). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 33-44.

-(*Recommended*) Alberts, Susan, Chris Warshaw, and Barry R. Weingast. “Democratization and Counter-majoritarian Institutions.” In *Comparative Constitutional Design* (2012), Tom Ginsburg (ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press: 69-100.

Lecture 10: Courts

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Gibler, Douglas M., and Kirk A. Randazzo. “Testing the Effects of Independent Judiciaries on the Likelihood of Democratic Backsliding.” *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3) (2011): 696-709.

-(*Recommended*) Helmke, Gretchen, and Frances Rosenbluth. “Regimes and the Rule of Law: Judicial Independence in Comparative Perspective.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 345-366.

Lecture 11: National and Sub-National Conceptions of Democracy and Autocracy

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Behrend, Jacqueline, and Laurence Whitehead. “The Struggle for Subnational Democracy.” *Journal of Democracy* 27(2) (2016): 155-169.

Assignments:

-Lecture Quiz 2

-Discussion Assignment 2

Week 4: July 27 – July 31, 2020 (Democratization)

Lecture 12: Theories of Democratization

-Reading(s):

-(*Recommended*) Boix, Carles, and Susan Stokes. “Endogenous Democratization.” *World Politics* 55(4) (2003): 517-549.

-(*Recommended*) O’Donnell, Guillermo, and Philippe C. Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about*

Uncertain Democracies (1986). Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.

Lecture 13: Mass Movements and Non-Violent Resistance Movements

-Reading(s):

-(**Watch**) Erica Chenoweth's TED Talk
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>)

-(**Required**) Bethke, Felix S., and Jonathan Pinckney. "Non-Violent Resistance and the Quality of Democracy." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* (2019): 1-21.

-(*Recommended*) Chenoweth, Erica, and Maria J. Stephan. "Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict." *International Security* 33(1) (2008): 7-44.

Lecture 14: Transitional Justice

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Olsen, Tricia D., Leigh A. Payne, and Andrew G. Reiter. "Transitional Justice in the World, 1970-2007: Insights from a New Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 47(6) (2010): 803-809.

-(*Recommended*) Sikkink, Kathryn, and Hun J. Kim. "The Justice Cascade: The Origins and Effectiveness of Prosecutions of Human Rights Violations." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 9 (2013): 269-285.

-(*Recommended*) Zvobgo, Kelebogile. "Designing Truth: Facilitating Perpetrator Testimony at Truth Commissions." *Journal of Human Rights* 18(1) (2019): 92-110.

Assignments:

-Lecture Quiz 3

-Discussion Assignment 3

Week 5: August 3 – August 7, 2020 (What Is Democratic Backsliding and What Factors Increase Its Likelihood?)

Lecture 15: The Pathways toward Democratic Backsliding

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Bermeo, Nancy. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27(1) (2016): 5-19.

-(**Required**) Kelemen, R. Daniel, and Mitchell A. Orenstein. “Europe’s Autocracy Problem: Policy Democracy’s Final Days?” *Foreign Affairs* January 7, 2016.

Lecture 16: Averting Democratic Backsliding

-Reading(s):

-(*Recommended*) Ginsburg, Tom, and Aziz Huq. “Democracy’s ‘Near Misses.’” *Journal of Democracy* 29(4) (2018): 16-30.

Assignments:

- Lecture Quiz 4
- Discussion Assignment 4
- Discussion Assignment 5

Week 6: August 10 – 14, 2020 (Do We Observe Democratization Processes in the Twenty-First Century?)

Lecture 17: Discussion Assignment 5 Topics

-Reading(s):

-No assigned readings associated with this lecture

Lecture 18: Review and Preparation for the Final Exam

-Reading(s):

-No assigned readings associated with this lecture

Assignments:

- Lecture Quiz 5

Week 7: August 17 – 21, 2020 (What Is Democracy? What Can the Study of Democracy Teach Us about Politics in the Twenty-First Century?)

Assignments:

- Final Exam
- Final Paper
- Extra Credit

Course Policies

Late Work Policy

Students are required to complete all assignments on time, and late work will not be accepted outside the times described in the syllabus, except in cases involving a documented emergency or illness. If a student believes there is a compelling reason to turn in assignments beyond the designated due date, it is the responsibility of the student to email the instructor before the assigned due date.

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for knowing, understanding, and abiding by the University of Arizona's Code of Academic Integrity. Honesty is a pillar standing at the center of the pursuit of knowledge and its transmission through the educational process, and students are expected to maintain high levels of integrity and ethical behavior throughout all the assignments and discussions in this course. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Each student's work must be completed individually unless otherwise stated in the syllabus;
- Student's work in this course should be original, however, there will be instances wherein students will be expected to incorporate or build upon others' works. Students must avoid plagiarism by attributing credit to others' works when appropriate. The university's library has several tips for students as to how to avoid plagiarism, which can be found at <https://new.library.arizona.edu/research/citing/plagiarism>.
- An important aspect of this course is the "classroom" discussions we will have via the weekly discussion assignments. Students are encouraged to engage in free and open discussions involving the students' intellectual perspectives on the theories and concepts discussed in the course. In this endeavor, students are expected to comport themselves in a courteous and professional manner. Derogatory and/or threatening comments are unacceptable and will be addressed through appropriate actions via university channels. For more information concerning students' responsibilities in fostering a positive learning environment, please see <https://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students>.
- Course lectures, quizzes, and exam materials are property of the instructor and cannot be copied, recorded, distributed, or sold without the instructor's consent.

For additional information on the university's Code of Academic Integrity, please see <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies/code-academic-integrity>.

Confidentiality of Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (“FERPA”) is a federal law governing the rights of students and outlining the institutional responsibilities attendant to student records. Of its many aims, FERPA is a federal law directed toward the protection of students’ privacy regarding their educational records. One practical implication of FERPA is that any component of the course related to, either directly or indirectly, individual grades will not be discussed via e-mail. If a student wishes to discuss individual grades, the student should e-mail the instructor to schedule an appointment to meet with the instructor.

For additional information concerning FERPA, please see the university’s website at <https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/personal-information/family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-1974-ferpa>.

Revisions to the Syllabus

As instructor, I reserve the right to amend, modify, and/or update the syllabus. In the event of a modification to the syllabus, an updated version will be provided to the class.

Date Syllabus Issued: July 2, 2020