

# Institutional Approaches to Democracies and Dictatorships

Professor Sona N. Golder

Course #: CPO 3930:01

Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:10 - 11:00

Place: Bellamy Building 115

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Course website: Blackboard

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 11:00-12:00 pm (and by appointment)

## Description

This course will employ the methodology of comparative political science to study questions about democracy and dictatorships from an institutional perspective. We will ask questions such as (i) what do we mean by democracy and how can we measure it? (ii) why do so many dictatorships use 'democratic' institutions such as elections or political parties? (iii) how can we explain transitions to democracy? Finally, we will ask if regime type (democracy versus dictatorship) affects outcomes that we care about: do citizens in democratic states have higher economic growth, better health and more education than citizens in dictatorships? Does the effect of regime type matter for some groups in society more than others? Note that the emphasis in this course is on the variety of institutional arrangements found in dictatorships, rather than in democracies; this is because students should have learned about variations in democratic institutions in CPO2002.

## Prerequisite

All students must have successfully completed CPO:2002. In that class, you should have learned about institutions in democracies (presidentialism versus parliamentarism, electoral rules, party systems, etc.). If you do not remember this material, read Chapters 6-7 (pp. 141-201) of the required textbook for this course, *Comparing Political Regimes*.

## Requirements

There will be three exams (two midterms and a final) and regular homework assignments. In the interests of fairness, homework assignments that are turned in late will not be graded. Exam makeups will only be possible in the most extenuating of circumstances (oversleeping, leaving early for vacation etc. are not suitable excuses). Appropriate documentation must be provided before a make-up exam can be scheduled. If you miss an exam without contacting me in advance (or on the day of the exam if advance notice is impossible), I will assign a zero for that exam grade.

Attendance at lectures is both recommended and required. In my previous classes, attendance at lectures has been a good predictor of a student's performance on exams. Attendance will not be taken every day; however, it will be taken with some regularity throughout the semester. (Dates on which attendance will be taken will *not* be announced in advance.) You are expected to attend all classes or provide documentation explaining your absence.

### **Exam Dates**

Midterm 1: Wednesday, October 11  
Midterm 2: Wednesday, November 8  
Final Exam: Wednesday, December 13, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

### **Grades**

Midterm 1: 25%  
Midterm 2: 25%  
Final: 30%  
Participation: 20%

Note: Your participation grade will be based on (i) lecture attendance, (ii) participation in class, and (iii) homework assignments.

### **Required Readings:**

The main textbook for the course is *Comparing Political Regimes* by Alan Siaroff. It is available at the FSU Bookstore.

I have attempted to provide as many of the other readings as possible on the course Blackboard site. The remaining readings have been placed on reserve at the FSU library (<http://eres.lib.fsu.edu/>). For those readings that are electronically available, either on the Blackboard site or at the FSU library reserve, you are encouraged to *print them out* so that you can make notes and refer back to them as required. These readings are provided online rather than in a printed coursepack to save you money (the coursepack would necessarily be more expensive, due to copyright expenses, than your printing costs will be).

### **Recommended Readings:**

Occasionally I list recommended readings. These are readings that would be particularly interesting if one wished to know more about certain topics we cover in class. They are not required.

# Schedule:

**Week 1: August 28** – Introduction to course: approaches and topics.

REQUIRED READING:

None.

**\*\*Note: Class Cancelled on August 30 and September 1\*\***

**Labor Day (No Class): September 4**

**Week 2: September 6-8** – What is political science, what is comparative politics?

REQUIRED READING:

*Comparing Political Regimes*, Chapter 1, pp. 11-37. [Required Book]

RECOMMENDED READING:

Clark et al. 2006. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Chapter 2. [BLACKBOARD] Consult for a more detailed discussion of the scientific method, logical problems with induction, logically valid arguments, the limits of the comparative method, and questions of philosophy of science more generally.

Ryszard Kapuscinski. 1989. *The Emperor*. Journalist's account of the reign (and collapse) of Ethiopian King Haile Selassie, based on interviews with palace insiders. Highly readable account of the inner workings of a dictatorship; touches on many issues relevant to the scholarly work discussed in this course.

**Weeks 3-4: September 11-22** – What are states? What do they do, why do we have them? What is the difference between living in a 'state of nature' where no political authority protects you, and living in a society with a state? If you create a state with the power to protect, have you also created a state with the power to repress? Why would the state agree to follow rules, and why would citizens believe this agreement to be credible? When will a ruler be bound by its own rules? Can institutions be used to protect citizens? Commonsense understanding of the difference between democracies and dictatorships: in democracies, rulers are bound by the 'rule of law' while in dictatorships, the ruler can change the rules arbitrarily.

REQUIRED READING:

Robert I. Rotberg. 2004. Excerpt from "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention, and Repair" in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (ed. R. Rotberg), pp. 2-27. [FSU Library Reserve]

Stephen Holmes and Cass R. Sunstein. 1999. “No Property Without Taxation”, Chapter 3 from *The Cost of Rights*, pp. 59-76. [FSU Library Reserve]

Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England”, *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 49, No. 4., pp. 803-832. [BLACKBOARD]

**\*\* Note: Reading added on 9/18/06 \*\*** William Clark, Matt Golder & Sona Golder. 2006. “Power & Politics: Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Revisited.” Paper presented at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia. [BLACKBOARD]

RECOMMENDED READING:

Clark et al. 2006. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Chapter 4. [BLACKBOARD] Consult for a more detailed discussion of the role of the state, and how to solve normal (strategic) form games such as the Prisoner’s Dilemma (State of Nature) game.

Clark et al. 2006. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Chapter 4. [BLACKBOARD] Consult for a more detailed discussion of the Exit, Voice & Loyalty (extensive-form) game.

**Weeks 5-6: September 25 - October 6** – What is democracy? How is it defined? How is it measured? What are the common measures used by scholars, and which is best? (Hint: it always depends on your research question.) What are the main types of democracies? Conversely, what is dictatorship? What are the main types, how are they measured, etc.?

REQUIRED READING:

*Comparing Political Regimes*, Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 61-108. [Required Book]

*Comparing Political Regimes*, Chapter 8, pp. 203-226. [Required Book]

John Herz. 1952. “The Problem of Successorship in Dictatorial Regimes: A Study in Comparative Law and Institutions”. *Journal of Politics*, Vol 14 No. 1, pp. 19-40. [BLACKBOARD]

Jennifer Gandhi. 2004. “The World of Dictatorial Institutions”, Chapter 1 from *Political Institutions under Dictatorship* (Ph.D Dissertation, NYU), pp. 7-51. [FSU Library Reserve]

Barbara Geddes. 2003. “Classification Scheme for Coding Authoritarian Regimes”, Appendix A from *Paradigms and Sand Castles*, pp. 225-232. [FSU Library Reserve]

**Week 7: October 9-13** – Review for Midterm 1 (Monday). Midterm 1 (Wednesday). Institutions in Dictatorship (beginning Friday).

**1<sup>st</sup> Midterm Exam (Wednesday, October 11)**

**Week 8: October 16-20** – ‘Democratic’ Institutions in Dictatorships. What role do constitutions, elections, and parties play in non-democratic regimes?

REQUIRED READING:

Nathan Brown. 2002. *Constitutions in a Nonconstitutional World: Arab Basic Laws and the Prospects for Accountable Government*. pp. 3-13, 67-94. [FSU Library Reserve]

Geddes, Barbara. 2005. “Why Parties and Elections in Authoritarian Regimes?” Unpublished paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. [BLACKBOARD]

Review Gandhi 2004 (from Week 6).

**Weeks 9-10: October 23 - November 3** – Transitions to Democracy. Models of democratization; different processes of democratization (top-down, bottom-up, negotiated pacts, etc.).

REQUIRED READING:

*Comparing Political Regimes*, Chapter 9, pp. 227-256. [Required Book]

Adam Przeworski. 1988. “Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts” in *Constitutionalism and Democracy*, edited by Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad, pp. 59-80. [FSU Library Reserve]

Michael Bratton and Nicholas Van de Walle. 1994. “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa.” *World Politics* 46:4, pp. 453-489. [BLACKBOARD]

RECOMMENDED READING:

Allister Sparks. 1995. *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa’s Road to Change*. Journalist’s account of the transition to democracy in South Africa. Considered by some scholars to be one of the best accounts of a democratic transition.

Timothy Garton Ash. 1993. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of ’89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. Journalist’s eyewitness account of the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe.

**Week 11: November 6-8** – Review for Midterm 2 (Monday). Second midterm exam (Wed.).

**2<sup>nd</sup> Midterm Exam (Wednesday, November 8)**

**Veterans’ Day (No Classes): November 10**

**Week 12: November 13-17** – Democratic Consolidation. If a non-democratic regime collapses will the result be an established democracy or a new authoritarian regime?

REQUIRED READING:

*Comparing Political Regimes*, Chapter 5, pp. 109-140. [Required Book]

Stathis N. Kalyvas. 2000. “Commitment Problems in Emerging Democracies: The Case of Religious Parties”. *Comparative Politics* 32:4, pp. 379-399. [BLACKBOARD]

RECOMMENDED READING:

Tina Rosenberg. 1996. *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe’s Ghosts After Communism*. Journalist’s account of the dilemma facing new democracies: what is to be done with the former elite and those who collaborated with the dictatorial regime?

### **Thanksgiving Holiday (No Classes): November 24**

**Weeks 13-15: November 20 - December 8** – Regime type and policy outcomes. Is a democracy vs. dictatorship distinction the best way to examine the effects of regime type on policy outcomes? Selectorate theory. How do institutions affect the kinds of public goods that leaders produce? If governments produce public goods, do their policies benefit all groups in society equally? (Review for final exam on last day of class, Friday Dec. 8.)

REQUIRED READING:

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James Morrow, Randall Siverson, & Alastair Smith. 2001. ‘Political Competition and Economic Growth.’ *Journal of Democracy* 12: 58-72. [BLACKBOARD]

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs. 2006. “Postponing the Democratic Moment: Strategic Coordination, Public Goods, and Political Survival.” Manuscript, NYU. [BLACKBOARD]

Michael Ross. 2006. “Does Democracy Reduce Infant Mortality?” Manuscript, UCLA. [BLACKBOARD]

**Final Exam (Wednesday, December 13, 12:30 - 2:30 pm)**

## Additional Information

### Students with Disabilities

Instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental or learning disabilities. Students with disabilities which may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements are to inform the instructor (after class or during the instructor's office hours) so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Students should register with the Student Disability Resource Center, 97 Woodward Avenue (644-9546) and bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating the required accommodations in the first week of class.

### Department/Collegiate Complaint Procedures

A student who has a complaint against any member of the college's teaching staff is responsible for following the procedures described in the Student Handbook at the following website: [www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/](http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/). The student should attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member or teaching assistant involved. Lacking a satisfactory outcome, the student can turn to the department chair. (If the complaint concerns a teaching assistant, the student should contact the supervising faculty member first). If a satisfactory outcome still is not obtained, the student can turn to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Complaints may concern inappropriate faculty conduct (including inappropriate course materials), incompetence in oral communications, inequities in assignments, scheduling of examinations at other than authorized and published times, failure to provide disability accommodations, or grading grievances. FSU has a specific policy regarding sexual harassment - this can be found at <http://www.auditservices.fsu.edu/>.

### Plagiarism and Cheating

All students are bound by the Academic Honor Policy (<http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/academics.htm>). You are expected to be honest and honorable in your fulfillment of assignments and in test-taking situations. Plagiarism and cheating are serious forms of academic misconduct. Examples of them are given in the Student Handbook: <http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/2003codes/honor.html>. The department of Political Science works with individual instructors to detect plagiarism and cheating and to ensure that appropriately serious punishments are applied. An instructor who suspects a student of plagiarism or cheating must inform the student (preferably in writing) as soon as possible after the incident has been observed or discovered. Instructors who detect cheating or plagiarism may decide to reduce the student's grade on the assignment or course, even to assign an F. The instructor will discuss the matter with the student, put any agreement regarding academic penalty in writing signed by both the instructor and the student, and report the infraction to the Chair and the University judicial office. If no agreement can be reached, the instructor refers the matter to the Academic Honer system Hearing Panel.

### Your Responsibilities

Your responsibilities to this class - and to your education as a whole - include attendance and participation. This syllabus details specific expectations the instructor may have about attendance and participation. You have a responsibility to help create a classroom environment where all may learn. At the most basic level, this means you will respect the other members of the class and the instructor and treat them with the courtesy you hope to receive in turn.

### Plus-Minus Grading

All the department's instructors can append plus or minus grades to the letter grades they assign for the course. If the instructor does not specifically indicate in the syllabus that he or she will not assign plusses or minuses, students should assume that this form of grading will be used.

Please visit the Political Science Department's website: <http://www.fsu.edu/~polisci/>. It is frequently updated with new events and procedures in our department, changes in the Schedule of Courses, plus TA and faculty office hours when available. You also may find current information on pre-advising and registration.