

Social Sciences Honors Seminar: Institutional Approaches to Democracies and Dictatorships

Professor Sona N. Golder

Course #: ISS 2937:02

Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:25 - 2:15

Place: Bellamy Building 112

E-mail: sgolder@fsu.edu

Tel: 850-644-3676

Course website: Blackboard

Office: 553 Bellamy Building

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 2:30-3:30pm (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. Substantively, the first part of the course compares democracies and dictatorships. We will ask questions such as (i) why are some states democratic but others authoritarian? (ii) what do we mean by democracy and how can we measure it? (iii) how can we explain transitions to democracy? We will also examine the different institutional forms that democratic states can take as well as the variety of institutional arrangements found in dictatorships. Finally, we will ask if democratic states systematically produce different outcomes such as higher economic growth, better health and more education?

The course will NOT be an in-depth study of 3 or 4 countries (although you will get country-specific knowledge). The universe of cases will be all the countries in the world. The course is unapologetically scientific. It treats epistemological debates quite seriously and makes the argument that to behave scientifically is nothing more nor less than to adopt scholarly practices that invite falsification. I will try to convince you that formulating knowledge about politics in a manner that invites falsification is both intellectually persuasive and normatively satisfying. The course will provide you with simple methodological tools for analyzing these questions. For example, you will learn to employ simple game-theoretic models and interpret regression results. No prior knowledge is required; all that is required is an open mind and a willingness to learn.

Requirements

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. There will be three exams - two midterms and a final - and periodic homework assignments. In the interests of fairness, homework assignments that are handed in late will not be graded and exam makeups will only be possible in the most extenuating of circumstances (oversleeping, leaving early for Spring Break etc. are not suitable excuses).

Exam Dates

Midterm 1: Friday, February 17

Midterm 2: Wednesday, March 29

Final Exam: Tuesday, April 25, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Grades

Midterm I: 25%

Midterm II: 25%

Final: 30%

Participation: 20%

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

Required Texts:

I have attempted to provide as many of the readings on the blackboard site as possible. All of the remaining readings have been placed on reserve at the FSU library (<http://eres.lib.fsu.edu/>). Thus, all of the readings are either available on the Blackboard site or online at the FSU library.

Schedule:

This schedule should be treated as tentative and flexible. It may be the case that it takes us more or less time for a particular topic than I have allotted here. We will adapt accordingly.

Weeks 1 - 2: January 9 - 20 – Introduction to course. What is comparative politics? What is science? Mill's Methods of Agreement and Difference. Induction versus deduction. Logical fallacies.

Clark, William, Matt Golder, & Sona Golder. 2005. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Ch. 1 - 2. [BLACKBOARD]

Note: No class scheduled on January 16 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day).

Week 3: January 23-27 – What is politics? Exit, voice and loyalty game. Extensive form games.

Clark, William, Matt Golder, & Sona Golder. 2005. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Ch. 3. [BLACKBOARD]

Week 4: January 30 - February 3 – What is the state? Contractarian and predatory views of the state. Normal form games.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. 'War Making and State Making as Organized Crime.' In Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer & Theda Skocpol (eds.) *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 169-191. [FSU Library]

Weeks 5-6: February 6 - 17 – Why are some states democratic but others authoritarian?

Measuring democracy:

Coppedge, Michael. 2005. "Thickening Thin Concepts: Issues in Large-N Data Generation," in David Collier and Gerardo Munck, eds., *Regimes in Latin America: Concepts, Methods, and Findings* (forthcoming Oxford University Press) [BLACKBOARD].

Przeworski, Adam, Michael Alvarez, Jose Cheibub & Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 13-36. [FSU Library]

Modernization Theory I: Wealth

Przeworski, Adam & Fernando Limongi. 1997. 'Modernization: Theories and Facts.' *World Politics* 49: 155-183. [FSU Library]

Modernization Theory II: Production Profiles

Bates, Robert. 1991. 'The Economics of Transitions to Democracy.' *PS: Political Science & Politics* 24: 24-27. [BLACKBOARD]

Wantchekon, Leonard & Nathan Jenson. 2004. "Resource Wealth and Political Regimes in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 816-841. [BLACKBOARD]

1st Midterm Exam (Friday, February 17)

Week 7: February 20 -24 – Culture, identity and democracy

Clark, William, Matt Golder, & Sona Golder. 2005. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Ch. 6. [BLACKBOARD]

Chandra, Kanchan & Cilanne Boulet. 2003. ‘Ethnic Diversity and Democratic Stability.’ Paper presented at the Department of Politics Seminar, New York University. [BLACKBOARD]

Posner, Daniel. 2004. ‘The Political Salience of Cultural Differences: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi.’ *American Political Science Review*. [BLACKBOARD]

Week 8: February 27 - March 3 – Transitions to democracy. Collective action problems, tipping models, and incomplete information games.

Kuran, Timur. 1991. ‘Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989.’ *World Politics* 44: 7-48. [BLACKBOARD]

Spring Break: March 6 - 10

Week 9: March 13-17 – Institutions under dictatorship. Why do dictatorships hold elections, have constitutions, allow political parties, and open legislatures?

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

Other readings TBA.

Week 10: March 20 - 24 – Democracy and majority rule. May’s Theorem. Arrow’s Impossibility Theorem. The dictatorship of the median voter.

The Problem with Majority Rule:

Shepsle, Kenneth & Mark Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. pp. 49-81 (Chapter 4). [FSU Library]

The Importance of the Median Voter:

Shepsle, Kenneth & Mark Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. pp. 82-136 (Chapter 5). [FSU Library]

Week 11: March 27 - April 2 – Regimes and government formation.

Parliamentary, Presidential, Mixed Regimes:

Mainwaring, Scott. 1993. 'Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination.' *Comparative Political Studies* 26: 198-228. [FSU Library]

Uni-Dimensional Models of Government Formation:

Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, & Peter Mair. 2006. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*. New York: McGraw Hill. pp. 381-409. [FSU Library]

2nd Midterm Exam (Wednesday, March 29)

Week 12: April 3 - 7 – Electoral rules. Mechanical effect of electoral systems. Duverger's theory and the strategic effect of electoral systems.

Clark, William, Matt Golder, & Sona Golder. 2005. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Ch. 9. [BLACKBOARD]

Clark, William & Matt Golder. 2006. 'Rehabilitating Duverger's Theory. Testing the Mechanical and Strategic Modifying Effects of Electoral Laws.' *Comparative Political Studies*. [BLACKBOARD]

Week 13: April 10 - 14 – Federalism, bicameralism, judicial review, central bank independence. Veto players.

Tsebelis, George. 2002. *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp. 17-37 (chapter 1). [FSU Library]

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Chapters 10-12). [FSU Library]

Week 14: April 17 - 21 – Does democracy make a difference? Selectorate theory.

Economic Performance I:

Przeworski, Adam & Fernando Limongi. 1993. 'Political Regimes and Economic Growth.' *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7: 51-69. [BLACKBOARD]

Economic Performance II:

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

Final Exam (Tuesday, April 25, 5:30 - 7:30 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 available on the following website: <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 Honesty 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 pluses 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.