

Democracy

Political Science 4350/8356
University of Nebraska Omaha
Spring 2018 (Jan. 8-May 4)
Totally Internet Mediated

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Course Description

The Third Wave of democratization brought an end to more than 60 authoritarian regimes throughout the world.¹ Authoritarian government experienced wholesale decline as political liberalization took hold in one state after another. From the end of military dictatorships in Southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in the 1990s, democracy was on the rise in the late 20th century. Yet, non-democracies persist, new democracies face challenges to consolidation, and established democracies find their institutions under attack. As ever, scholars and practitioners, citizens and activists, statesmen and students, confront questions about the quality of democratic practice and sustainability of democratic systems. The seeming international triumph of democratic ideals in the Third Wave of democratization was neither absolute nor unidirectional. Past “waves” of democratization have been reversed. Democracies, particularly new ones, risk slipping into quasi-democratic practices or experiencing outright authoritarian reversal. This course covers democracy as a domestic political regime as well as transitions to and from democracy with a particular emphasis on existing theories of democratization.

Prerequisites

This is an upper-level Political Science course. PSCI 2500 (Introduction to Comparative Politics) or junior standing or permission of instructor is required. Graduate: PSCI 2500 or equivalent is recommended.

Course Materials

- ❖ Dahl, Robert. 2015. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press (2nd edition)
- ⊛ Gill, Graeme. 2000. *The Dynamics of Democratization: Elites, Civil Society, and the Transition Process*. New York: Palgrave.
- Runciman, David. 2015. *The Confidence Trap: A History of Democracy in Crisis from World War I to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Individual class readings are available on the Canvas course site in their respective modules.

¹ Huntington, Samuel. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Course Expectations

Readings: All readings listed on the syllabus are required readings. Graduate students (those enrolled as PSCI 8356) are also responsible for the readings labeled “additional graduate reading.”

Online behavior: Everyone will conduct themselves online with dignity and respect for others at all times. Treat everyone with patience, common courtesy, and basic human decency.

Academic Integrity: You must maintain academic integrity at all times. Plagiarism/cheating are serious academic crimes, and I will pursue any infringements seriously and actively. At a minimum, any infringement will result in a grade of “zero” on the assignment. For more information on University of Nebraska Omaha policies on academic integrity, please see:

<http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/achievement/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php> and <http://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/student-rights-responsibilities.php>.

Special Accommodations: Accommodations are provided for students who are registered with the UNO Accessibility Services Center and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact Accessibility Services Center (MBSC 126, Phone: 402-554-2872, TTY: 402-554-6015) or go to the website: <https://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/inclusion/disability-services/>.

Late Policy: On daily/weekly assignments, no late work will be accepted. For the research paper and review essay assignments, late papers will be penalized by 5% per day late. For example, a paper that earns an 85% but is one day late would receive a grade of 80%.

Assignments and Evaluation

Discussions: 15%

Authoritarian Breakdown and Democratization Scenario: 10%

Institutional Design Scenario: 15%

Democratization Research Paper: 35%

The Confidence Trap Review Essay: 25%

Discussions (15%)

Because this is an online class, participation in the Discussions on the Canvas course site is mandatory. Many modules for the course include a Discussions element. I will post a discussion question or prompt based on the reading assignments for that module. You are expected to do the assigned readings in order to discuss the course material. Your initial discussion board post each week should be 250-350 words, and you are responsible for at least one additional post responding to a classmate’s post. Graduate students are responsible for at least two additional posts responding to a classmate’s post. Your grade will be based on the overall quality of your comments. In some modules, discussions will take place in pre-set groups. In those instances, I will provide supplemental instructions for participation.

Authoritarian Breakdown and Democratization Scenario (10%)

In the module on Stages of Democratization—Authoritarian Breakdown, Democratization, and Democratic Consolidation, you will be given a scenario of a hypothetical country under authoritarian rule; and, working in groups, you will discuss the actors, their interests, and likelihood of democratization and consolidation.

Institutional Design Scenario (15%)

In the module on Institutional Design in (New) Democracies, you will be given a hypothetical country with a set of political, economic, and social conditions; and, working in groups, you will discuss what the best political institutions (presidential or parliamentary system, electoral rules, term limits) would be for the country's new democracy. Each group will collaborate in a Discussions board on the Canvas course site and turn in a **2-3 page paper** describing the institutions the group has chosen and justifying their selection.

Democratization Research Paper (35%): Initial reference list, 5%; Final paper, 30%

In the first 8 weeks of the semester, you will write a research paper regarding democratization and democratic consolidation in one country in the world. In 5-6 pages (double-spaced, 1-inch margins and 12 pt. Times New Roman font), you will respond to one of the three prompts below.

(1) Choose a non-democratic country anywhere in the world. Describe the elements of the political system that make this country a *non-democracy*. Then, employing the various causal factors (Internal and External Structure and Agency) that we examine this semester, *assess the prospects for democratization* occurring in this country in the near term (next three to five years) and medium term (next 10 years). Of the various factors you examine, which ones should scholars be paying especially close attention to in this case, and why?

(2) Choose a country anywhere in the world that has democratized in the last 10 to 15 years that you find to be a *consolidated* democracy. Paying particular attention to the transition from established to consolidated democracy, explain the democratization process in this country, employing the various causal factors (Internal and External Structure and Agency) that we examine this semester. Given its relative infancy, why are you confident that this democracy is already consolidated? What lessons can we draw from this case about democratic consolidation in other cases?

(3) Choose a country anywhere in the world that has democratized in the last 10 to 15 years that you find **not** to be a *consolidated* democracy. Explain the democratization process in this country, employing the various causal factors (Internal and External Structure and Agency) that we examine this semester. Why is this democracy not yet consolidated? What are the prospects for consolidation in the near term (next three to five years) and medium term (next 10 years)? Why? What lessons can we draw from this case of non-consolidation about the process of democratic consolidation in other cases?

Integrated with the initial look at Regime Types and Democracy: Its Many Forms, I will cover a handful of selected coding schemes, and your paper-writing process will begin with **choosing a prompt and country to investigate** by January 19. Next, I will provide research guidance on data sources and collection, and you will submit a preliminary reference list of sources (relevant

sources from the syllabus, additional scholarly sources, and other **high-quality** sources) by February 2. *I will approve the list and/or ask you to revise before proceeding with the paper.* The full paper is due March 2.

The Confidence Trap Review Essay (25%)

In the final five weeks of the semester, you will write a paper regarding the contemporary practice and challenges for democracy. In 5-6 pages (double-spaced, 1-inch margins and 12 pt. Times New Roman font), you will assess David Runciman's argument in *The Confidence Trap: A History of Democracy in Crisis from World War I to the Present*, utilizing the other readings from this section of the syllabus (e.g. Dahl, Putnam, Foa and Mounk). The paper should re-articulate Runciman's argument, address at least two specific challenges raised in the other readings (i.e. the tension between democracy and market-capitalism from Dahl's work), and critique Runciman's claim about "the confidence trap." The paper is due April 27.

UNO Writing Center

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, visit their website at www.unomaha.edu/writingcenter or visit them at their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 150.

Course Readings and Schedule

Part I. Democracy and Its Alternatives

Module 1: Regime Types (Week 1)

- ❖ Dahl: Preface, Note on the Text, and chapters 1-3
- Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy is... and is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-88 (1991)

Additional graduate reading

- Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65 (2002)

Module 2: Democracy: Its Many Forms (Week 2)

- **Democratization Research Paper: Submit prompt choice and country to investigate by January 19 at 4:00 pm**
- ❖ Dahl, chapters 4, 8-11; Appendices C & D

Additional graduate reading

- David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives," *World Politics* 49(3): 430-451 (1997)

Module 3: Democracy: Its Consequences (Week 3)

- ❖ Dahl, chapters 5-7

- James Ray, “The Democratic Path to Peace,” *Journal of Democracy* 8(2): 49-64 (1997)

Additional graduate reading

- Patrick J. McDonald, “Great Powers, Hierarchy, and Endogenous Regimes: Rethinking the Domestic Causes of Peace,” *International Organization*, 69(3): 557-588 (2015)

Part II. Democratization and Democratic Consolidation

Module 4: The Stages of Democratization—Authoritarian Breakdown, Democratization, and Democratic Consolidation (Week 4)

- **Democratization Research Paper: Submit preliminary reference list of sources by February 2 at 4:00 pm**
- ✪ Gill, chapter 2
- Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, “Toward Consolidated Democracies,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7(2): 14-33 (1996)

Additional graduate reading

- Guillermo O’Donnell, “Illusions about Consolidation,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7(2): 34-51 (1996)

Module 5: Explaining Democratization: Causal Factors, part I: External Structure and Agency (Weeks 5-6)

External Structure

- ❖ Dahl, chapter 12 (pp. 145-148)
- Lawrence Whitehead, ed. *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas* (2001): chapter 1 (Whitehead, “Three International Dimensions of Democratization”)

Additional graduate reading

- Lawrence Whitehead, ed. *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas* (2001): chapter 11 (Powell, “International Aspects of Democratization: The Case of Spain”)

External Agency

- M. Cox, G. Ikenberry, and T. Inoguchi, eds. *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (2000): chapter 9 (Ralph, “‘High Stakes’ and ‘Low-Intensity Democracy’: Understanding America’s Policy of Promoting Democracy”)
- Marina Ottaway and Theresa Chung, “Toward a New Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy*, 10(4): 99-113 (1999)
- Elizabeth Spiro Clark, “A Tune-Up, Not an Overhaul,” *Journal of Democracy*, 10(4): 114-118 (1999)
- E. Gyimah-Boadi, “The Cost of Doing Nothing,” *Journal of Democracy*, 10(4): 119-124 (1999)
- Irene Lasota, “Sometimes Less is More,” *Journal of Democracy*, 10(4): 125-128 (1999)

- Mark P. Lagon, “Promoting Democracy: The Whys and Hows for the United States and the International Community,” *Council on Foreign Relations* (2011)
- “Why is America So Bad at Promoting Democracy in Other Countries?” *Foreign Policy* (2015)

Additional graduate reading

- Stephen Knack, “Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?” *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(1): 251-66 (2004)

Module 6: Explaining Democratization: Causal Factors, part II: Internal Structure and Agency (Weeks 7-8)

- **Democratization Research Paper: Submit final paper by March 2 at 4:00 pm**
- Dahl, chapter 12 (pp. 149-163)
- ✪ Gill, chapters 1, 3-5

Additional graduate reading

- William Galston, “Civil Society and the ‘Art of Association,’” *Journal of Democracy*, 11(1): 64-70 (2000)
- Bernard Lewis, “Islam and Liberal Democracy: A Historical Overview,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7(2): 52-63 (1996)

Module 7: Institutional Design in (New) Democracies: Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems... and All of the Other Rules of the Game (Weeks 9-10)

- **Institutional Design Scenario: Submit group paper by March 16 at 4:00pm**
- ❖ Dahl, Appendix A; review chapters 8-11
- Juan Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism,” *Journal of Democracy* (1990)
- David Horowitz, “Comparing Democratic Systems,” in Diamond and Plattner, eds., *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* (1996)
- Ben Reilly, “Electoral Systems for Divided Societies,” *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 156-170 (2002)
- Adrienne LeBas, “Term Limits and Beyond: Africa’s Democratic Hurdles,” *Current History* (May 2016)
- “Compulsory Voting,” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: http://www.idea.int/vt/compulsory_voting.cfm

Additional graduate reading

- William Reisinger, “Choices Facing the Builders of Liberal Democracy,” in Robert Grey, ed., *Democratic Theory and Post-Communist Change* (1997), 24-44

March 19-23: Spring Break (NO CLASSES)

Part III: Democracy: A Never-Ending Challenge

Module 8: Democracy and Market-Capitalism (Week 12)

- ❖ Dahl, chapters 13-14, 17
- Runciman, Preface and Introduction

Additional graduate reading

- Valerie Bunce, "Democratization and Economic Reform," *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 4 (2001): 43-65

Module 9: Democracy in Crisis? (Weeks 13-14)

- ❖ Dahl, chapters 15-16
- Runciman, chapters 1-5
- Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk, "The Democratic Disconnect," *Journal of Democracy*, 27(3): 5-17 (2016)
- Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone" in B. Brown, ed., *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 9th edition (2000), pp. 265-274

Additional graduate reading

- Terry Lynn Karl, "Economic Inequality and Democratic Instability," *Journal of Democracy*, 11(1): 149-156 (2000)

Module 10: Improving the Practice of Democracy (Week 15)

- Runciman, chapters 6-7
- Joel Westheimer, "Educating the 'Good' Citizen: Political Choices and Pedagogical Goals," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 37(2): 241-247 (2004)
- William A. Galston, "Civic Education and Political Participation," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 37(2): 263-266 (2004)

Additional graduate reading

- Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Indispensability of Political Parties," *Journal of Democracy*, 11(1): 48-55 (2000)

Module 11: The Future of Democracy and Authoritarianism? (Week 16)

- ***The Confidence Trap* Review Essay: Submit paper by April 27 at 4:00 pm**
- Runciman, Epilogue and Afterword
- Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76(6): 22-43 (1997)