

RPOS 364: Building Democracy
Fall 2011

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RPOS 364
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Course Objectives:

By the first decade of this century, the number of full-fledged democracies has grown from about 40 to almost 90. This course will analyze the decay of authoritarian and emergence of democratic institutions, as well as the role played by international donors in these changes. It will begin with a brief examination of some “habits of democracies” and then explore democratization in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Students will gain an understanding of how democratic theory has been put into practice, and what causes experiments in democracy to succeed or fail. They will employ class discussions, written exercises and role playing in simulations in order to understand the logic of different vantage points in the process of democratization and functioning of democratic government.

Core Readings: Available at Mary Jane’s Books

- Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- G. Shabbir Cheema, *Building Democratic Institutions* (Kumarian Press, 2005)
- Robert A. Dahl, Ian Shapiro, Jose Antonio Cheibub, eds, *The Democracy Sourcebook* (MIT Press, 2003)
- Michael McFaul, *Advancing Democracy Abroad* (Hoover Institution and Rowman and Littlefield, 2010)
- Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry eds, *Central and East European Politics, From Communism to Democracy*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2011)
- Assessments, articles and reports available on e-reserve: [E-res Password: Democracy](#)
- Mass media, including New York Times, blogs, web sites.

Requirements

Attendance & Participation	10%	Final Exam	30%
Midterm	30%	Class/Paper Assignments	30%

Learning Objectives

- Understanding of classical and contemporary definitions and approaches to democracy, democratization and de-democratization as these are understood in different types of political systems, and in developed and developing countries.

- Understanding the different paths taken by governments in a process of democratization, including delayed democratization and de-democratization
- Understanding of social, institutional, economic and psychological factors that underlie democracy and democratization
- Understanding of particular dimensions and potential aspects of democracy and democratization, such as justice and rule of law, development of political institutions, such as parliaments, decentralization of government, respect for human rights, elections, corruption and the like.
- Understanding the possibilities and limits for assisting in the development of democracy and democratic practice
- Development of research skills: finding materials, reading closely and summarizing texts and drawing inferences concerning motivations and causation of policies and events
- Development of analytic and writing skills: how to summarize and synthesize source materials into a coherent argument with support from diverse sources

Writing and Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another's words or ideas without giving credit to that person. While this includes copying text word for word without the use of quotation marks, it also includes paraphrasing another person's work without proper citation. Intellectual honesty is a core value of university and the foundation of faculty and student development. Students guilty of plagiarizing **any** material will receive a failing grade for the **course** and the evidence will be automatically turned over to the *Office of Student Conduct*. During the first week of class, all students **must** review the UAlbany Library's tutorial on plagiarism entitled: Plagiarism 101 (<http://library.albany.edu/usered/ncplaga/index.html>). It is really far easier to do your own work than to plagiarize and students would be most unwise to consider it.

Participation. Class participation consists of preparation for and engagement in class discussion. It entails regular class attendance, completing assigned readings, asking relevant questions, and taking positions on issues raised in class

Midterm and Final Exams: These essay exams will give the opportunity to present views on the material covered in class and in readings.

Written Assignment: Comparative Perspectives on Democracy and Democratization. Students will develop a comparative case study of democratization that either explores national experience in democratization and/or de-democratization or explores the effectiveness of particular practices or institutions designed to advance democratization.

COURSE OUTLINE

Part 1: Democracy and Democratization

The first half of the course develops an assessment of how democracy differs from dictatorship; how it has emerged as the dominant norm in governments throughout the world; what its economic, social, organizational, and cultural correlates are; the process of democratization and de-democratization; and look carefully at the process of post-communist democratization in Central and Eastern Europe.

August 29-31, September 7: Introduction – Dictatorship and democracy

How do democracies differ from dictatorships? What is central to the definition and practice of democracy? How do we know that a government is democratic? How can democracy be measured?

- McFaul, *Advancing Democracy Abroad*, Chapter 2
- Dahl, Shapiro and Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, 2-11, 29-39, 48-53
- John Gerring, and Michael Coppedge, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach," *Perspectives on Politics* 9:1 (June 2011) 247-67, ERES

September 12-14: Sources, Origins and Emergence

How do democracies emerge? Is democracy an especially modern phenomenon? Is it inevitable? What conditions best support the development of democracy? What alternative paths to development compete with the development of democracy?

- Dahl, Shapiro and Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, 56-75, 93-115
- Fareed, Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* (Nov-Dec, 1997), 22-41

September 19-21: Cultures of Democracy

What values are most supportive of democracy? How do "traditional" values differ from "modern" values? How does the size of a unit of government affect the prospects for democracy? How does ethnic and cultural pluralism affect the development of democracy? How does the evolution of social capital affect the development of democracy?

- Dahl, Shapiro and Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, 118-132, 142-190, 455-458

September 26, 28: Constitutions and Institutions

What institutional arrangements are most conducive to the development of democracy? How can the institutions of government be accountable to the “people”? What is the best arrangement between governing institutions: executives, parliaments, judiciaries, security forces? What relationship between national, regional and local authorities are most conducive for democracy?

- Dahl, Shapiro and Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, 192-216, 252-255

October 3, 5, 10: Democratization and De-Democratization

What leads to democratization and de-democratization? How does the quality of public life differ in democracies from non-democracies? How is democracy related to the capacity of governments to govern? How important are trust, inequality, and autonomous institutions of power in democratization? What are some alternative paths of democratization and de-democratization?

- Tilly, *Democracy*, Chapters 1-8

October 10: Handout of Paper Assignment

October 12, 17: Democratization and Post-Communism in Central Europe

What was the experience of democratization in a region that had lived with highly authoritarian dictatorships for the past half century? How have the newly transformed governments addressed problems of economic development, potentially fractious problems of ethnicity/nationalism, and the challenge to expand the representation of women in politics?

- Wolchik and Curry, *Central and East European Politics, From Communism to Democracy*, Chapters 1-5, 17

October 19: Midterm

Part II: The Practice of Democratization and Reform

The second half of the course considers whether it is possible to build democracy. It explores a series of case studies in democratization and de-democratization; considers the practice of foreign aid to support processes of democratization; and then turns to the practice of democratization in specific sectors of governance: public sector management, legislative development, elections, strengthening integrity, advancing human rights, decentralization, and improving access to justice.

October 24, 26: Cases in Democracy Building

What specific patterns have different governments gone through in the path of democratization? Are culturally/ethnically plural states condemned to a violent transition? What are the chief difficulties in advancing and sustaining a process of democratization? Who has benefited most from democratization.

- Wolchik and Curry, *Central and East European Politics, From Communism to Democracy*, Chapters 8-16 Each student will read three of these chapters.
- Case Studies from other regions will be uploaded to Eres.

October 31, November 2: The Wisdom of assisting in democratization Abroad?

Does globalization imply a requirement to assist in processes of democratization abroad? Is it possible to assist democratization in other countries? Why do developed and democratic governments decide to assist other governments to democratize? What are the costs and benefits of providing assistance to democratization abroad?

- McFaul, *Advancing Democracy Abroad*, Chapters 1, 3,4,
- Wolchik and Curry, *Central and East European Politics, From Communism to Democracy*, Chapters 6-7

November 7, 9: Strategies of Reform:

What is the most effective strategy of assisting governments to become more democratic? Who are the actors in democratization? How does the type of assistance given by individual governments and multilateral institutions and non-governmental organizations differ from each other? Is it possible to coordinate this assistance effectively? What actually takes place in assisting democratization?

- McFaul, *Advancing Democracy Abroad*, Chapter 5, 6

November 16, 21: Democratization and Development I

How do agencies involved with international development approach democratization and reform of governments? What types of programs have been employed in supporting democratic elections, in combating corruption, strengthening parliaments and promoting human rights? How does the experience of supporting democracy on the ground differ

- Cheema, *Building Democratic Institutions*, Chapters 1-5
- Eres articles

December 5: PAPER DUE

November 28, 30, December 5: Democratization and Development II

Does everyone play nicely in the sandbox? How does development assistance for democratization really work on the ground? How do implementers work with their donors, their clients and other implementer in practice? How do development agencies assist in the strengthening grass roots democracy through decentralization, improving the capacity of the public sector to manage and deliver services effectively, to improve access to justice? How are efforts to build democracy complicated by crisis and conflicts?

- Cheema, Chapters 6-10
- US Agency for International Development Publications on Democracy and Governance:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/

December 7: Conclusion – the Future of Democracy

What are the prospects for democracy in the future? Will the advance of globalization strengthen or impede the process of democratization globally? Have the outcomes of increasing international growth of democracies – in producing and distributing wealth, advancing or impeding human rights, in protecting or destroying the environment – strengthen or weaken the past centuries growth of democratization?

Papers:

1. Case Study of Democratization process – that looks at secondary literature and some real data.
2. Reform of Particular Institutions – particular institutions – comparing processes in two countries

1. Why Democracy – several lenses of interpretation:
 - a. democracy as religion,
 - b. a set of institutional arrangements
 - c. Arrangements for elections
 2. What is political democracy, authoritarianism, totalitarianism – gerring et al article; hyde syllabus; tilly and dahl,
 - a. leads to an understanding of the political – not anti-corruption, but balancing between majorities and minorities.
 - b. Federalists,
 - c. Crick: political vs. ideology, justice, nationalism, etc.
 - d. Parties/Factions
 - e. Elections
 - f. Policy
 3. Democratic Transformations – historical change. Is it inevitable and unchangeable? It is not in – east Europe text; stuff from other continents, ingelhart and baker on values (dahl)
 - a. Culture of Change
 - b. Evolution of Political Systems
 - c. movements
 4. Policy: Exporting Democracy? Assisting processes of democratization (McFaul)
 - a. Who promotes it
 - b. Can it be promoted
 - c. Strategy vs. Good Works
 - d. Foreign aid and democratization
 5. Institutions, Constitutions, Civil Society, Business, Types of Government and the like
 - a. Foreign aid programs vs. UN and norm diffusion
 - b. Supporting institutions
 - c. Civil Society and Business
 - d. Intervention
 - e. Post-Conflict Democratization
 6. Several levels of action
 - a. Policies of Governments
 - b. Policies of External Actors
 - c. Developments in Country – economic, social, political
- 3.