COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar addresses the literature on democracy and democratization. Since 1974, over thirty countries around the world started a transition toward democracy. As a result of these dramatic events, comparative scholars have studied these, and earlier, transition cases to understand why some countries become democratic while others do not, and why some new democracies show signs of consolidating while others collapse. This seminar, then, addresses the recent work in the field. First, we will review works that define and measure key concepts, such as authoritarianism, democracy and democratic consolidation. Then, we will consider a range of factors to explain the installation, consolidation, or failure of democracy. Finally, we will discuss a current controversy in the democratization literature. The goals of the seminar are three-fold. First, you will gain an introduction to democracy and democratization studies. Second, this background will help you prepare for your comparative politics comprehensive exams. Third, the seminar can give you an early start on a conference paper, master’s thesis, or dissertation proposal on democratization.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course requirements for this graduate seminar include class participation, leading a weekly discussion, seven short papers, a research design proposal, and a research design paper.

Participation has two components. First, students are expected to read the weekly required readings carefully and to participate actively in class discussions. To help you pull together your thoughts, and to write your short papers, I will distribute topics for the weekly readings. Second, one student will serve as a discussion leader with me, starting on week 4. Leading a discussion entails writing a weekly paper for that week and leading the class discussion with me.
The short papers critique the weekly readings. You will write 7 short papers across the semester. (If you choose to write more than 7 papers, I will drop your lowest grade/s.) Everyone will write a paper for January 21st; after that, you will select 6 from the remaining 9 weekly topics. These papers will help you organize your thoughts for our class discussions. After the semester is over, they will serve as a resource for your comparative politics comprehensive exams. These papers should be 1-2 pages single-spaced and should be uploaded to Angel by noon on Wednesdays. Note that all classmates will be able to read all weekly papers. While class discussion leaders will lead the class discussions, everyone should come to class prepared to discuss the week’s topics. That means that everyone should come to class having read both the assigned readings and the weekly papers on Angel. As the short papers are designed to focus and enhance class discussion, late papers generally will not be accepted.

The research design entails a proposal and a paper. The proposal presents your research question, a brief literature review, research design, methods, the feasibility of your project, and its contribution to the field. You must receive my approval for your research design topic. Be sure to talk with me about your topic in advance. If you change your topic during the semester, you must get my approval on your new topic, as well. (You will also need to write a new proposal.) I encourage you to talk with me about your proposal well before its deadline. The proposal should be 6-8 pages double-spaced. You will present your draft proposal to the class on March 18th. Your final proposal is due by noon on March 29th. I will distribute guidelines for the research design proposal later in the semester.

The research design paper addresses a question central to democracy or democratization. I will distribute in class a handout that explains how to write your research design paper. The paper should be empirical. In other words, your research should be scientific, generating hypotheses that are falsifiable and that can be tested with data. Students can choose from a wide range of methodological approaches, including (but not limited to) case studies, quantitative analysis, historical structuralism, and formal theory. Again, I encourage you to talk with me about your research design paper throughout the semester, particularly regarding conceptual issues, data problems, and potentially contradictory results. Ideally, your research design paper will be a preliminary version of a conference paper that you can present in the future or a start on your master’s essay or dissertation. The text of your research design paper should be no longer than 35 pages double-spaced. A hard copy of your paper is due in my mailbox by noon on the day scheduled for our final exam.
GRADING:

Your final grade will be calculated by weighing the class requirements using the formula below:

- Participation 20%
- Discussion Leader 10
- Short Papers 30
- Research Design Proposal 10
- Research Design Paper 30

REQUIRED READINGS:

The following books are required reading. They have been ordered for the bookstore and placed on reserve in the library, as well. We will also be reading journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters. Copies of readings that are not easily accessible (i.e. are not found on JSTOR or ProQuest) will be made available, for you to Xerox. Please return the readings as quickly as possible, so that others can copy them, as well.


COURSE SCHEDULE

January 14: Introduction to Democratization

January 21: Defining and Measuring Regime Types

Required:
First read:


Then pick any three:


Alvarez, Mike, José Antonio Cheibub, Fernando Limongi, and Adam Przeworski. 1996. Classifying Political Regimes. Studies in Comparative International Development 31:3-36.

Recommended:


_________. 1996. Illusions about Consolidation. Journal of Democracy 7:34-51. (Also, see controversy with Gunther et. al., Journal of Democracy.)


Vanhanen, Tatu. 2000b. The Polyarchy Dataset: Vanhanen’s Index of Democracy (1.02). (http://www.svt.ntnu.no/iss/data/vanhanen)


**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**February 4: Actors in the Transition Process I: Elites**

Required:

Recommended:


*Comparative Politics* 24:379-399.


**February 11: Actors in the Transition Process II: Mass Public**

Required:

Recommended:


**February 18: Factors in the Transition Process: International Actors/Events**

Required:

Recommended:


**February 25: Political Economy of Democratic Transitions**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**March 4: Research Day (Research Design Proposals)**

**March 11: Spring Break (No Class)**

**March 18: Class presentations: Research Design Proposals**

A copy of your draft proposal is due Wednesday March 17 at noon, uploaded to Angel.

**March 25: Class presentations: Research Design Proposals**

**April 1: Institutions**

Required:

Recommended:


**April 8: Mass Public**

Required:

Recommended:


**April 15: The End of the Transition Paradigm?**

Required:


Recommended:


**April 22: MPSA Meeting (No Class)**

**April 28: Authoritarian Consolidation**

Required:


Recommended:


Research Design Papers due by noon on the day scheduled for our final exam.

**Academic Dishonesty**

The Department of Political Science, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one’s work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation are responsible for checking with their instructor.

In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist but are not limited to any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of any violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to follow procedures established by the College of the Liberal Arts. More information on academic integrity and procedures followed for violation can be found at: [http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Academic_Integrity/integrity.shtml](http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Academic_Integrity/integrity.shtml)

**Disabilities**

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor early in the term. Do not wait until just before an exam to decide you want to inform the instructor of a learning disability; any accommodations for disabilities must be arranged well in advance.