

# POLS 416: Democratization

Spring 2007

MWF 11:00-11:50 pm, 107 Parkinson Lab

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## 1 Overview

The third wave of democratization, the series of democratic transitions that has occurred in countries of Southern Europe, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Africa, and East Asia over the last three decades, has provided political scientists with a great deal of evidence for understanding what conditions favor democracy. In this course, we will examine these circumstances and the theories that explain how they work. As this course is a research seminar, we will be applying these theories to evaluate the prospects for democratic transitions in those countries that have remained under authoritarian rule.

By the end of the course, you will:

1. Develop a thorough understanding of current political science theories of democratization,
2. Become familiar with how these theories have been applied to explain recent democratic transitions around the world,
3. Gain experience applying political science theories to understand contemporary political events,

4. Develop your ability to convey your research findings in presentations and in writing, and
5. Hone your skills in researching and writing in teams (especially valuable in the working world!).

## 2 Requirements

Your grade will be based on the following:

Class Participation	20%
Group Presentations	20% (5 presentations, 4% each)
Progress Reports	20% (4 reports, 5% each)
Final Paper	30%
Group Member Grade	10%

### 2.1 Class Participation

You are expected to complete all of any assigned readings prior to class and make informed contributions to the discussion each time we meet. To participate, you must of course be present, so attendance is mandatory. Any absences will reduce your final grade by one percentage point. Any class period in which you refuse to participate or otherwise convince me that you have arrived unprepared will count as an absence; that is, it will reduce your final grade by one percentage point.

### 2.2 Group Presentations

In the course of the semester, you will work with a group to evaluate the prospects for democratization in a country of your choice that remains under authoritarian rule. Along with your fellow group member(s), you will be responsible for five presentations on your country in the course of the semester. Each presentation will be approximately fifteen minutes in length, to be followed by about five to ten minutes for questions and comments. All group members must speak in the course of the presentation. Guidelines and suggestions for making an effective presentation will be discussed in class.

## 2.3 Progress Reports

At the time of each of the first four presentations, you and your fellow group member(s) will be required to submit a short paper (2 to 4 pages) that summarizes the findings you present. Guidelines and suggestions for writing an effective report will be distributed in class. Late reports will not be accepted.

All of the written work that you submit as a group must ultimately be your own and in your own words; any quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks. Any time you quote a source or borrow its idea, you must include a citation like this (Author, Page). If the source is not one of the course readings, please include a full citation at the end of your paper.

## 2.4 Final Paper

Each group is responsible for preparing a final paper, 20 to 25 pages long, that synthesizes its findings as developed throughout the semester. Guidelines and suggestions for the final paper will be distributed in class in the course of the semester. Late papers will not be accepted.

## 2.5 Group Member Grade

At the end of the semester, you must provide a short, one-paragraph evaluation of your own performance in the group assignments as well as one paragraph on the performance of each of your fellow group members. I will use your self evaluation and the evaluations provide by your fellow group members to determine your Group Member Grade.

# 3 Readings

There are four required books for this class; all are available at the bookstore. Additional readings are available online. The required textbooks are:

Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bratton, Michael and Nicholas van der Walle. 1996. *Democratic Experiments in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens. 1992. *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Additional readings are available at the following links. Print them out and bring them to class on the days they are assigned. Several links will prompt you for a username and password. I will announce these in class, but to refresh your memory, the username is “student” and the password is the name of an ancient breed of Egyptian greyhound.

Karl, Terry Lynn. 1987. “Petroleum and Political Pacts: The Transition to Democracy in Venezuela.” *Latin American Research Review* 22(1): 63-94. [Off-campus link.]

Pei, Minxin and Sara Kasper. 2003. “Lessons from the Past: The American Record on Nation-Building.” Carnegie Endowment Policy Brief No. 24.

Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Pp. 37-52.

Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 51-99.

Solt, Frederick. 2001. “Institutional Effects on Democratic Transitions: Neo-Patrimonial Regimes in Africa, 1989-1994.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36(2): 82-91.

Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Pp. 9-21.

## 4 Class Schedule

- Week 1** Introduction to the Study of Democratization.  
*Reading:* Przeworski et al., 13-59.
- Week 2** Political Science Basics and Research Tips.  
*Readings:* Van Evera & Shively.
- Week 3** The Effects of Pre-Existing Institutions on Democratization.  
*Readings:* Bratton and van der Walle & Solt.
- Week 4** Institutions in Authoritarian Countries.  
*Assignment:* Group Presentation and Progress Report.
- Week 5** Socioeconomic Structure and Democratization.  
*Reading:* Boix.
- Week 6** Structure in Authoritarian Countries.  
*Assignment:* Group Presentation and Progress Report.
- Week 7** Political Actors, Strategic Decisions, and Democratization.  
*Reading:* Przeworski & Karl.
- Week 8** Actor-Centered Theory in Authoritarian Countries.  
*Assignment:* Group Presentation and Progress Report.
- Week 9** Spring Break.
- Week 10** International Influences on Democratization.  
*Reading:* Pei and Kasper & Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens, 1-78, 226-302.
- Week 11** International Influences in Authoritarian Countries.  
*Assignment:* Group Presentation and Progress Report.
- Week 12** Group Meetings with Professor Solt.  
*Assignment:* Work on Final Paper and Presentation.
- Week 13** Group Meetings with Professor Solt.  
*Assignment:* Work on Final Paper and Presentation.
- Week 14** Final Paper Presentations.  
*Assignment:* Group Presentation.
- Week 15** Conclusions.  
*Assignment:* Final Paper and Group Member Grade.