

P.Sc. 353 Comparing Democracy & Dictatorship Prof. Farkas Spring 2018

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This is an advanced level politics course emphasizing research and analysis. It presumes that you have either lower level comparative politics classes, a background course in another discipline, or a driving interest in the subject matter. One or more of these are required. The academic focus is on rigorous comparison and analysis of the recent political experiences of countries that claim to be “democratic” or purport to be “building” democracy. We will begin with the challenge of defining terms and move to cases to test the usefulness of our definitions. This is not nearly as easy as it may seem. Students that make a commitment to the subject will be rewarded with discovering a fascinating, intriguing and crucial insight into how our world works. You will be challenged to process both quantitative and qualitative information. You will be expected to refine your presentation skills via written and oral opportunities. You will be given a chance to intellectually stretch in new directions and test your own abilities and understanding. Be sure that you can devote a large portion of your term to this enterprise. In the end, we anticipate a new, more sophisticated understanding of “democracy” and “dictatorship” as phenomena in politics.

This course will systematically examine the debate about the requisites and constituent parts of “democracy” and “dictatorship.” The comparison will draw on the common functions performed by all political systems and identify the contrasting patterns that differentiate these terms. Political systems in the 21st century world display an array of characteristics that challenge simple classification. Elections, participation, distribution of resources, corruption and transparency are examples of concepts to be examined. The course will conclude with an effort to analyze any pattern that is emerging.

This course has been designated by the Academic Affairs office of DePaul as a “global learning experience” class. This means that students in this class (or a subset of them) will have the opportunity to engage in live discussion sessions with students studying “democracy” in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Special sessions will be scheduled during the Quarter to accommodate these simultaneous sessions. Two Fridays will be selected by mutual agreement and DePaul students that can and choose to participate in this special feature will commit to meet at 9:00am to 11:30am on those two Fridays.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Please read and THINK about the following list.

- (a) All readings must be done on time ... that is, BEFORE the lecture/discussion deals with the subject. This course is reading intensive especially in the first half of the class. Students must parcel adequate time to complete all reading.
- (b) Class attendance is crucial. The intellectual constructs crucial to this class will be developed in class. Lectures will introduce information that is NOT in the readings. Students are expected to attend EVERY class.
- (c) Mid-term exam
- (d) Research: Quarter-long collection of data to test a specific hypothesis. A four slide Power Point presentation of the data and results is required.
- (e) A comprehensive final exam constructed around one or two seminal essay questions.
- (f) Class preparation and participation is required.

For those engaging directly with their Dubrovnik counterparts, two Friday morning sessions will be required. Students in the class will be able to opt in or opt out of these special sessions but students should understand that without this experience, it will be more difficult to gauge the seminal issues in the course.

MATERIALS & READINGS:

- IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CONSTITUTION BUILDING

Available free on the IDEA website (www.idea.int) sent to you in mail request as early as possible

- LeDuc, Niemi, and Norris, **Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in a Changing World**, 4th Edition, 2014

- Buena de Mesquita, **The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior is Almost Always Good Politics** Paperback: 352 pages Publisher: Public Affairs (2012) **ISBN-10:** 1610391845 **ISBN-13:** 978-1610391849

- **Required Web-sites:**
 - <http://www.idea.int>
 - **Subscribe to DEMOCRACY LAB: Legatum Institute**
 - **"V-Dem" project materials**

FACULTY-STUDENT CONTACT

Experienced university students know that it is wise to use the opportunity to visit and consult with professors during their office hours. If those hours are impossible, propose to meet at another time. It is YOUR responsibility to use this "out-of-class" time to clarify questions you have that have not become clear in class, raise questions or thoughts about other ideas, or simply to come to understand better the professor's thinking about any subjects at all. If you do this, it will be easier for your professors to deal with you and your uniqueness. Students are certainly entitled to all the guidance and assistance that we can provide. This course is committed to that principle. Only you know when and how you need help. Try to remember that it is your education and YOU must do your part to sketch in how this plan (syllabus) best works for you. I am looking forward to knowing and working with you! As veteran students, you should not need prodding in this direction. Every student is REQUIRED to visit me in my office before the end of the third week of the course. If office hours are unworkable, request another time.

Formal Office Hours: 990 W. Fullerton Ave. Room 2211

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00-9:30 Tuesday 1:30-3:00pm other times by appointment

All other times by arrangement ...

Office phone: 773 325-1977 cell phone: 847 251-2671 dfarkas@depaul.edu

GRADES

Every effort will be made to communicate clearly just how each student is doing during the term. Excellent effort and solid production are the expectations. Consistency, clarity, timeliness, and analytic strength will be rewarded. Any student choosing not to regularly participate in seminar discussions will receive a grade of C at best.

BREAKDOWN: Participation 25 pts. Midterm 25 pts. Hypothesis Test 25 pts. Final Exam 25 pts.

EXAMS A "blue book" mid-term exam will focus on the book length readings to that point.

A final exam will be designed to encourage you to "synthesize" our efforts and your thinking in the class. This will take the form of a "take home" essay with a two day preparation period.

Research

The hypothesis will be constructed around some dimension of "democracy" that you find especially critical or interesting. There are many options that will be discussed at length during the term. One focus will be on new or experimental democracies. Another could be "illusionary democracies" ... wannabes or veiled authoritarian systems

(“democracy lite”). Yet a third could be “established” democracies and their developmental direction. Some effort will be made to match your focus with something in your academic background or interests to help construct your hypothesis. You should view this as a formidable challenge and one that can provide the foundation for a senior thesis or even graduate work if you desire to pursue either.

The hypothesis will serve as a vehicle for thinking about the following factors ...

- Political setting (the era and historical/political milieu)
- The architecture (i.e. political structure) of the system
- The “model” of democracy in place
- An analysis of the degree to which the case or cases “measure” up
- The functional advantages and problems of the system
- Reflective “lessons” for the systems under scrutiny

These can be elaborated and clarified either in class or in consultations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

“Academic honesty” is crucial to our enterprise. The faculty has effective ways of investigating suspicious cases. To avoid any possibility, cite all sources and consult with your professor if you have any questions. University regulations are clear and will be followed in cases requiring such action. This is an essential “rule of the game” and all students should do their own thinking and attribute ideas to their originators. The official university policy follows:

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement is unacceptable.

CLASSROOM DECORUM

It is very important that in framing one's behavior you are cognizant that what you do DOES affect others. For this reason and a number of other pedagogical ones, I ask that you arrive at class **on time**, refrain from talking to other students during class, refrain from using cell phones or any electronics if unrelated to class work, and eat or drink only in unobtrusive ways. Clean up after yourself. Your university experience is an opportunity to learn both intellectual and other constructive behaviors.

ABSENCES

Over the years, I have simply declined to make judgments about the “validity” of student “reasons” for missing class. Being there is YOUR responsibility! Whether your reason is good or problematic, the reality is that you missed some important work. To this end, it is unwise to miss ANY class. If you miss class, I will assume YOU made a judgment that something else was “more important” in your view. All decisions have consequences. In the end, YOU ARE responsible for the work we did in that class!

REMINDER:

You should plan to participate in the GLE sessions on two Friday mornings during the term. Dates to be determined.

CLASS SCHEDULE: YOU are responsible for learning about changes to the schedule.

MODULE 1 Defining ...

Tuesday, March 27	<i>Democracy & Dictatorship: starting points for definitions:</i>	
	<i>Option 1: Values: What “people” want?</i>	IDEA “An Introduction”
Thursday, March 29	<i>Option 2: Political Architecture: structurally modeling “democracy”</i>	
Tuesday, April 3	<i>Option 3: Leadership Personality & Behavior make the difference</i>	

MODULE 2 Comparing ...

Thursday, April 5	<i>Variables: why and how examples</i>	IDEA “Assessing”
Tuesday, April 10	<i>Key Differences Among Political Systems</i>	Comparing Democracies (all)
Thursday, April 12		
Tuesday, April 17		

MODULE 3 Contrasting ...

Thursday, April 19	<i>Technology & Democracy vs. Technology & Dictatorship</i>	Buena de Mesquita (all)
Tuesday, April 24	<i>Dimensions of difference ...</i>	
Thursday, April 26	<i>Reviewing our understanding the “Handbook”</i>	
Tuesday, May 1	MID-TERM exam	
Thursday, May 3,	<i>Hypothesis: Tune-up</i>	

MODULE 4 Designing ...

Tuesday, May 8	<i>Intervention to Nurture Democracy</i>	IDEA “Principles” & “De-centralized Forms”
Thursday, May 10	<i>Constitution-building after Conflict</i>	IDEA “... after Conflict”

Bosnia Case **Handout: Draft Constitution**

MODULE 5 The Locus of Democracy ...

Tuesday, May 15	<i>Other Venues for Democracy: Corporate Democracy? Organizational Democracy?</i>	
	<i>Family democracy?</i>	
Thursday, May 17	<i>The FUTURE of Democracy: Capitalism, Socialism & Democracy</i>	

MODULE 6 Testing Ideas ...

Tuesday, May 22	<i>Hypotheses Testing Results:</i>	All students -- PPT presentations
Thursday, May 24	<i>Hypothesis Testing Results:</i>	
Tuesday, May 29	<i>Hypothesis Testing Results:</i>	
Thursday, May 31	<i>Seminal notions ...</i>	

Tuesday, June 5 & 7 *To be determined ...* **Final Exam**

