

POL 329: Transitions to Democracy
MW 3:00-4:15 — Hume 203

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

This course offers a survey of contemporary trends in democratization (the processes of transitions to and consolidation of democratic regimes), with a special focus on the so-called “third wave” of democracy. As such, this course covers cases (primarily in Europe, Asia, Latin America, but also in Africa and the Middle East) that began transitions to democracy in the 1970s or later.

The course is divided into four sections: In the first, students will engage with the conceptual debate over the meaning of democracy, drawing from the political theory canon but anchored in the work of Robert Dahl, one of the most prominent contemporary democratic theorists. Next, students will consider different theories or explanatory models of democratization. Students will apply this knowledge to a country of his or her choice, and present their research in a formal class presentation. The third and fourth sections focus on democratic consolidation. We will begin with a focus formal institutions (political parties, executive-legislative relations, etc.), then consider informal factors (culture, the media, etc.). Students will apply this knowledge to a country of his or her choice, in a number of selected short research assignments. Students will also work in small groups to produce a group “constitutional engineering” project.

The student learning objectives for this course include:

- To formulate and defend your own definition of democracy.
- To assess the quality of democracy in any relevant country in the world.
- To understand and be able to apply many of the basic concepts and theories in the literature on democratization.
- To construct and apply conceptual models of democratic transitions and consolidation using empirical data.
- To communicate clearly and persuasively—particularly using primary sources of data.
- To increase your understanding of political trends in countries around the world.

COURSE TEXTS

The following books are *required* for this course:

Dahl, Robert. *After the Revolution? Authority in the Good Society*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1991.

Sørensen, Georg. *Democracy and Democratization*, 3rd ed. Boulder: Westview Press. 2008.

Additional *required* readings are posted online and listed after the course schedule.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Below are a summary of the course requirements and their percentage of the final grade:

	<u>Points</u>
Participation	40
Midterm exam	100
Democratic theory essay	40
Country report & presentation	60
Analysis assignments (x4)	80 (20 points each)
Oz group project	40
Final exam	100
Total	460

Attendance and Participation

We expect you to complete readings and assignments *before* the class for which they are assigned and to come ready to discuss them. Participation grades are subjective evaluations of your performance in class.

We will enforce the following attendance policy in this class: You are allowed up to three “personal” days you can take for any reason (including illness). Beyond that, each additional absence will result in a deduction of 20 points from the final semester grade. (Exceptions may be made for students suffering traumatic hardships, such as hospitalization, following the guidelines in section VI of the *M Book*.)

Exams

The midterm exam will assess your understanding of the debate over the meaning of “democracy,” as well as the knowledge of basic concepts and theories of democratization discussed in the first part of the course. The final exam will assess your conceptual understanding of transitions to and consolidations of democratic regimes, as well as your ability to use those concepts to conduct analysis based on data for relevant countries. Both exams will combine multiple choice, short answer, and short essay. We will hand out a study guide a week in advance of each exam.

Assignments

Throughout the semester you will write six research reports.

Every student is required to submit the following two assignments:

1. Democratic theory essay
2. Country report and presentation (5-7 minutes)

Every student is required to submit *any two* of the following assignments:

- 3A. Executive-legislative relations report
- 3B. Subnational politics report
- 3C. Electoral systems report
- 3D. Party system report
- 3E. Rule of law report

Every student is required to submit *any two* of the following assignments:

- 4A. Economics and democracy report
- 4B. Civil society report
- 4C. Civil-military relations report
- 4D. Political culture report
- 4E. Media and communications report

Group Project

During weeks 8-10 of the semester, you will work on a group project in small groups (of 4-5 students). The project asks you to work collaboratively to write a set of institutional design for a country (“Oz”) attempting to transition to democracy. The assignment allows you to apply what you learn during those weeks about political institutions as a “constitutional engineer.” Each group will *collectively* produce one report (6-7 pages in length) and give an oral presentation (7-10 minute) on its proposed constitutional design for Oz. We will provide more details in class.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES & CLASS RULES

Please be sure you follow these basic class rules and policies throughout the semester:

Classroom Behavior

We do not allow the use of cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices in class without permission. Given the sometimes sensitive nature of what we will be discussing this semester, we expect students to abide by the principles and values outlined in the University Creed, and to maintain a civil discourse even when we might disagree.

Missing Assignments

If you know in advance that you will miss an assignment deadline, you may submit the assignment early—and then appeal for an extension. If you prepare for contingencies (by not starting to work on assignments the night before they are due), you should be safe. Even if your work is not complete, submitting what you have accomplished prior to the emergency is better than earning a zero. Extensions will only be granted under extreme circumstances, and at our discretion.

Communication

Email is the most common way for students and faculty to communicate out of class. We try to answer messages promptly, but do not expect emails sent *after 6pm* to be answered until *after 8 am* the following day. Additionally, remember to keep messages professional and respectful (e.g. use salutations, such as “Professor Centellas/Reynolds” or “Dr. Centellas/Reynolds”). Also, check your university email account regularly; we will use that address when sending important messages related to the course.

Student Disability Services

If you have a *documented* disability as described by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 933-112 Section 504) or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and would like to request academic and/or physical accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services at 234 Martindale Center (662-915-7128). Course requirements will not be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided as appropriate. Please consult <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/sds/> for more information on student disability services.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

As a student at the University, all work submitted under your name, for your credit, is assumed to be your original work. While teachers hope and expect for you to incorporate the thinking of others in your work, you *must* credit others’ work when you use it. In your written assignments, there are only three methods for properly importing the works of others: quotations, paraphrase, and summary. Broadly speaking, plagiarism is completely avoidable. However, if you are ever unsure if you are committing plagiarism, consult with us prior to submitting the assignment.

The penalty for plagiarism and/or cheating in this class ranges from failure of the assignment to failing the course. Additional penalties are also possible. Students should familiarize themselves with the relevant guidelines and procedures in the *M Book*.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic & Reading	Assignment or Class Activity
<i>I. Concepts and Foundations</i>			
1	1/24	Introduction	Hand out syllabus, discuss course requirements
	1/26	Why Value Democracy? Wolin, “Democracy: Electoral & Athenian” Excerpts (handout): Pericles, Machiavelli, Rousseau, Madison, J. S. Mill, Schumpeter	
2	1/31	Democracy and Authority Dahl, <i>After the Revolution?</i> (Chapter 1)	
	2/02	Democracy and Authority Dahl, <i>After the Revolution?</i> (Chapter 2)	Assignment 1: Political theory essay
<i>II. Explanatory Models</i>			
3	2/07	Explaining Democratization I Sorensen, Chapter 2 Ziblatt, “How Did Europe Democratize”	
	2/09	Explaining Democratization II Sorensen, Chapter 3 Bunce/Wolchik, “Defeating Dictators”	
4	2/14	International Forces Sorensen, Chapter 4 Türkmen, “The EU & Democratization in Turkey”	
	2/16	Comparing Models & Ideas Munck, “Theory Building in Democracy Studies” Bunce, “Rethinking Recent Democratization”	
5	2/21	Midterm Exam	Bring blue book
	2/23	Case Study Presentations	Assignment 2: Country reports and presentations
6	2/28	Case Study Presentations	
	3/02	Case Study Presentations	
<i>III. Democratic Consolidation & Political Institutions</i>			
7	3/07	What is Consolidation? Schedler, “What is Democratic Consolidation” Sin/Wells, “Is Democracy the Only Game in Town?”	
	3/09	Measuring Democracy Schmitter, “What Democracy Is ... and Is Not” The Economist, “Democracy Index 2010”	Bring to class the 2010 Freedom in the World (Freedom House) report on your country.
8	3/21	Institutions and Constitutional Design Lijphart, “Constitutional Design for Divided Societies” Reynolds, “Constitutional Engineering in Southern Africa”	
	3/23	Executive-Legislative Relations Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism” Valenzuela, “Latin American Presidencies Interrupted” Fish, “Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies”	Assignment 3A

9	3/28	Federalism and Subnational Politics Eaton, “Federalism in Europe and Latin America” Gibson, “Subnational Authoritarianism”	Assignment 3B
	3/30	Elections and Electoral Systems Soudriette/Ellis, “A Global Snapshot” Horowitz, “A Primer for Decision Makers” Reilly, “Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific”	Assignment 3C
10	4/04	Parties and Party Systems Lipset, “The Indispensability of Political Parties” Mainwaring, “Party Systems in the Third Wave” Kreuzer/Pettai, “Political Parties and Political Development”	Assignment 3D
	4/06	Rule of Law O’Donnell, “Why the Rule of Law Matters” Krasnov, “The Rule of Law”	Assignment 3E
IV. Democratic Consolidation & Other Issues			
11	4/11	“Oz” Project Presentations	Constitutional design group presentations and papers
	4/13	Economics Dahl, Chapter 3 Berghagen. “Democracy, Business, and the Economy”	Assignment 4A
12	4/18	Civil Society Letki, “Social Capital and Civil Society” Howard, “The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society”	Assignment 4B
	4/20	Civil-Military Relations Kohn, “How Democracies Control the Military” Ruhl, “Honduras Unravels”	Assignment 4C
13	4/25	Political Culture Welzel/Inglehart, “Political Culture, Mass Beliefs, and Value Change” Chu/Huang, “Solving the Asian Puzzle” Shi/Lu, “The Shadow of Confucianism”	Assignment 4D
	4/27	Media and Communications Voltmer and Rawnsley “The Media” Deibert/Rohozinski “Liberation vs Control”	Assignment 4E
14	5/02	Why Does Democracy Matter? Sorensen, Chapters 5-6 Mansfield/Snyder, “Democratization and War”	
	5/04	The Future of Democracy? Sorensen, Conclusion Dahl, Chapter 4	
	5/12	Final Exam – Thursday, May 12 at 4pm	

ADDITIONAL READINGS

The following additional readings are *required* for this course and available through Blackboard:

- Bermeo, Nancy Gina. 2002. "The Import of Institutions." *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2): 96-110.
- Bernhagen, Patrick. 2009. "Democracy, Business, and the Economy." In *Democratization*, eds. Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F. Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, 107-125. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bunce, Valerie. 2003. "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience." *World Politics* 55 (2): 167-192.
- Bunce, Valerie J. and Sharon L. Wolchik. 2010. "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *World Politics* 62 (1): 43-86.
- Chu, Yun-huan and Min-hua Huang. 2010. "Solving the Asian Puzzle." *Journal of Democracy* 21 (4): 114-122.
- Deibert, Ronald and Rafal Rohozinski. 2010. "Liberation vs Control: The Future of Cyberspace." *Journal of Democracy* 21 (4): 43-57.
- Eaton, Kent. 2008. "Federalism in Europe and Latin America: Conceptualization, Causes, and Consequences." *World Politics* 60 (4): 665-698.
- The Economist. 2010. *Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat*. London: Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Fish, M. Steven. 2006. "Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 17 (1): 5-20.
- Gibson, Edward L. 2005. "Boundary Control: Subnational Authoritarianism in Democratic Countries." *World Politics* 58 (1): 101-132.
- Horowitz, Donald L. 2003. "Electoral Systems: A Primer for Decision Makers." *Journal of Democracy* 14 (4): 115-127.
- Howard, Marc M. 2002. "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society." in *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2): 157-169.
- Kohn, Richard. 1997. "How Democracies Control the Military." *Journal of Democracy* 8 (2): 140-153.
- Krasnov, Mikhail. 2004. "The Rule of Law." In *Between Dictatorship and Democracy: Russian Post-Communist Political Reform*, eds. Michael McFaul, Nikolai Petrov, and Andrei Ryabov, 195-212. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Kreuzer, Marcus and Vello Pettai. 2004. "Political Parties and the Study of Political Development: New Insights from the Postcommunist Democracies." *World Politics* 56 (4): 608-633.
- Letki, Natalia. 2009. "Social Capital and Civil Society." In *Democratization*, eds. Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F. Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, 158-169. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lijphart, Arend. 2004. "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (2): 96-109.
- Linz, Juan J. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1 (1): 51-69.
- Lipset, S. M. 2000. "The Indispensability of Political Parties." *Journal of Democracy* 11 (1): 48-55.
- Mainwaring, Scott. 1998. "Party Systems in the Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 9 (3): 67-81.
- Munck, Gerardo L. 2001. "The Regime Question: Theory Building in Democracy Studies." *World Politics* 54 (1): 119-144.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo. 2004. "Why the Rule of Law Matters." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4): 32-46.
- Reilly, Ben. 2007. "Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific." *Journal of Democracy* 18 (1): 58-72.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 1995. "Constitutional Engineering in Southern Africa." *Journal of Democracy* 6

(2): 86-89.

Ruhl, Mark. 2010. "Honduras Unravels." *Journal of Democracy* 21 (2): 93-107.

Schedler, Andreas. 1998. "What is Democratic Consolidation?" *Journal of Democracy* 9 (2): 91-107.

Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is ... and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2 (3): 75-88.

Shi, Tianjian and Jie Lu. 2010. "The Shadow of Confucianism." *Journal of Democracy* 21 (4): 123-130.

Shin, To-ch'ol and Jason Wells. 2005. "Is Democracy the Only Game in Town?" *Journal of Democracy* 16 (2): 88-101.

Soudriette, Richard and Andres Ellis. 2006. "A Global Snapshot." *Journal of Democracy* 17 (2): 78-88.

Türkmen, Füsün. 2008. "The European Union and Democratization in Turkey: The Role of the Elites." *Human Rights Quarterly* 30 (1): 146-163.

Valenzuela, Arturo. 2004. "Latin American Presidencies Interrupted." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4): 5-19.

Voltmer, Katrin and Gary Rawnsley. 2009. "The Media." In *Democratization*, eds. Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F. Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, 234-248. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weizel, Christian and Ronald Inglehart. 2009. "Political Culture, Mass Beliefs, and Value Change." In *Democratization*, eds. Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F. Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, 126-144. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wolin, Sheldon S. 1993. "Democracy: Electoral and Athenian." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 26 (3): 475-477.

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2006. "How Did Europe Democratize?" *World Politics* 58 (2): 311-338.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

The following are the descriptions of the written assignments for this course. Please look them over. We recommend selecting—and starting work—on them well in advance.

Assignment 1: Democratic Theory Essay

1. The concept “democracy” has been reinterpreted numerous times. If you had to identify one consistent strand, what would it be? Use it to write your own (one paragraph) definition of democracy.
2. Pick one of the following (Pericles, Machiavelli, Rousseau) and one of the following (Madison, Mill, Schumpeter). Compare and contrast their views of democracy.
3. How would your two authors respond to Robert Dahl’s *After the Revolution*? Does Dahl reconcile the two authors’ positions?

Assignment 2: Country Study

Using in-depth news articles and at least one “scholarly” source, write a report on how and why your country case study experienced a transition to democracy. Write it as a “policy brief” meant to bring a new diplomat up to speed on the country. Focus on the following areas:

1. Briefly *describe* your country’s transition process. Be sure to include key dates and actors in your description.
2. What were the main *causal* factors for the transition? What concepts and theories do you find useful in explaining what happened, and why?
3. Is your country currently a democracy?

Assignment 3A: Executive-Legislative Relations

1. Describe the basic characteristics of a presidential, parliamentary, and semi-presidential system. What type of system does your country have?
2. Locate a copy of your country’s constitution and code any two or three of the Fish-Kroenig Legislative Powers Survey factors (in Fish, “Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies”). To find a copy of the constitution, see the following websites: <http://confinder.richmond.edu> or <http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/forcons.html>. Do these factors push power more to the legislature or the executive?
3. What is the most critical factor for understanding executive-legislative relations in your country? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 3B: Federalism and Subnational Politics

1. Based on the readings, how do you define “federalism”? What are the advantages and disadvantages of federalism for democratic consolidation?
2. Go to the Institute of Federalism website (<http://www.federalism.ch>). Play both Federalism Games I & II. Comment on the games and what the institute wants you to learn about federalism. What lessons would you apply to your country?
3. Is your country a federal or unitary system? How does this shape politics between and within the capital and the rest of the country’s “interior”? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 3C: Elections and Electoral Systems

1. What is the current electoral system used in your country for national elections? If you have a system with separate legislative and executive elections, include both. Using the most recent election results in your country (include a table), describe how the system works.
2. Using the *Instructions for Assessment of the Election Process* published by IFES (posted on Blackboard) and the table from Sorensen’s chapter, briefly describe the task of election observers.

What should election observers be looking for – before the election, the day of election, and during the vote count?

3. Was the most recent election in your country “free and fair”? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 3D: Parties and Party Systems

1. What are Scott Mainwaring’s four dimensions of party system institutionalization?
2. Using data from the IFES Election Guide website (<http://www.electionguide.org>), look at the most recent legislative elections. Provide a brief description of your country’s party system along these four dimensions.
3. Which of the four dimensions is weakest in your country? Make sure your description includes major parties (up to three) and the most relevant cleavages (up to two). Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 3E: Rule of Law

1. How does Guillermo O’Donnell define rule of law?
2. Large-scale corruption is one consequence of a lack of the rule of law. Transparency International is an organization that publishes surveys and indices of corruption around the world. Go to the website (<http://www.transparency.org>) and look at the most recent Corruption Perceptions Index. Briefly describe the methodology of the index. How does your country rank?
3. What are some of the chief concerns regarding reducing corruption and strengthening the rule of law in your country? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 4A: Economics

1. According to Berghagen, how does economic development influence democratization?
2. From the most recent UN Human Development Report (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/>), how is the Human Development Index constructed? What is your country’s current composite index number and world ranking? Attach a copy of your country’s “Country Profile of Human Development Indicators” after clicking “open all” to see the specific indicators. Compare and contrast the various indicators for your country.
3. Discuss the status of economic development in your country and how it affects democratic consolidation. Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles you will use to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 4B: Civil Society

1. According to Letki, what are “civil society” and “social capital”?
2. Visit the website for CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (<http://www.civicus.org/csi>). How do they construct the Civil Society Index? Register yourself to get access to the CSI database. Is your country in the database? If not, select another country in the same geographic region. What are the four dimension scores for your country?
3. Select the “Impact” dimension and then read the information for “all indicators” in the sub-dimensions of 4.1 (influencing public policy) and 4.3 (empowering citizens). What key conclusions do you draw about how civil society impacts policy and empowers citizens? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 4C: Civil-Military Relations

1. According to Kohn, what is the “ideal” civil-military relationship for a democracy and what are the three broad areas we must include in our investigation of civil-military relations?
2. Visit the website for the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (<http://www.sipri.org>) and provide a table of the military expenditures in US dollars and as a percentage of GDP for your country for the time frame given in the military expenditure database. Visit your country’s website for the ruling government cabinet. Who is the current Defense Minister in your country’s government cabinet? What is that person’s professional background?
3. What do these two pieces of information (military spending and background of the current defense minister) suggest to you about civil-military relations? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles about civil-military relations in your country to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 4D: Political Culture

1. What is political culture and how do Welzel and Inglehart suggest it contributes to democratic consolidation?
2. Visit the World Values Survey Associate website (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>). Under “Findings,” select “National-level Value scores by country” and present a table of your country’s traditional/secular-rational values and survival/self-expression values over time. What do those concepts and scores mean?
3. Is the political culture of your country supporting democratic consolidation? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 recent news articles to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.

Assignment 4E: Media and Communications

1. According to Voltmer and Rawnsley, how does the role of the media under the old regime affect its performance after regime change?
2. Visit the website for Reporters Without Borders (<http://en.rsf.org>) and locate your country on the Press Freedom Index. How is the index compiled? Has your country been improving lately on this index? What are some of the issues/incidents highlighted on your country’s page on this website?
4. What role did the media or communications played a part in the transition to democracy in your country? Use Lexis-Nexus to locate information from 2-3 news articles to contextualize your analysis and advance your argument.