POSC 233 Corruption, Authoritarianism, and Democracy  
Spring Term 2010

SYLLABUS

Professor: Alfred P. Montero  
Office: Willis 407
Phone: x4085 (Office)  
Email: amontero@carleton.edu
Web Page: http://people.carleton.edu/~amontero
Office Hours: Tuesday 4-6 p.m.; Wednesday 5-7 p.m.; Thursday by appointment via Skype
Skype: amontero9601

Course Description

After three decades of democratization, most countries are democratic. But the quality of these democracies is questionable as many suffer from continuous problems of corruption, poor elite accountability, human rights violations, and even policies that can only be described as semi-authoritarian. This course investigates the classic regime types (totalitarianism, authoritarianism, democracy), transitions between them, and the problems of deviations from democratic norms and processes. Special attention will be paid to problems of democratic governance such as electoral fraud, campaign finance malfeasance, vote-buying, the corruption of the judiciary, and political and bureaucratic institutions created to address these issues.

What is Expected of Students

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. That means that students must keep up in their reading assignments and attend class regularly. Students must be fully prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous lectures. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and their in-class discussion. Attendance is required.

Reading Materials

This course requires your purchase of two books that are presently on sale at the college bookstore:


In addition to these texts, this course requires your study of a number of other readings and multimedia from diverse sources. These readings are all available on the course Moodle page. Additionally, I will occasionally distribute clippings from The New York Times, Journal of Democracy, Current History, and the Economist on Moodle and via email. Video and audio
materials will also be posted on the course Moodle page. Other resources are available on the course web page (http://people.carleton.edu/~amontero/cad.htm).

Grading

Assessment of the students in this course will be based on their performance on two papers, a group data gathering and coding project with written preliminary reports and a debate “tournament” component at the end of the term. The grade breakdown follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Writing Assignment</th>
<th>25%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Second Writing Assignment</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Data Coding Project Preliminary Reports: Group Dynamics: Oral Presentation:</td>
<td>25% (10%) (5%) (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation (including periodic diagnostic exams)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Writing Assignments

Paper assignments in this course are of varying lengths. Yet they must all be typed, paginated, and double-spaced with 12cpi font size and one-inch margins (unjustified). I require the use of Times New Roman font type. Beyond these style requirements, parenthetical and bibliographic citations must follow the required format described in detail in the Bibliographic Format handout posted on the course webpage. Furthermore, students will be expected to use the checklist against the most common errors committed on papers before uploading their work.

These assignments must be turned in as PDF files unless otherwise indicated by 5 p.m. in the student’s hand-in folder on the Courses directory on the due date specified in the assignment handout. Late work will receive no credit. Technical problems involved in converting and uploading work onto Courses will not be accepted as a reason for late or improperly formatted
work. Students remain responsible for addressing all glitches unless they are systemic. Proper use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar is expected. Since ability to edit your own work and produce concise argument is a touchstone for assessing and developing your critical skills, students will not be allowed to surpass the required number of pages. A handout will be distributed with the particular parameters of each of these assignments well before the due date.

**Paper #1**

The first writing assignment will ask students to select two countries that had a previous democratic experience that broke down into a type of authoritarianism. Both the process and the resulting authoritarian regime are to be compared across these two countries. This section will focus on a test of Juan Linz’s theory for democratic breakdown. Then, if applicable, the student will analyze the conditions underlying the liberalization of the authoritarian regimes and subsequent transitions to democracy in each case. The focus will be on the causal importance of at least two variables governing the democratization process. This paper will require sustained research on the empirical cases, so work on this project must be initiated shortly after the handout on the assignment is posted on Moodle. This paper will be 7-8 pages in length plus endmatter (e.g., figures, tables, endnotes, and bibliography).

**Paper #2**

This second writing assignment will act as an accompaniment to the group data coding project. Based on the data collected in this project, the student will select between 5 and 8 countries, study the variance of several indicators of democratic quality, and then design a hypothesis for testing that explains this variance. The method of analysis may range from qualitative case comparisons to quantitative techniques involving nonparametric comparison of group characteristics, cluster analysis, and linear regression. This paper will be 8-10 pages in length plus endmatter. A handout will be posted on the course Moodle page well before the assignment deadline.

**Group Data Coding Project**

After the first two weeks, small teams of students will be assembled by the professor to work on a common project involving the design and measurement of political institutional variables. The guiding principle of the project will be measuring the quality of democracy in comparative perspective and over time. This project will involve extensive data gathering and meetings with the professor to design variables measuring different dimensions of the quality of democracy. Once assembled, each team will contribute a module to a common dataset that will then be used for basic nonparametric analysis. A series of short handouts will explain the different steps of this project. Students will be assessed on their collaborative skills and their collective work products.
Class Participation

Communicating your insight into the subjects analyzed in this course is an integral part of the learning experience. In no way do I consider class participation a residual category for subjectively determining the final grade. In this course, I will evaluate your performance in both formal, scheduled presentations and informal class discussion. The following are structured presentation formats that will be used in this course, in addition to the formal presentation of the group data coding project:

(1) A simulation on transitions to democracy.
(2) A debate “tournament” on the quality of democracy and the role of corruption.
(3) Two case study exercises.
(4) Small group discussions on selected questions and cases.

In addition to these activities, occasionally students will prepare homework assignments or answer written and oral questions based on the readings and the lectures. These periodic “diagnostics” will assess listening and reading comprehension skills. They will compose half of the total participation score in the final assessment but will be individually ungraded. Progress and overall performance by the end of the term will dictate how the diagnostics will be assessed.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:

98-100 A+
94-97 A
91-93 A-
88-90 B+
83-87 B
79-82 B-
76-78 C+
72-75 C
68-71 C-
67/below D/F

Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see the useful handout on “Avoiding Academic Misconduct,” available on the course webpage.
Special Needs

Students requiring access to learning tools/special schedules approved by Student Support Services should contact me at the beginning of the course.

NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.

PART I:

REGIMES AND TRANSITIONS

The Murder of Democracy (Monday, March 29)


Types of Authoritarianism (Wednesday, March 31)


The Outlier: Totalitarianism (Friday, April 2)


Film: “The Architecture of Doom” (Dir. Peter Cohen, Germany). Will be screened over the weekend in LIBR 344 (time and date TBA).
The Determinants of Regime Change (1): Modernization and Social Conflict Theory
(Monday, April 5)


The Determinants of Regime Change (2): Elite Approaches and Strategic Interaction
(Wednesday, April 7)


The “Resurrection of Civil Society”: Pressures for Transition “From Below” (Friday, April 9)


The Transitions Game: Strategic Interaction Tested in the Classroom (Monday, April 12)

The Transitions Simulation

PART II:

THE QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY

Assessing the “Quality of Democracy”: Hybrid Regimes and their Varieties (Wednesday, April 14)


Elite Accountability and Government Responsiveness (Friday, April 16; Monday, April 19)


Electoral Authoritarianism (Wednesday, April 21)


Class on Friday, April 23 cancelled due to the Midwest Political Science Association meetings.

Machine Politics: Patronage, Clientelism, and Patrimonialism (Monday, April 26 & Wednesday, April 28)


Guest lecture: Simeon Nichter (Carleton Class ’98), via Skype.

Monday, May 3 is Midterm Break

Vote-Buying (Friday, April 30 & Wednesday, May 5)


*Case #1: Monitoring and Re-designing an Electoral System*

**Electoral Fraud (Friday, May 7)**


**The Geography of Democratic Quality: Subnational Authoritarianism (Monday, May 10)**


PART III

CORRUPTION AND DEMOCRACY

What Does Corruption Do To Democracy? (Wednesday, May 12)


Corruption and the Economy (Friday, May 14)


Elections, Campaign Finance, and Graft (Monday, May 17 and Wednesday, May 19)


Case Studies of Corruption (Friday, May 21)


Case #2: Designing Auditing Institutions to Prevent Corruption

*Debate Tournament: Designing Political Institutions* (Monday May 24-Wednesday June 2)