This is a seminar on the nature and consequences of democracy. It is a companion course to "Comparative Research on Democratization," which examines causes of democracy. However, neither seminar is a prerequisite for the other.

"Comparing Democracies" is a semester-long workshop devoted to establishing rigorous criteria for evaluating how democratic "democracies" are and what difference it makes. During most of the post-war era, U.S. political science moved toward a consensus on a narrow, liberal-pluralist concept of democracy that reduced a rich and complex tradition to electoral competition, broad suffrage, and certain attendant institutions. This was a useful concept for several decades, as it made possible an increasingly rigorous program of research on the causes and consequences of democracy. But at the end of the Third Wave, it has become hard to ignore the price that we paid for this productivity. Now there are many more countries that satisfy the minimal requirements for a narrow version of democracy. At the same time we are painfully aware that some democracies are much more “democratic” than others. Yet the concept we inherited does not provide us with clear criteria for making such judgments. The purpose of this seminar is to reconsider, in a more broad-minded frame of mind, what the essential components of democracy are, and to examine empirically their interrelationships and their consequences for other social and political values. We will read and discuss selected theoretical works–some old, some recent– that propose definitions of and justifications for democracy. We will break down the concepts into measurable components and function as a research team to produce qualitative and quantitative indicators of the quality of democracy. Students will also present and critique their own research on the consequences of these qualities of democracy for war and peace, political culture, governability, and economic policy and performance. The seminar includes practical instruction on concept formation, measurement theory, dimensional analysis, and other methodological tools that would be useful for analyzing many complex political phenomena besides democracy.

Grades are based on
25% oral critiques of readings most weeks, including discussing a classmate’s draft paper
5% defense of a model of democracy on September 3 or 10
10% country ratings for Polyarchy Scale, due September 24
15% proposal presented at brainstorming session on October 15
20% for the draft presented in class December 3 or 10
25% for the revised, final version of the paper turned in by December 15.

Please do not plan on taking an Incomplete for this course. It is almost always a bad idea, as you are not likely to have more time to devote to your paper later on. For this reason, I will deduct one sign (eg., A to A-) from the grade of any paper turned in over Winter Break, and two signs (eg., A to B+) for any paper turned in by the absolute deadline of exam week of the spring 2010 semester. By Graduate School rules, any paper not turned in by that date automatically becomes an F (failing).
Books available for purchase at the bookstore are:


There is no course packet. Unless otherwise noted, required journal *articles* will be available through electronic journals and required book *chapters* will be available through electronic reserves. Recommended readings are not on reserve.

---

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments**


No reading assignment.

*Exercise:* You will be randomly assigned a model of democracy. For the next class, write a definition of that model of democracy in your own words and list arguments in favor of adopting this model. (Print this out and give it to me at the end of the next class.) Why should we, as political scientists, understand democracy in this way? You should use the relevant passages of Held’s _Models of Democracy_ as a starting point, but feel free to explore additional sources on your own. You may read his descriptions of the other models less carefully, but do at least study his summary tables with care.

_Sep tem ber 3 (Class cancelled due to APSA Meeting in Toronto. We will need to schedule a make-up session): Thick and Thin Concepts of Democracy_

Democracy has been defined in a great variety of inconsistent ways. One way of dealing with conceptual diversity is to redefine the concept in a narrower way. U.S. political scientists have tended to narrow the concept to a liberal-pluralist model. Why did they do this? What are the advantages of adopting this thin concept of democracy? What are the costs?

*Come to class prepared to argue in favor of your assigned model, whether you agree with it or not. The best debater will win a prize! Also bring your definition to hand in. (5% of grade.)*
Classical democracy, pp. 11-28 (Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Pericles)
Republicanism, pp. 29-55 (Cicero, Marsilius of Padua, Machiavelli, Rousseau, Wollstoncraft)
Liberal democracy, pp. 56-96 (Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, Madison, James Mill, Bentham, JS Mill)
Marxism & corporatism, pp. 96-122, 172-184, & 217-230 (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Callinicos, Offe, Miliband, Poulantzas)
Competitive elitism, pp. 125-157 (Weber, Schumpeter)
Pluralism, pp. 158-184 (Truman, Dahl; Neo-Pluralism)
Legal democracy, pp. 201-209 (Hayek, Nozick)
Participatory democracy, pp. 209-216 (Pateman, Macpherson)
Deliberative democracy, pp. 231-255 (Habermas, Fishkin, Dryzek, Gutmann, Young, Beetham)
Cosmopolitan democracy, pp. 290-311 (Held)

Everyone must also read this article:

**Recommended**
September 10. Conceptualization and Measurement Theory
Is it possible to “measure” complex concepts such as “democracy”? What are the standards for doing it well?

*Assignment: Write your own definition of democracy and bring it to this class.


Peter Mair, “Getting the Concepts Right,” APSA-CP (Summer 2009). [in course folder]

Recommended

September 17. Measurement in Practice
How does one actually DO this?!

**Instructions will be given for the measurement exercise for next week.


Recommended

September 24. Exercise in Replicating the Polyarchy Scale
**By noon today, you must save to your dropbox in the course folder your country ratings for the polyarchy scale replication (10% of grade). In the first half of the class, we will do the scaling in class and assess internal and inter-coder reliability. In the second half of the class, we will explore external validity of this scale by comparing scores with democracy indicators compiled by the Quality of
Government Institute. Prepare for this by scanning through:


**Please plan to discuss your paper with me privately, alone or as a team, before spring break.**

October 1. Indicators of Democracy
Each of you will be assigned one indicator to report on. What is the concept it is intended to measure? What does it actually measure? How extensively has it been measured? How reliably has it been measured? What would this indicator be useful for?

Freedom House, “Methodology.”
http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=35&year=2005


Recommended
October 8. Debates about Measuring Democracy
What difference does it make how we measure democracy?


Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (2002): 5-34. (Recommended: discussion following this article)


**Recommended**


October 15. Brainstorming Session
**Write a proposal of 500-1000 words to do at least two of the following: a) define a component of democracy (preferably a neglected one) and justify its inclusion in the concept of democracy; b) develop a procedure to operationalize some aspect of democracy; c) develop a hypothesis about a consequence of a country either possessing or lacking a component of democracy; d) test a hypothesis about a consequence of some aspect of democracy. Present this in class. Students with similar interests are welcome to collaborate on the seminar paper, especially if they have**
complementary skills or backgrounds. 15% of grade.

**October 22: No class due to Fall Break**

**October 29. Consequences of Democracy: War and Peace**
**Please plan to discuss your paper with me privately again, alone or as a team, before this class.**


**Recommended**


**November 5. Consequences of Democracy: Culture and Public Opinion**


Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (Yale UP,


**Recommended**


**November 12. Consequences of Democracy: Governability, Public Order, and Human Rights**

**By this class meeting, each student will sign up to serve as a discussant for another student’s paper. Coauthored papers will have more than one discussant.**

Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*, chapters 14 and 15 (pp. 243-274).


**Recommended**


November 19. (I will be in Quito for the FLACSO anniversary, I would like to schedule a make-up class.) *Consequences of Democracy: Economic Policy and Performance*


Carles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge UP, 2003), chapters 5 and 6 (pp. 171-232).


**Recommended**


**November 26: No class due to Thanksgiving Holiday**

**December 3 and 10. Presentation of research papers**

**You must email a copy of your draft paper to the class and me by the previous class meeting. This draft counts as 20% of your course grade, so it is crucial to have a good draft ready on time. Final drafts for grading will be due on the official exam date for this course. (There is no final exam.) The final draft counts 25%, and grading standards rise between the first and last drafts, so substantial improvement is expected.

**Second drafts of papers will be due by 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 15.**