SEMIRAN: DEMOCRATIZATION AND REGIME TRANSITION

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This seminar surveys the well-established literature on "regimes and transitions." The focus is on the historical, structural, and institutional themes in this literature, though we will also dabble a bit on the cultural and the behavioral. Major topics include regime types, transition, democratic consolidation, regime breakdown, institutional choice, political economy of transition and breakdown, culture, and the new authoritarianism. The readings are purposely diverse in terms of the approach and method employed.

PREREQUISITES: Open to graduate students.

WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE THIS COURSE? "Regimes and transitions" is an important topic in comparative politics. If comparative is your first or second field, it will help to prepare you for your qualifying exams. If your regional interests lie in Europe or Latin America you find a great deal of material drawn from these areas. We will also do some reading on Africa and Asia as well. If you plan to conduct research on democratization, the course will familiarize you with the literature on this subject, and your notes and written work will serve as a foundation for preparing future literature reviews.

REQUIREMENTS: There is substantial reading each week (five articles or a book, or some combination thereof). Careful reading and preparation for active and cogent participation in class discussions is essential. Students will be required to serve as discussant for one week's readings, and will also prepare a research paper.

Discussant: Each student will be responsible for leading discussion for one seminar during the semester. This assignment also includes writing a discussion paper on that week's reading assignment. The paper should summarize the major research questions raised by the readings and the major theses of the authors. It should also discuss the hypotheses framed, structures of inference, and evidence used in each of the readings. It should also raise topics for further discussion, critically evaluate the literature, and, if relevant, relate that week's readings to those from earlier weeks. Discussion papers are due at 9:00 am on Friday before the week's seminar meeting and should be distributed to the class via email. All participants should also read the paper carefully before the seminar.

Research paper: Each student will produce an original research paper that touches upon one or more of themes taken up in class. There are no strictures on the approach that you may take on the paper. It may be scientific or interpretative in approach. All methods are allowed, from large-n regression models to game theory to small-n cross-national to individual case studies.
All papers must pay attention to good theorizing (whatever the tradition) and must also marshal compelling evidence in support of the paper’s theoretical argument. Often a normal science framework (introduction, literature review, theory, hypotheses, methods, variables, results, conclusions) can facilitate this. It is by no means required that you follow this format; but papers need to be well-organized, cogently argued, and well-written no matter how the work is presented.

Obviously, the subject needs to be related to the themes raised in the course. If you are unsure about whether a topic pertains please see me as soon as possible. You will need to work on the paper in parallel to your coursework. By week eight, you need to be prepared to have substantive discussion with me on what your paper topic will be. I will expect you to have concrete ideas about theory, approach, and design. If you are interested in one of the topics covered later in the course, you should take a look at this literature earlier in the semester on your own. You are encouraged to use my office hours to discuss research questions or to schedule appointments with me by email. The last class meetings will be devoted to research presentations.

PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION: Course requirements will be weighted in the following manner.

Research paper .................50%
Research meeting ...............10%
Research presentation ..........10%
Participation ....................20%
Discussant .......................10%

READINGS: Several books that you will read in full are available for purchase at the bookstore (Linz, O’Donnell and Schmitter, Teorell, Jamal, Coppedge). Two other books (Dahl, Linz and Stepan), classics from which you will read excerpts, are also available for purchase. All other readings should be available through the UF libraries either electronically or on reserve. Consult the ARES course page for specifics.

SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1 (August 26): Organizational Meeting
Distribution of syllabus, discussion of course and requirements

September 2: Labor Day Holiday

Week 2 (September 9): Classical Approaches


**Recommended Readings:**


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**Week 3 (September 16): Transition and Consolidation**


Week 4 (September 23): **Comparative Historical Analysis**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 5 (September 30): Economic Development and Performance**


Recommended Readings:


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**Week 6 (October 7): Institutions**


Recommended Readings:


Week 7 (October 14): Research I


Week 8 (October 21): Research II

Discussion of research papers, individual appointments

Week 9 (October 28): Culture/Behavior


**Recommended Readings:**


Week 10 (November 4): **Authoritarianism I**


November 11: **Veterans Day Holiday**
Week 11 (November 18): **Authoritarianism II**


**Recommended Reading:**


Week 12 (November 25): **Summing Up**

Jan Teorell. 2010. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World,*

**NB:** A first draft of papers is due by this session.

**Week 13 (December 2): Research Reports**

Depending on the number of papers we will go longer than usual. If that is the case, dinner will be provided.

**Papers due:** December 10.