POS 4931 Politics and the Armed Forces

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday 1:55 to 2:45 PM and Thursday 1:55 PM to 3:50 PM
Class Venue: 0034 Anderson Hall
Professor: Sebastian Elischer
Office: Anderson Hall 212
Office Hours: Tuesday 10 AM to 12 PM
Thursday 4 PM to 5 PM.
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Seminar Description
The subordination of military forces to democratic civilian rule occupies a central space in comparative politics and can be seen as one of the oldest problems of human governance. Whether and how a society controls those who possess the ultimate power of physical coercion, and ensures their loyalty to the particular government in power is essential to democratic governance. Civilian control of the military is of concern in established democracies such as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom or France but even more so in the many nascent democracies of Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Arab world. Governments of these young or less institutionalized democracies must ensure that the military - often the previous holder of power - will not stage a coup or otherwise defy their effective power to govern. In many of these countries the military remains deeply involved in politics through informal channels. The focus of the class is on civil-military relations in young democracies. It discusses the key concepts of civil-military scholarship and applies these concepts to a diverse set of empirical cases from across the globe. At the heart of the seminar are the following questions: a) What does the concept of civilian democratic control actually entail? b) What are the major challenges in ensuring the democratic control of the armed forces? c) Which factors cause the military to overthrow democratically elected governments? d) What are the long-term political and economic consequences of military rule?

Requirements, Assignments and Grading
Students must read the assigned material for each week and come to class prepared. I expect students to attend all classes and participate in class discussions. If you cannot make it to class please let me know prior to the class which you cannot attend. If this is not possible please contact me as soon as you can.

In order to get full credits students have to pass several assignments.
1. All students need to give a class presentation (as part of a group of 3; the presentation should last no longer than 25 minutes in total) on a topic related to the weekly readings. The oral presentation must cover material not included in the required reading. You are required to discuss the content of your presentation with me during my office hours one week prior to the presentation. I will provide help identifying suitable literature/ topic for your presentation. The presentation accounts for 20% of
your final grade. All student presentations take place on Thursday. In Week 7 student presentations take place on Tuesday and on Thursday.

2. Two tests in class. The tests accounts for 50% (2x25%) of your final grade and cover the concepts and issues we discuss in class.

3. A research memo (5 pages including bibliography; Time New Roman 12, double-spaced) covering contemporary civil-military relations in a country of your choice. By week 8 all students must submit an outline of their final paper to me electronically. All students must discuss their final paper with me during my office hours. During the last week of class all students are invited to discuss their final paper in class. The final research paper accounts for 30% of your grade. The memo is due on December 9 at 7 PM.

Grading scale
A  91 or above   B  81-84
A- 88-90       B- 78-80
B+ 85-87      C+ 75-77

Policies on Persons with Disabilities
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. It will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Anyone with a disability should feel free to see me during office hours to make the necessary arrangements.

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism
All students should observe the University of Florida’s standards of academic honesty. In the event that a student is found cheating or plagiarizing, he/she will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs and to the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator for possible dismissal from the program. Acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or another assignment that was written by someone else (i.e., by another student, by a research service, or downloaded off the Internet);
- Copying, verbatim, a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without properly acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted citation style and using quotation marks;
- Paraphrasing (i.e., restating in your own words) text written by someone else without citing that author;
- Using a unique idea or concept, which you discovered in a specific reading, without citing that work.

Policy on Late Assignments
I understand that sometimes there are reasons why an assignment cannot be handed in on time. If you anticipate such a situation please contact me asap. This MUST happen prior to the deadline of the assignment.

Books
There is no textbook to purchase for this class. Each week students must read a number of articles. I will try and upload some of the reading on the UF online learning system.
Any of the sessions may be subject to change

**Week 1, August 22 and 24: Getting Started**
Organizational meeting, getting to know each other, expectations and assignments, introduction of open source databases, discussion of syllabus, key concepts and topics of civil-military relations.


**Week 2, August 29 and 31: Getting Concepts Right: Democratization and Democratic Civilian Control of the Armed Forces I**
We discuss basic definitions of democracy and review the so-called “third wave of democratization”. We examine the differences between a democratic transition and a democratic consolidation.


**Week 3, September 5 and 7, Getting Concepts Right: Democratization and Democratic Civilian Control of the Armed Forces II**
What does democratic control of the armed forces mean in practice? Why should ordinary citizens care about the role of the armed forces?


**Week 4, September 12 and 14: Civilian Control in the United States I**
We examine highly influential studies on civil-military relations in the United States. Although these texts were written decades ago, they continue to shape the thinking behind the role of the military in new democracies.


“The Civil-Military Industrial Complex.” Speech by President Dwight Eisenhower.

**Week 5, September 19 and 21: Civilian Control in the United States II**


**Week 6, September 26 and September 28: Civilian Control in Young Nations**

We examine why the armed forces overthrow democratically elected regimes and the factors that are conducive to military coups.


*On September 26, the first test takes place in class covering the material we discuss during Week 1 and Week 5!*

**Week 7, October 3 and 5: Coups and Their Causes. Empirical Evidence from Across the World**

Building on last week’s class we examine a few countries which have experienced military coups in greater detail.

Please read two of the following


Week 8, October 10 and 12: The Military as Pillar of Autocratic Rule
Many autocratic governments are led by civilian rulers. These regimes often rely on the military in order to remain in power. We examine some prominent cases.


Week 9, October 17: The Challenges of Rebuilding Democratic Civilian Rule
No class on October 19. In the last 25 years many former military dictatorships underwent democratic transitions. The removal of the armed forces from power is a challenging task for incoming democratic governments. We analyze some of these challenges.


Week 10, October 24 and 26: Successful Democratization and its Effect on Civil-Military Relations
The re-establishment of democratic rule after military dictatorship is challenging but not impossible. We discuss the effect of democratization on civil-military relations in countries where democratization has been successful.


Week 11, October 31 and November 2: Security Sector Reform
Many new democracies have put in place institutional oversight mechanisms in order to establish democratic control of the armed forces. We examine some of these reforms and their implications.

The required reading is yet to be determined

Week 12: November 7 and 9: The Arab Spring
The Arab Spring has changed the global geostrategic landscape. We examine the role of Arab armies in facilitating and in countering democratic transitions.


**Week 13, November 14:**
*The second test takes place on November 14 in class covering the material we discuss during Week 6 and Week 12. No class on November 16.*

**Week 14: November 21 and 23: When Coups Lead to Democratization**
A prominent assumption in the literature is that military coups lead to military dictatorship and thus to autocratic rule. Most recent research, however, argues that coups increasingly lead to democratization. The implications of military coups, therefore, might be considerably more nuanced than assumed previously.


**Week 15: November 28 and 30:** No class. Students should use the time to work on their final research assignment. All students need to discuss their assignment with me during office hours.

**Week 16: December 5:** Contemporary Civil-Military Relations
The content of this meeting is determined by national or international events.