

**CPO 4731: Democratization in Global Perspective**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Florida  
Fall 2025

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**Course Information**

Lecture: Tuesday 8:30 AM - 10:25 AM (AND 0101)  
Thursday 9:35 AM - 10:25 AM (AND 0101)

**Course Description**

What is democracy and why has it spread across the globe? Will it continue? This course will teach students about dictatorships, democratization, and democratic breakdown. We will examine the different "waves" of democratization, explore how country-specific attributes and international factors shape democratic transitions, and discuss how institutional arrangements impact democratic consolidation.

**Course Objectives**

In this course we will:

- Assess typologies and use them to categorize regimes.
- Evaluate major theories of democratization and democratic breakdown.
- Analyze historical waves of democratization.
- Understand the impact of institutions on representation, and governance.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

A student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

- Identify different types of political regimes.
- Explain the dominant theoretical approaches for explaining regime change.
- Describe the various strategies that authoritarian regimes use to forestall change.
- Assess how institutional design affects representation and governance.
- Analyze a complex political situation, develop persuasive, evidence-based recommendations, and effectively communicate information to a decision-maker.

## **Course Materials**

There is one required book for this course. Students can purchase the book in the UF Bookstore or online. All the other articles and book chapters can be found on the UF E-Learning (Canvas) at <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>.

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

## **Graded Work**

- Class Attendance and participation (10%)

You are expected to attend all class meetings prepared for an in-depth discussion of the assigned course material. Students will be awarded one point for each class session attended and one point for their participation during a class session. These cannot be made up but may be waived with a documented excused absence. The lowest two scores are dropped.

Participation may include providing personal insight to the material, outside articles, current events, or responding to classmates. I understand some students may feel uncomfortable speaking in class, however, all students will benefit from hearing a wide range of perspectives. I encourage you to step outside your comfort zone to ask, answer, or comment on a question throughout the course. If you are someone who frequently contributes to class discussion, I urge you to be considerate of your fellow classmates and provide opportunities for others who wish to speak.

- Policy Recommendation Memos (30%)

Each student will write two policy memos. Each memo will be approximately 1,500 words in length. You will receive additional instructions on these memos in class. The deadlines for these two memos can be found in the class schedule below.

- Midterm Exam (30%)

There will be an in-class midterm exam on October 7, 2025. It is worth 30% of the final grade. Students should review all the class materials and apply them in answering the question(s).

- Final Exam (30%)

There will be a final exam on December 8, 2025 from 3-5pm. It is worth 30% of the final grade. Students should review all the class materials and apply them when answering the question(s).

## **Grading Scale**

Percent	Grade
93.0-100	A
90.0-92.9	A-
87.0-89.9	B+
83.0-86.9	B
80.0-82.9	B-
77.0-79.9	C+
73.0-76.9	C
70.0-72.9	C-
67.0-69.9	D+
63.0-66.9	D
60.0-62.9	D-
0-59.9	E

## **Course Policies**

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Florida is an institution of learning, research, and scholarship that is strengthened by the existence of an environment of integrity. It is essential that all members of the University practice academic integrity and accept individual responsibility for their work and actions. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction and referral to the university's Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult me.

**Participation:** To successfully pass this course, your participation and engagement is necessary. Students must be prepared to discuss the readings and other materials listed for that day. However, if you are sick or have been in contact with someone who is sick please stay home and take care of yourself. If you miss class, you are encouraged to ask your classmates for their notes or come to office hours to talk about the material you missed.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies.

**Lecture Slides:** I will post lecture slides on the course website at the conclusion of each class meeting. The slides are meant as a guide and are in no way a substitute for attending lecture. My hope is that by making the slides available students will not feel that they must spend the entire class furiously taking notes and instead pay close attention to the lecture, ask questions, and participate deeply in class discussion.

**Communication:** Students should use Canvas to contact me. Although you may email me at my UF email account, the university strongly encourages communication via Canvas to avoid the potential of violations of student confidentiality protected by [FERPA](#). I encourage students to make an appointment and visit me during office hours to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the course.

**Email/Messaging Hours:** You may email or message me via Canvas at any time that is convenient to you. I will respond within one business day between the hours of 9am and 5pm. If you do not receive a reply from me after 24 hours, please resend your message. Although I may sometimes reply outside of these designated hours, responses cannot be guaranteed after 5pm on weekdays, weekends, or holidays. Please plan accordingly to have your questions answered in advance of assignment and exam deadlines.

**Exams:** There are two exams. Exams will draw from all assigned readings up to that point. If you know you will miss the exam for a UF-sponsored commitment (e.g. traveling with the debate team, softball team, orchestra, ROTC, etc.) *or* for some foreseeable personal commitment *that is not discretionary* (e.g. a scheduled medical procedure, like surgery) *or* because of an existential-level family emergency (e.g. death, medical emergency you will be able to make up the exam. If the miss is because of a scheduled event, you must let me know at least two weeks in advance (email is perfectly acceptable and preferred). I will work with you to make accommodations, but it is your responsibility to arrange with me to take a makeup exam.

**Grades Adjustment:** I do not round or adjust grades under any circumstances. This policy is not an attempt to be harsh but to hold all students in equal standing. I do not offer extra credit on an individual basis. All opportunities for extra credit, if any, will be announced on Canvas.

**Late or Make-up Assignments:** Work that is late due to a university-approved absence will be accepted without penalty. If an assignment is submitted late for reasons unrelated to a university-approved absence, it will be penalized 1 full letter grade the first day it is late and 3 percent each day thereafter. No late work will be accepted more than seven calendar days past due.

Acceptable reasons for work to be late include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena).

## University Policies and Resources

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/).” (The direct link is <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>.)

## Course Schedule

### **Week 1: Introduction**

8.21.25      Course Introduction

### **Week 2: Democracy and Dictatorship**

8.26.25      What is democracy? How do we define it? How should we define it?  
Coppedge, Michael. *Democratization and Research Methods*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. (Chapter 2, pages 11-48)  
**Print out the freedom house activity word doc**

8.28.25      What are dictatorships?

Ezrow, Natasha, and Erica Frantz. *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and Their Leaders*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2011. (Chapter 1, pages 1-24)

### **Week 3: Waves of Democracy**

9.2.25      Venezuela Case Study

Corrales, Javier, and Michael Penfold-Becerra. *Dragon in the Tropics: Hugo Chávez and the Political Economy of Revolution in Venezuela*. Brookings Institution Press, 2011. (Read just the Introduction, pages 1-14)

Handlin, Samuel. "Mass Organization and the Durability of Competitive Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Venezuela." *Comparative Political Studies* 49.9 (2016): 1238-1269. (Read 1246-1253; 1257-1258)

Naím, Moisés, and Francisco Toro. "Venezuela's Suicide." *Foreign Affairs* 97 (2018): 126.

9.4.25      Waves of Democracy

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Vol. 4. University of Oklahoma press, 1993. (Chapter 1, pages 3-31)

Doorenspleet, Renske. "Reassessing the Three Waves of Democratization." *World Politics*. 52 (1999): 384-401.

## **Week 4: Determinants of Democratization**

### 9.9.25 Alternative Approaches

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. (Chapter 1)

Diamond, Larry. 2010. 'Why are there no Arab democracies?' *Journal of Democracy*. 21(1): 93-104. DOI: 10.1353/jod.0.0150

Liu, Yu, and Dingding Chen. "Why China Will Democratize." *The Washington Quarterly* 35.1 (2012): 41-63.

### 9.11.25 Foundations of Democracy

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. (Chapter 2)

Recommended: Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1994. 'The social requisites of democracy revisited.' *American Sociological Review*. 59: 1-22.

## **Week 5: Structural vs Social Forces**

### 9.16.25 Economic Determinants

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. (Chapter 3)

Przeworski, Adam and Limongi, Fernando. 1997. Modernization: Theories and facts. *World Politics*, 49(3):155–83. (Read 155-169)

### 9.18.25 Popular Mobilization

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. (Chapter 5)

## **Week 6: Masses and Elites**

### 9.23.25 Revolutionary Surprise

Kuran, Timur. 1991. "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989". *World Politics*, 44:7–48.

King, Gary, Pan, Jennifer, and Roberts, Margaret E. 2013. How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression. *American Political Science Review*. Read (326-328)

Weyland, Kurt. "The Arab Spring: Why the Surprising Similarities with the Revolutionary Wave of 1848?." *Perspectives on Politics* 10.4 (2012): 917-934.

9.25.25 *Interests and Actions*

Geddes, Barbara. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press, 2003. (Read pages 50-86)

**Week 7: Democratic Transitions**

9.30.25 *Relinquishing Power*

McFaul, Michael. "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World." *World Politics* (2002): 212-244.

Smith, Peter H. "Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective." *New York* (2005). (Read 62-70; 90-106)

10.2.25 *Survival*

Ezrow, Natasha, and Erica Frantz. *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and Their Leaders*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2011. (Read pages 54-61; 67-77)

Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse*. Cambridge University Press, 2018. (Skim pages 129 to 136; Read pages 137-143)

**Week 8: Midterm**

10.7.25 *Midterm Exam*

10.9.25 Authoritarian Elections

Blaydes, Lisa. "Authoritarian Elections and Elite Management: Theory and Evidence From Egypt." *Princeton University Conference on Dictatorships*. 2008.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Read the Introduction)

## **Week 9: Democracy via the Ballot**

### 10.14.25 Stolen Elections

Cantú, Francisco. "The Fingerprints of Fraud: Evidence from Mexico's 1988 Presidential Election." *American Political Science Review* 113.3 (2019): 710-726.

Tucker, Joshua A. 2007. Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(4):535–551.

Robertson, Graeme. "Political orientation, information and perceptions of election fraud: Evidence from Russia." *British Journal of Political Science* 47.3 (2017): 589-608.

### 10.16.25 When do Elections Lead to Change?

Bunce, Valerie J., and Sharon L. Wolchik. "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *World Politics* 62.1 (2010): 43-86.

Donno, Daniela. "Elections and Democratization in Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science* 57.3 (2013): 703-716.

## **Policy Brief 1 Due**

## **Week 10: Prospects for Democratization**

### 10.21.25 Russia Case Study

Treisman, Daniel. 2011. The return: Russia's journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev. New York: Free Press Chapter 7 and Chapter 10

Frye, Timothy, Scott Gehlbach, Kyle L. Marquardt, and Ora John Reuter. "Is Putin's popularity real?." *Post-soviet affairs* 33, no. 1 (2017): 1-15.

Recommended: Watch: "Putin's Way" (2015).

### 10.23.25 Impetus from Abroad

Teorell, Jan. *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. (Read Chapter 4)

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and George W. Downs. "Intervention and Democracy." *International Organization* (2006): 627-649.



## Week 11: Exporting Democracy

### 10.28.25 Democratization from Abroad

Finkel, Steven E., Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Mitchell A. Seligson. "The Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003." *World Politics*. 59 (2006): 404.

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. "Linkage Versus Leverage. Rethinking the International Dimension of Regime Change." *Comparative Politics* (2006): 379-400.

### 10.30.25 Institutional Design

The Politics of Electoral Systems (PES). 2008. Eds. Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell. Oxford University Press. (Read pages 1-14)

Meisburger, Timothy M. "Debating Electoral Systems: Getting majoritarianism right." *Journal of Democracy* 23.1 (2012): 155-163.

Reynolds, Andrew, and John M. Carey. "Debating Electoral Systems: Getting Elections Wrong." *Journal of Democracy* 23.1 (2012): 164-168.

## Week 12: Electoral Arrangements

### 11.4.25 Electoral Laws and Political Parties

Lipset, Seymour Martin. "The indispensability of political parties." *Journal of democracy* 11.1 (2000): 48-55.

Drutman, Lee, & Rob Oldham. 2024 "Governing the House with Multiple Parties" New America Foundation: 6-50.

### Policy Brief 2 Due

### 11.6.25 Inclusive Legislatures

Rosen, Jennifer. 2013. "The Effects of Political Institutions on Women's Political Representation: A Comparative Analysis of 168 Countries from 1992 to 2010." *Political Research Quarterly*, 66 (2): pp 306-321.

Htun, Mala. *Inclusion Without Representation in Latin America: Gender Quotas and Ethnic Reservations*. Cambridge University Press, 2016. (Read Chapter 5)

### **Week 13: Presidentialism**

11.11.25      Holiday - No class

11.13.25      *The Executive*

Böckenförde, Markus. "The Design of the Executive Branch" *A Practical Guide to Constitution Building*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), 2011.

Mainwaring, Scott, and Matthew Shugart. "Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal." *Comparative Politics* (1997): 449-471.

### **Week 14: Consolidation**

11.18.25      *Democratic Consolidation and Backsliding*

Schedler, Andreas. "Measuring Democratic Consolidation." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36.1 (2001): 66-92.

Gasiorowski, Mark J., and Timothy J. Power. "The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation: Evidence from the Third World." *Comparative Political Studies* 31.6 (1998): 740-771.

Waldner, David, and Ellen Lust. (2018). "Unwelcome change: Coming to terms with democratic backsliding." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 93-113.

Little, Andrew T., and Anne Meng. "Measuring democratic backsliding." *PS: Political Science & Politics* (2023): 1-13.

11.20.25      *Preventing Erosion*

Gamboa, Laura. "Opposition at the Margins: Strategies against the Erosion of Democracy in Colombia and Venezuela." *Comparative Politics* 49.4 (2017): 457-477.

### **Week 15: Final Review**

12.2.25      Final Review

### **Final Exam**

12.8.25      3-5 PM