AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES
Special Topics in Comparative Politics
Political Science 7971

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Thursdays 9:00-12:00
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Fall 2011

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a graduate-level seminar focusing on various aspects of contemporary non-democratic regimes, such regimes constituting roughly half of the countries of the world. While labeled generically as “authoritarian” regimes, these non- or pseudo-democracies take various forms, and have different political goals, different administrative styles, and different attitudes toward the societies they seek to govern. The seminar readings seek to reflect this diversity within authoritarian regimes and to provide a useful introduction to literature in this sub-field.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each student’s semester grade will be determined on the basis of three tasks, detailed below.

[1] Research paper: weighted at 40 percent of the course grade. This paper is to be modeled on a typical conference paper. The paper can focus on any aspect of authoritarianism, but must seek to make a contribution to an extant scholarly debate in the literature. It must be fully cited and written to professional standards. Topics must be cleared by the instructor. This paper is due no later than Thursday, December 1.

[2] Weekly reaction papers: weighted at a combined 40 percent of the course grade. In a maximum of three double-spaced typed pages each, these weekly papers should focus on issues of interest (problems, debates, inconsistencies, consequences, etc) that emerge from the week’s readings. Papers should be fully cited. Papers are due the morning of each seminar.

[3] In-class performance: weighted at 20 percent of the course grade. Everyone is expected to come to class well prepared, and to have that preparation reflected in their contribution to seminar discussions. Attendance at each of the thirteen seminar sessions is mandatory.

TEXTS

The following six books are required for the course. Additional article- and chapter-length readings will be posted on the course Moodle site.

PB 978-0230202757


- Students seeking reference to foundational works in this field should consider the following texts; they are not required for the course.


TOPICS AND SYLLABUS OF READINGS

1. August 25 Introduction to the Course

2: September 1 Overview of Non-Democratic Regimes


3: September 8 Authoritarian Regime Types (part 1)


4. September 15 Authoritarian Regime Types (part 2)


5: September 22

The Institutional Structure of Authoritarianism


6: September 29

Legitimacy, Compliance and Support


7. October 6

Elections under Authoritarianism


8: October 20  
**Regime Durability, Regime Collapse**


9: October 27  
**Competitive Authoritarianism**


10: November 3  
**Political Culture and Authoritarianism**


11: November 10
Single-Party Authoritarianism


12: November 17
Why Are Some States Democratic and Others Not?


November 24
No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

13: December 1
Authoritarianism’s Aftermath


