

**COMPARATIVE DEMOCRATIZATION**  
**POLSCI 4KC3E**  
**Winter 2023**

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**Lecture:** Thursdays 7-10pm  
**Room:** KTH B101

**Office:** Over zoom  
**Office Hours:** 2-4pm on Fridays over

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## **Course Description**

Democratization is a process that can followed (re)defined, measured and compared across various locales. In this course, we will follow the process from its inception to its maturation and decay as we compare its various iterations to find patterns and factors that contribute to variations. This journey will enhance student understanding of the process, its causes, measures, and effects, and just as importantly hone the students' comparative, analytical, and communicative skills. In the first section of the course, we will define democratization, consider various ways of measurement, and attend to the roots of the process. The second section of the course will have us comparing the process at its mature stage: how diffusion contributes to the process, how consolidation happens and what contributes to backsliding. In the last section, we will consider the roles that the media and civil society can play in stalling or reviving the process.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Define democratization and democracy through a contrast with authoritarianism
- Locate and critically analyze the roots of democratization
- Explain the factors contributing to democratization as well as backsliding
- Recognize assumptions and strength of different theories and arguments, especially as they apply to the issues and case studies considered in class
- Create a foundation from which to build their own original theoretical arguments and research projects involving the politics of democratic and authoritarian regimes
- Exhibit professional and ethical behaviour through teamwork, and the practice of collaborative and respectful questioning of various perspectives

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- All texts will be available on A2L.

## **Class Format**

The course is a three hour seminar on Thursday evenings (7-10pm). Students are expected to have to class having read the assigned material, most often have completed the reading reflection before class, and ready to discuss and apply their understanding. In class, after the third week, during the first 45 minutes of class, a student group will lead the class in activity and discussion of the assigned texts highlighting both their significance. The remainder of the class will be devoted to a semi-structured lecture that will combined with learning activities completed in groups. The discussion, learning activities and semi-structured lectures will prepare students to show their knowledge on the midterm, for their own application of the material to a particular country in their vlogs.

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Midterm	20%	February 16
2. Weekly reflections	8 x 2.5=20%	Ongoing when readings are assigned
3. Presentation	15%	Once, between weeks 4-12
4. Vlog	25%	April 4-6
5. Participation	20%	Ongoing, self-evaluation due April 10

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

### **Midterm (20%), February 16**

Details about Assignment/test 1 The midterm will cover material up to this point in this course (readings and lectures and case studies). It will consist of 50 multiple choice questions. You will have 80 minutes to complete the midterm.

### **Weekly Reflections (8 x 2.5%=20%), ongoing when readings are assigned**

By Wednesday at 11:59pm, BEFORE each week of material is discussed in seminar, you are to submit your reflections on the readings, to show you are prepared for discussion that week. Each reflection is worth 2.5%, and you have a choice before which EIGHT seminars you are submitting your reflections. These reflections should be about one single-spaced page long. You are to put in writing your understanding of the texts/positions expressed in those texts (75% of the texts should be covered). Is there something you do not understand? Is there something you do not agree with? Is there something that you wanted to read in a text and finally found it articulated in this text? Even if you did not agree with something, briefly summarize the position or legal position outlined. The response is supposed to show that you have read the assigned readings. Please cite specific passages or at least page numbers from the texts. In addition to the page reflection, include a question with respect to the material—all of this is meant to show that you are engaging with class material and it will be clear if you are based on your reflections. A reflection that leaves no doubts that you carefully read the material before the seminar will achieve 2.5/2.5. A reflection that shows some of the texts were read to some extent or a reflection that does not cite pages/passages or one that fills the reflection with quotes (there shouldn't be quotes), will achieve a grade between 0 and 2 based on quality. A reflection without proper citations will not receive more than 1/2.5.

### **Presentation (15%), due once between weeks 4 and 12**

Starting in Week 4, you will begin to put democratic principles in practice by leading discussion of the week's material for the first 45 minutes of class. Further instructions will be given in the first weeks of the course.

### **Vlog (25%) April 4-6**

Early in the course, you will be asked to become an advisor for a country of your choosing. Your task will be apply what you learn in this course to advise that country on its democratization process. You will present your analysis and recommendations in a vlog (together with a transcript) and share with classmates on April 4<sup>th</sup>. By April 6<sup>th</sup>, you will critique and assess the analysis of your classmates on the forum, relying on course material. Further instructions will be given during the first weeks of the course.

### **Participation (20%) Ongoing and self-evaluation is due April 10th**

Students are expected to consistently come to classes, demonstrably have read the material, stay for the entire class, pay full attention to what others in the class are contributing, and make valuable contributions to the discussion. Students will assess their own participation in the course using the “Self-assessment of participation” form found on A2L. Reasonable self-assessments will be used without changes, while unreasonable embellishments will be properly re-assessed.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (Jan 12) Introduction**

#### **Week 2 (Jan 19) What is a democratic regime?**

Readings: Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (Yale University Press, 2008). Chapter 1: Democratization and Public Opposition.

Gerardo L. Munck, “What Is Democracy? A Reconceptualization of the Quality of Democracy,” *Democratization* 23, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 1– 26,

Sen, Amartya, “Democracy as a Universal Value,” *Journal of Democracy* 10, no. 3 (July 1999): 3-17.

#### **Week 3 (Jan 26) What is an authoritarian regime?**

Readings: Juan José Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000). Pages 49-63

Stephen H. Haber, “Authoritarian Government,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, ed. Donald A. Wittman and Barry R. Weingast, 2008.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51–65.

#### **Week 4 (Feb 2) Measuring democracy?**

Readings: Haerpfer Bernhagen and Welzel, 2019, “Measuring Democracy”, Chapter 4, pp. 52–66.

Coppedge, Michael et.al. 2011. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach." *Perspectives on Politics* 9(02): 247–67.

Skim: Collier, David, and Robert Adcock. 1999. "Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices About Concepts." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1): 537–65.

Pamela Paxton, "Women's Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 35, no. 3 (September 1, 2000): 92–111.

### **Week 5 (Feb 9) Democratic Configurations: Institutional design debates**

Readings: Lijphart, Arend, "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies," *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 1 (Winter 1991): 72-84.

Linz, Juan J., "The Perils of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy* 1, no. 1 (1990): 51-69.

Horowitz, Donald L., "Comparing Democratic Systems," *Journal of Democracy* 1, no. 4 (1990): 73-79.

### **Week 6 (Feb 16) Midterm**

### **Week 7 (Feb 20-24)**

**Date – Mid-term recess, No Class**

### **Week 8 (Mar 2) Structural Approaches to Democratization (Preconditions School)**

Readings: Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited: 1993 Presidential Address" *The American Sociological Review* 59, no. 1 (1993): 1-22.

Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (1997): 155–83.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel. "Changing Mass Priorities: The Link between Modernization and Democracy." *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (2) (2010): 551–67.

### **Week 9 (Mar 9) Diffusion**

Readings: Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge, "Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 4 (May 1, 2006): 463–89,

Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, "International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*,

Democratic Revolutions in Post-Communist States, 39, no. 3 (September 1, 2006): 283–304

Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, “Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization,” *International Organization* 60, no. 4 (October 2006): 911–33.

### **Week 10 (Mar 16) Consolidation and backsliding**

Readings: Andreas Schedler, “What Is Democratic Consolidation?,” *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 2 (1998): 91–107, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1998.0030>. • Ashutosh Varshney, “India Defies the Odds: Why Democracy Survives,” *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 3 (1998): 36–50,

Şebnem Yardımcı-Geyikçi, “Party Institutionalization and Democratic Consolidation: Turkey and Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective,” *Party Politics* 21, no. 4 (July 1, 2015): 527–38,

David Waldner and Ellen Lust, “Unwelcome Change: Coming to Terms with Democratic Backsliding,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 21, no. 1 (2018): 93–113

Kapstein, Ethan B. and Nathan Converse, “Why Democracies Fail,” *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 4 (Oct. 2008): 57-68.

### **Week 11 (Mar 23) Democracy, Media, and Digital Authoritarianism**

Readings: Stein, Elizabeth A. 2014. ‘The Media in Transitional Democracies’. *Democratization* 21 (3): 579–81.

Greitens, Sheena Chestnut. 2013. ‘Authoritarianism Online: What Can We Learn from Internet Data in Nondemocracies?’ *PS: Political Science & Politics* 46 (2): 262–70.

Freedom on the Net 2018: The Rise of Digital Authoritarianism’. 30 October 2018.

Feldstein, Steven. 2019. ‘The Road to Digital Unfreedom: How Artificial Intelligence Is Reshaping Repression’. *Journal of Democracy* 30 (1): 40–52.

### **Week 12 (Mar 30) The hope of civil society and political culture**

Readings: Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, “Political Culture and Democracy: Analyzing Cross-Level Linkages” *Comparative Politics* Vol. 36. N1 (2003): 61-79.

Alison Brysk, “Democratizing Civil Society in Latin America,” *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 3 (2000): 151–65.

Bellin, Eva (2012). Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring. *Comparative Politics*, 44(2), 127-149.

**Week 13 (April 6) Vlog presentations and discussion**



## **Course Policies**

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

Written assignments are due in the Dropbox on A2L at 11:59pm on the due date listed on the course outline. Do not slip assignments under your prof's office door. Assignments will be assessed 10% late penalty every 24 hours after the due date, including weekends.

If you know that you will have a few assignments due in several classes on the same day, come talk to me about it early (at least a week before deadline) and a short extension may be granted. Extensions are official only in written form, when confirmed through email.

### **Readings, Email, Office Hours, and Other Rules:**

Every student is responsible for all required readings. Some of the texts are more difficult than others. Students are expected to come to every class having read the reading assigned for that class.

I will be happy to meet with you in person or over Zoom, during a time that is convenient for both of us. Come, sit, relax and if you want to talk about the university in general or the course in particular, I'll be glad to see you. My rule for both email communication and office hours is that you meet me half way. (For example, just asking what does Proctor think of science or what is the meaning of life, doesn't give me anything to work with in order to help you out). Be prepared to tell me what you know and what you understand so that we can build on that basis to enrich your understanding and experience.

Sometimes, an email requires a very long response. If your email is really long and requires a long response, it is probably better for us to meet in person or over zoom so that we can have a back and forth and that will also reduce misunderstandings.

I will reply to emails within 24 hours (and usually much quicker), so if you do not get a reply from me within 24 hours, the wires must have crossed somewhere and you should email me again to make sure your email gets through. It doesn't bother me at all, just sometimes an email gets lost in the email box and I actually really appreciate it if you resend after the 24 hours, if I haven't responded to you.

### **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". In this course, an MSAF will give students an extra 3 days (including weekend) extension on the assignment that was MSAFed. There is no need to email your professor after submitting the MSAF. 3 days are automatically added to your assignment due date without penalty.

### **Courses With An On-Line Element**

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Online Proctoring**

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

### **Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection**

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

**All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic**

**integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **Copyright and Recording**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.

- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Conduct Expectations**

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.