Room: 306 E Woodburn Hall  
Dates: 01/09/17 - 04/28/17  
Time: T 2:30 PM-5:20 PM  

Professor: Matthew Wilson  
Email: mwilson1@mix.wvu.edu  
Office: 315D Woodburn Hall  
Office Hours: T 1-2 PM & by appointment  

Mao Tse-tung,  
(P. R.) China 1945-1976  
Augusto Pinochet,  
Chile 1973-1990  

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
What explains the rise and fall of dictators? What, if anything can be learned from the ways they govern? Using theoretical approaches, case studies, and quantitative research, this course examines the politics of authoritarian rule by focusing on dictators and their demise. The graduate seminar on dictatorship provides an introduction to the dominant questions, theories, and empirical research on authoritarian regimes and democratization. The goals of the class are to differentiate among forms dictatorships, identify governing strategies, and discern the long-term impacts of dictatorship on institutional and economic development. The course primarily focuses on broad differences in ruling styles and their relations to the survival of dictators and their regimes. The course has two primary goals: (i) to prepare students for a research career in comparative politics by providing a primer on the conceptualization and measurement of authoritarianism, and (ii) to help prepare doctoral candidates for the comprehensive examination on dictatorship and democracy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Students are expected to  
(1) read assigned materials before the start of each class;  
(2) attend all lectures and participate in class discussions;  
(3) complete three response papers;  

Students should select three weeks from the syllabus. For each of the three weeks, submit a five to ten double-spaced page response summarizing and criticizing the reading(s) and suggesting improvements for future research.  

(4) give an in-class presentation;  

Each student must give a presentation overviewsing the readings for an assigned week, lasting roughly 30 to 45 minutes. In the presentation, the discussant should address the following questions on the readings:

- What is the main question? What is the motivation behind the question?  
- What are the theoretical assumptions? Are the concepts in the theory clearly defined? Are the key actors in the theory individuals, groups, states, or organizations?  
- Are the theoretical assumptions accurate? Are there circumstances under which they might not be true?  
- What are the observable implications of the theory? (If the theory is true, what should we observe?)
• Which implications does the researcher test? Does the research design strategy adequately test the theory?
• What is the unit of analysis? How are cases selected and what is the sample? Is the research design qualitative or quantitative, or both?
• Are the theoretical concepts validly measured? How could they be improved upon?
• How does the research address alternative explanations with the research design? Are there other potential alternative explanations?

The depth of preparation evidenced in the questions and recorded notes, along with the student’s presentation of the material, will determine their grade.

(5) submit a research design paper;

Each student is expected to write a 15 page (double-spaced) research design on a topic related to the study of authoritarianism. The student should explain the importance of the topic and a succinct synthesis of existing research on the issue. After outlining a theory and hypotheses (as well as competing theories), the student should indicate the type of data they propose to use: what is the unit of analysis? Will the project rely on existing data or must data be collected? What sources are available? What are the criteria for choosing cases? What are the strengths and limitations of the proposed sources/data? The research design may call for large-N analysis or case studies, both of which are appropriate. The paper should summarize the data (if available) and describe the anticipated results.

GRADES: Attendance and participation 10%
In-class presentation 30%
(3) Response papers 3 @ 10% = 30%
Research design paper 30%
Total 100%
A: 90-100; B: 80-89.9; C: 70-79.9; D: 60 to 69.9; F: 0-59.9

READING MATERIALS:
Students are expected to be familiar with all books on the syllabus, which will not be provided. All other required readings will be made available online or through the West Virginia University library.

CLASS POLICIES:
Failure to follow class rules will affect the student’s participation grade.
1. The use of cell phones is not permitted.
2. Computers are allowed to take notes only.
3. Please do not read outside materials.
4. Sleeping in class is not allowed.
5. Grades will not be changed if an issue is reported after two weeks have passed.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Academic Integrity. The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Catalog at http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecredittermsclassification/#academicintegritytext. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Adverse Weather Commitment. In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (at least one hour before class starts), using MIX to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

Inclusivity. The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see http://diversity.wvu.edu.

Sexual Misconduct and Resources. West Virginia University (WVU) does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence [BOG Policy 44]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff, but keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Carruth Center, 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC), 304-292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).
Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules. The academic calendar is available at: [http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/westvirginiauniversitycalendar/](http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/westvirginiauniversitycalendar/)

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

‡ Books that students are expected to familiar with.

**Introduction**

01/10  Origins of dictatorship


**Conceptualizing dictatorship**

01/17  What is democracy?


01/24  Varieties of dictatorship


01/31  Continuities of dictatorship


Authoritarian regime types

02/07  Personalist regimes and monarchies


02/14  Military regimes


02/21  Party-based regimes


Strategies of control

02/28  Problems of authoritarian rule


03/07   [Spring Recess]

03/14*  Economic co-optation


03/21  Coercion


03/28  Institutional co-optation


Outcomes

04/04  War and survival


04/11  Growth and modernization


04/18  Transitions from dictatorship


Extensions

04/25  Advanced democracies and authoritarian risk  [Research design paper due]


[+ additional online posts]