

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

**Professor:** Matthew Wilson

**Email:** mhwilson1@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 overviewing 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..)*

<b>GRADES:</b>	Attendance and participation	10%
	In-class presentation	30%
	(3) Response papers	3 @ 10% = 30%
	Research design paper	30%
	<hr/>	
	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/coursecreditstermsclassification/#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/>.

### CLASS SCHEDULE:

‡ Books that students are expected to familiar with.

### Introduction

#### 01/10 *Origins of dictatorship*

North, D. C. (1981). *Structure and Change in Economic History*. Norton, New York.‡

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., and Robinson, J. (2004a). Institutions as the fundamental cause of long-run growth. National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 18481.

Olson, M. (1993). Dictatorship, democracy, and development. *American Political Science Review*, 87(3):567–576.

### Conceptualizing dictatorship

#### 01/17 *What is democracy?*

Munck, G. L. and Verkuilen, J. (2002). Conceptualizing and measuring democracy : Evaluating alternative indices. *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(1):5–34.

Collier, D. and Levitsky, S. (1997). Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research. *World Politics*, 49(3):430–451.

Elkins, Z. (2000). Gradations of democracy? empirical tests of alternative conceptualizations. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(2):293–300.

Schmitter, P. C. and Karl, T. L. (1991). What democracy is... and is not. *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3):67–73.

#### 01/24 *Varieties of dictatorship*

Wilson, M. C. (2013). A discreet critique of discrete regime type data. *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(5):689–714.

Geddes, B., Wright, J., and Frantz, E. (2014b). Autocratic breakdown and regime transitions: A new data set. *Perspectives on Politics*, 12(2):313–331.

Cheibub, J. A., Jennifer, G., and Vreeland, J. R. (2010). Democracy and dictatorship revisited. *Public Choice*, 143:67–101.

Weeks, J. L. (2012). Strongmen and straw men: Authoritarian regimes and the initiation of international conflict. *American Political Science Review*, 106(2):326–347.

#### 01/31 *Continuities of dictatorship*

Bueno de Mesquita, B., Smith, A., Siverson, R. M., and Morrow, J. D. (2005). *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge: MIT Press, (paperback) edition.‡

Wintrobe, R. (2000). *The Political Economy of Dictatorship*. New York: Cambridge University Press.‡

Wright, J., Honaker, J., and Geddes, B. (2014). The latent characteristics that structure autocratic rule. American Political Science Association.

**Authoritarian regime types**02/07 *Personalist regimes and monarchies*

Brownlee, J. (2007b). Hereditary succession in modern autocracies. *World Politics*, 59(4):595–628.

Acemoglu, D., Verdier, T., and Robinson, J. A. (2004b). Kleptocracy and divide-and-rule: A model of personal rule. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2(2-3):162–192.

Bratton, M. and van de Walle, N. (1994). Neo-patrimonial regimes and political transitions in africa. *World Politics*, 46(4):453–489.

Wiarda, H. J. and Kryzaneck, M. J. (1992). Trujillo and the caudillo tradition. In (Ed.), H. M. H., editor, *Caudillos: Dictators in Spanish America*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

02/14 *Military regimes*

Geddes, B., Frantz, E., and Wright, J. G. (2014a). Military rule. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 17:147–162.

Nordlinger, E. A. (1977). *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Government*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood-Cliffs.‡

02/21 *Party-based regimes*

Magaloni, B. (2006). *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.‡

Gandhi, J. and Lust, E. (2009). Elections under authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12:403–422.

Levitsky, S. and Way, L. (2002). The rise of competitive authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2):51–65.

**Strategies of control**02/28 *Problems of authoritarian rule*

Svolik, M. W. (2012). *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.‡

## 03/07 [Spring Recess]

03/14\* *Economic co-optation*

Jensen, N. and Wantchekon, L. (2004). Resource wealth and political regimes in africa. *Comparative Political Studies*, 37(7):816–841.

Ross, M. (2001). Does oil hinder democracy? *World Politics*, 53:325–361.

Haber, S. and Menaldo, V. (2011). Do natural resources fuel authoritarianism? a reappraisal of the resource curse. *American Political Science Review*, 105(1):1–26.

Ulfelder, J. (2007). Natural resource wealth and the survival of autocracies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(8):995–1018.

03/21 *Coercion*

Poe, S. C., Tate, C. N., and Keith, L. C. (1999). Repression of the human right to personal integrity revisited: A global cross-national study covering the years 1976–1993. *International Studies Quarterly*, 43(2):291–313.

Conrad, C. (2011). Constrained concessions: Dictatorial responses to domestic political opposition. *International Studies Quarterly*, 55(4):1167–1187.

King, G., Pan, J., and Roberts, M. E. (2013). How censorship in china allows government criticism but silences collective expression. *American Political Science Review*, 107(2):2.

03/28 *Institutional co-optation*

Gandhi, J. and Przeworski, A. (2007). Authoritarian institutions and the survival of autocrats. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(11):1279–1301.

Brownlee, J. (2007a). *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.‡

Truex, R. (2014). The returns to office in a “rubber stamp” parliament. *American Political Science Review*, 108(2):235–251.

**Outcomes**04/04 *War and survival*

Weeks, J. L. (2008). Autocratic audience costs: Regime type and signaling resolve. *International Organization*, 62((Winter)):35–64.

Fjelde, H. (2010). Generals, dictators, and kings: Authoritarian regimes and civil conflict, 1973–2004. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 27(3):195–218.

Wilson, M. and Piazza, J. (2013). Autocracies and terrorism: Conditioning effects of authoritarian regime-type on terrorist attacks. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(4):941–955.

Debs, A. and Goemans, H. (2010). Regime type, the fate of leaders, and war. *American Political Science Review*, 104(3):430–445.

04/11 *Growth and modernization*

Wright, J. (2008). Do authoritarian institutions constrain? how legislatures affect economic growth and investment. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(2):322–343.

Albertus, M. and Menaldo, V. (2012). If you’re against them you’re with us: the effect of expropriation on autocratic survival. *Comparative Political Studies*, 45(8):973–1003.

Haber, S. (2006). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, chapter Authoritarian Government, pages 693–707. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Przeworski, A. and Limongi, F. (1997). Modernization: Theories and facts. *World Politics*, 49:155–183.

04/18 *Transitions from dictatorship*

Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J. A. (2006). *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, New York.‡

Hellman, J. S. (1998). Winners take all: The politics of partial reform in postcommunist transitions. *World Politics*, 50(2):203–234.

Strand, H., Hegre, H., Gates, S., and Dahl, M. (2011). Democratic waves? global patterns of democratization, 1816–2008. (<http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/bcw2011/strandetal.pdf>).

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

Hetherington, M. J. and Weiler, J. D. (2009). *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.‡

[+ additional online posts]