

**Room:** 321 Gambrell Hall  
**Dates:** 01/10/22 - 05/04/22  
**Time:** W 5:50 PM-8:35 PM

**Professor:** Matthew Wilson

**Email:** wilso929@mailbox.sc.edu  
**Office:** 337 Gambrell Hall  
**Office Hours:** MW 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
& by appointment



Mao Tse-tung,  
(P. R.) China 1945-1976



Augusto Pinochet,  
Chile 1973-1990

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The graduate seminar on dictatorship and democracy 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 varieties of 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 democracy and authoritarianism, and
- (ii) to prepare doctoral candidates for the comprehensive examination on dictatorship and democracy.

### EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of the class, students will be able to:

- Identify dominant debates in the literature on dictatorships and democratization
- Critically evaluate the effects of institutions and strategies on the survival of dictatorship
- Distinguish between the ruling styles and consequences of modern dictators

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**1. *Participation* (40%)

Each student is expected to attend every seminar, read the assigned material before each class, and be prepared to discuss assigned material. In addition:

- Each student will be responsible for summarizing material, preparing questions, and facilitating discussion for *two* classes.
- For each class, students must submit information on *two* articles through the following link: <https://forms.gle/qxe6zPp6uCMNqkqp8>.

Grades will be based on knowledge of the material and on the quality and the frequency of participation.

2. *Written assignments* (5 @ 12% each = 60%)

Each student is expected to write a short paper (minimum seven double-spaced pages) for each of the following prompts:

- i. Outline a question in the literature on dictatorship and democratization. Explain the importance of the topic and provide a succinct synthesis of existing research on the issue. Use it to develop an original empirical argument.
- ii. Outline a research design for testing a specific question related to dictatorship and democratization. Be sure to identify the relevant variables, empirical strategy, case selection/data sources, and expected findings.
- iii. Demonstrate case-specific knowledge by describing background information for one or more real-world examples that validate or challenge a specific theoretical claim related to dictatorship and democratization. Discuss the strength of the evidence.
- iv. Compare and contrast three datasets related to dictatorship and democratization. Discuss sample coverage, coding rules, and conceptual overlap with other measures. Highlight strengths and weaknesses of each.
- v. Perform a preliminary analysis of a specific empirical claim related to dictatorship and democratization. Describe the results and potential extensions.

Papers should be submitted on Blackboard *before* class on the date that they are due. Students may submit papers in any order; see class schedule for due dates.

**GRADES:**

Attendance and participation	40%
(5) Written assignments	5 @ 12% = 60%
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100%

A: 90-100; B+: 87-89; B: 80-86; C+: 77-79; C: 70-76; D+: 67-69; D: 60-66; F: 0-59

**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:**

Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules.

The academic calendar is available at: [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/registrar/academic\\_calendars/2021-22\\_calendar.php](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/registrar/academic_calendars/2021-22_calendar.php).

Information on graduate academic regulations is available at: [http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=78&navoid=2271#Graduate\\_Grading\\_Policies](http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=78&navoid=2271#Graduate_Grading_Policies).

**FINE PRINT:**

Academic Integrity. I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects of this course. For the detailed policy of the University of South Carolina regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, see the University Honor Code: [https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/student\\_conduct\\_and\\_academic\\_integrity/documents/honor\\_code.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_conduct_and_academic_integrity/documents/honor_code.pdf). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any activity that may be interpreted as academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Personal Integrity. I am committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. I will not tolerate discrimination and harassment on the basis of identity or status, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, genetics, or veteran status. For more information on the University Student Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy, see [https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/equal\\_opportunities\\_programs/documents/student\\_non-discrimination\\_and\\_non-harassment\\_policy.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/equal_opportunities_programs/documents/student_non-discrimination_and_non-harassment_policy.pdf). If you want to speak to someone about an incident involving harrasment, sexual assault, or interpersonal violence, you can call 803-777-8248 to talk to a trained interpersonal violence advocate.

Accommodation. 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 Student Disability Resource Center (telephone: 803-777-6142, email: [sasds@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sasds@mailbox.sc.edu), or stop by LeConte College Room 112A). All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services. For more information, see [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/student\\_disability\\_resource\\_center/](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/).

Adverse Weather Commitment. In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use their 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 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 class activities. For weather-related news and announcements, see <https://sc.edu/uofsc/weather/>.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

Note: Students are expected to be familiar with all material in the books listed below but are not required to purchase materials. Access should be available to all readings (see key below).

01/12      *Origins*

\*Stasavage, David. 2020. *The Decline and Rise of Democracy: A Global History from Antiquity to Today*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

01/19      *Dilemmas*

\*Svolik, Milan. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

+ Gehlbach, Scott, Konstantin Sonin, and Milan W. Svolik. 2016. "Formal Models of Nondemocratic Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19: 565-584 (available on Blackboard).

01/26      *Leaders*

[Written assignment due]

\*Meng, Anne. 2020. *Constraining Dictatorship: From Personalized Rule to Institutionalized Regimes*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

+ Additional reading, TBA

02/02      *Actors and Preferences: Elites*

\*Albertus, Michael and Victor Menaldo. 2018. *Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

02/09      *Actors and Preferences: Non-elites*

\*Dickson, Bruce J. 2016. *The Dictator's Dilemma: The Chinese Communist Party's Strategy for Survival*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

02/16      *Actors and Preferences: Legislatures, Parties, and Elections*

[Written assignment due]

\*Higashijima, Masaaki. 2022. *The Dictator's Dilemma at the Ballot Box: Electoral Manipulation, Economic Maneuvering, and Political Order in Autocracies*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

02/23      *Actors and Preferences: Courts, the Military, and Monarchy*

\*Epperly, Brad. 2019. *The Political Foundations of Judicial Independence in Dictatorship and Democracy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

03/02      *Definitions*

\*Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. 2018. *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

03/09      [Spring Break; no class]

03/16      *Causes: Economic*

[Written assignment due]

\*Ansell, Ben W. and David J. Samuels. 2014. *Inequality and Democratization: An Elite-Competition Approach*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

03/23      *Causes: Social*

\*Hetherington, Marc and Jonathan Weiler. 2018. *Prius or Pickup?: How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

03/30      *Causes: Institutional*

\*Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson. 2013. *Why Nations Fail*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House (review).

04/06      *Outcomes: Economic*

[Written assignment due]

\*Albertus, Michael. 2015. *Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

04/13      *Outcomes: Social*

\*Matovski, Aleksander. 2021. *Popular Dictatorships: Crises, Mass Opinion, and the Rise of Electoral Authoritarianism*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

04/20      *Outcomes: Political*

[Written assignment due]

\*Haggard, Stephan and Robert R. Kaufman. 2016. *Dictators and Democrats: Masses, Elites, and Regime Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Key:

- \* E-book available from the University library.
- Advance copy available from professor.