

Texas A&M University  
Empirical Democratic Theory  
POLS 352, Fall 2020  
José Antonio Cheibub  
Tuesday-Thursday 9:45am – 11:00am, online

### Course Description

In this course we will learn and evaluate different theories of democratization. We will address questions such as: Why is there variation in the incidence of democracies in the world? Why are some countries democratic while others are not? Are there specific factors that lead to the emergence of democracies? What helps an existing democracy survive? As students will see, political scientists have not been shy in proposing answers to these questions. Some of these answers make a lot of sense, but are not supported by the data; others do not make much sense at all, even though some of the predictions they make are true. For each of these answers, we will try to determine whether they both make good logical sense and are supported by the data.

### Course Prerequisites

None

### Course Learning Outcomes

Students in this course will understand and evaluate different causal theories of democratization. To do so they will:

- Reconstruct the theories, as proposed by different authors.
- Identify main hypotheses and the concepts involved in them.
- Translate theoretical into empirical concepts.
- Evaluate the evidence and draw conclusions about the hypotheses and theories.

Additionally, the course will:

- Expose students to examples of the process of scientific inference, going from the formulation of theories through the development of hypotheses, operationalization of variables, data collection, analysis and inference.
- Practical introduction to research methods through examples.
- Ability to read tables and other quantitative information.

### Textbook and/or Resource Materials

There are no required textbooks. All required readings and other materials will be accessed online.

## Grading Policy

Final grades will result from the aggregation of partial grades obtained in the course of the semester. Partial grades (and their weights) will come from the following activities:

In class participation – 10% (assessed via zoom).

In class quizzes – 15% (aggregate of all quizzes).

First in class assessment (September 24) – 20%

Second in class assessment (October 29) – 20%

Final exam (December 7) – 35%

## Grading Scale

A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F =< 60

## Graded Attendance

Attendance will be monitored through tools available in Zoom.

## Late Work Policy

All course assessments will be submitted electronically. All work submitted after the established deadline will be considered late. All late work will have 20% deducted from the earned points. Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence [authorization] is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy. (See Student Rule 7.)

# COURSE SCHEDULE

## INTRODUCTION

August 20

No reading

## PRELIMINARIES

August 25 [5pp]

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Read pages 7-12.

August 27 [34pp]

Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James R. Vreeland. 2010. "Democracy and dictatorship revised." *Public Choice* 143 (1-2): 67-101.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

September 1 [19pp]

Cheibub, José Antonio and James R. Vreeland. 2018. "Modernization theory: Does economic development cause democratization?" In Nicolas van de Walle and Carol Lancaster, eds. *Oxford Handbook of Politics of Development*, pp. 3–21. Oxford University Press. [19pp]

September 3 [26pp]

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1960. *Political man: The social basis of politics*. New York: Doubleday.  
Read pages 45-71. [26pp]

September 8 [24pp]

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce and George W. Downs. 2005. "Development and Democracy."  
*Foreign Affairs* 84: (5): 77-86. [9pp]

Blaydes, Lisa. 2011. *Elections and distributive politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. Cambridge:  
Cambridge University Press. Pp. 26-48 [15pp]

**UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT**

September 10 [48pp]

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2005. *Economic origins of dictatorship and democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 15-30.

Houle, Christian. 2009. "Inequality and democracy: Why inequality harms consolidation but does not affect democratization." *World Politics* 61 (4): 589-622.

September 15 [31pp]

Ansell, Ben and David Samuels. 2010. "Inequality and democratization: A contractarian approach." *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (12): 1543-1574. (you can skim section 3).

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ASSET DISTRIBUTION**

September 17 [39pp]

Ross, Michael L. 2012. *The oil curse: How petroleum wealth shapes the development of nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 1-11 and 63-92.

September 22 [23pp]

Dunning, Thad. 2008. *Crude democracy: Natural resource wealth and political regimes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 1–24.

**FIRST IN-CLASS ASSESSMENT**

September 24

**WORLD VIEW AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

September 29 [17pp]

Inglehart, Ronald. 2000. "Culture and democracy." In Samuel P. Huntington and Lawrence E. Harrison, eds. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, pp. 80-97. New York: Basic Books.

October 1 [15pp]

Woodberry, Robert D. and Timothy S. Shah. 2004. "The pioneering protestants." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (2): 47-61.

October 6 [14pp]

Fish, M. Steven. 2002. "Islam and authoritarianism." *World Politics* 55 (October): 4-37.

Stepan, Alfred and Robertson, Graeme. 2003. "An 'Arab' more than 'Muslim' electoral gap." *Journal of Democracy* 14 (3): 30-44.

## **SOCIAL CAPITAL**

October 8 [45pp]

Fukuyama, Francis. 2000. "Social capital." In Samuel P. Huntington and Lawrence E. Harrison, eds. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, pp. 98-111. New York: Basic Books. [13pp]

Olken, Benjamin A. 2009. "Do television and radio destroy social capital? Evidence from Indonesian villages." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1 (4): 1-33. [32pp]

October 13 [57pp]

Satyanath, Shanker, Nico Voigtländer and Hans-Joachim Voth. 2017. "Bowling for Fascism: Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party." *Journal of Political Economy* 125 (2): 478-526. [48pp]

Giuliano, Paola and Romain Wacziarg. 2020. "Who voted for Trump? Populism and social capital." *NBER Working Paper Series* 27615. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. [9pp]

## **ETHNIC DIVERSITY**

October 15 [29pp]

Rabushka, Alvin and Kenneth A. Shepsle. 2009. *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*. New York: Pearson Longman. Pp. 62-91.

October 20 [31pp]

Lijphart, Arend. 2004. "Constitutional design for divided societies." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (2): 96-109. [13pp]

Graham, Benjamin A. T., Michael K. Miller, and Kaare W. Strøm. 2017. "Democratic Survival: Powersharing and Democratic Survival." *American Political Science Review* 111 (4): 686-704. [18pp]

October 22 [17pp]

Ichino, Nahomi and Noah L. Nathan. 2013. "Crossing the line: Local ethnic geography and voting in Ghana." *American Political Science Review* 107 (2): 344-361.

October 27 [15pp]

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75- 90

## **SECOND IN-CLASS ASSESSMENT**

October 29

### **STRATEGIES**

November 3 [49pp]

Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 51-79, 95-99. [32pp]

November 5 [27pp]

Treisman, Daniel. 2020. "Democracy by mistake: How errors of autocrats trigger transitions to freer government." *American Political Science Review*. Forthcoming.

Rustow, Dankwart A. 1971. "Sweden's Transition to Democracy: Some Notes toward a Genetic Theory." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 6 (A6): 9-26. [17pp]

### **DEMOCRATIC EROSION**

November 10 [44pp]

Mudde, Cas and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2017. *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 5 and 6.

November 12 [59pp]

Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On democratic backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27 (1): 5-19. [14pp]

November 17 [16pp]

Przeworski, Adam. 2019. *Crises of Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 83-142.

November 19 [17pp]

Svolik, Milan W. 2019. "Polarization versus Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 30 (3): 20-32.

Claassen, Christopher. 2020. "Does public support help democracy survive?" *American Journal of Political Science* 64 (1): 118-134.

November 24

Review

### **FINAL EXAM**

December 7, 8:00AM – 10:30AM

### **Attendance Policy**

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

### Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. ([See Student Rule 24](#).)

### Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

## Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.

The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

## Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

## COVID-19 Temporary Amendment

Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

Self-monitoring—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. **Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.**

Face Coverings—[Face coverings](#) (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Description of face coverings and additional guidance are provided in the [Face Covering policy](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) available on the [Provost website](#).

Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.

Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.

To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter). If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the [Student Conduct office](#) for sanctions. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.

#### Personal Illness and Quarantine

Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and **must not attend face-to-face course activities**. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.

Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for an excused absence (See [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2.](#)) To receive an excused absence, students must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7. While Student Rule 7, Section 7.3.2.1, indicates a medical confirmation note from



the student's medical provider is preferred, **for Fall 2020 only, students may use the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class form in lieu of a medical confirmation. Students must submit the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class within two business days after the last date of absence.**

### College and Department Policies

The Department of Political Science supports the Texas A&M University commitment to diversity, and welcomes individuals from any racial, ethnic, religious, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and nationality. (See <http://diversity.tamu.edu/>). In the spirit of this vital commitment, in this course each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute to all discussions. **Everyone is expected to respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by fellow students and the instructor**, and will engage in reasoned discussion that refrains from derogatory comments about other people, cultures, groups, or viewpoints