

Authoritarianism - Fall 2021
 GOV365I # 39055
 classroom: MEZ 1.202
 Tues., Thurs. 8:00am-9:15am

Professor Jason Brownlee
 email: brownlee-at-austin-dot-utexas-dot-edu
 office: Batts 3.146
 office hours (online): Wed. 11:00am-2:00pm

Authoritarian regimes are political systems in which the few rule the many. In the last century alone, such regimes have taken many forms. The rulers can be military officers or civilians. The government can operate as a hereditary monarchy or maintain republican-style institutions (elections, a legislature). Despite their variations, all authoritarian regimes share two features: they vest a small circle of rulers with the power to redistribute resources and apply violence; they deny the general populace regular influence in these same policy areas. In summary, authoritarian regimes are politically exclusive oligarchies. This course will study the economic, ideological, and political sources of authoritarian regimes and help explain why they persist.

Writing Flag

This course carries the Writing flag, meaning it is designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. For a sense of what a writing flag course typically entails, watch the video [The Writing Flag at UT Austin](#).

Grading policy

The grade has three components:

- I. In-class and homework writing exercises (10%).
- II. Three response papers with an opportunity to rewrite (60%).
- III. Two open-book short-answer exams (30%).

I. Short in-class and homework writing exercises (10%)

Periodically students will write short passages (1-3 paragraphs) in response to a prompt from Professor Brownlee. Passages will be graded for credit based on criteria specified at the time. The entirety of these assignments will constitute 10% of the final grade.

II. Three short papers (3-5 pages) with opportunity to rewrite (10%+10%, 10%+10%, 10%+10%)

In weeks 4, 7, and 11, students will submit a 3-5 page double-spaced paper that answers a specified question by drawing on course texts and discussions. Papers should demonstrate a command of the readings and a clear attempt to address the topic. The first submission will be graded on a 0-10 scale based on a rubric provided at the time. Students scoring less than 10 will have an opportunity to rewrite and resubmit, based on the professor's comments. The sum of the two submissions will constitute the total, out of 20, for the assignment. (10's automatically count twice.) Response papers do not need a bibliography, but should employ parenthetical citation and specific page numbers for quoted passages. For example, "no bourgeois, no democracy" (Moore 1966: 418). The formatting should be double-spaced, with 1" margins, and a font no smaller than Times New Roman 12 (which is the font in this document).

III. Two short-answer exams (15%, 15%)

Each exam will comprise a set of short-answer questions based on course materials. Exams are to be completed during the 75-minute class period, but can be taken at any location of the

student's choosing. Notes and course texts may be used when writing the exam. Other sources are prohibited. It is each student's responsibility to take exams as scheduled (unless exempted by a university documented time conflict).

Readings

Successful completion of this course requires a careful consideration of the required texts. Such attention means reflecting on the text as you are reading, and evaluating the author's argument. When you have finished you a reading you should be able to address the following items:

- 1) What is the author's argument in your own words?
- 2) If there is a historical narrative, who are the main personas and events?
- 3) What does the author provide that is new about authoritarianism?
- 4) What is a question you have about the reading and on which you would like to hear the professor's and your classmates' thoughts?

All readings are posted on Canvas in PDF format. Below is the schedule of topics, readings, and assignments. Each week includes three texts and roughly 40-60 pages of material.

1. Introduction (August 26)

- The syllabus.

2. Authoritarianism in History (August 31, September 2)

- Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Second epilogue, Chapters 5 and 6.
- Paul Pierson, "Big, Slow-Moving, and... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics," pp. 177-203.
- Reinhard Bendix, *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule*, pp. 3-18.

3. The State and Power (September 7, 9)

- Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," pp. 181-186, other pages are optional.
- John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*, pp. 1-32.
- Slavoj Zizek, "Through the Glasses Darkly."

4. Class Structures (September 14, 16)

Paper 1 due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, September 16.

- John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present*, 3rd ed., pp. 350-363
- Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, pp. 51-63.
- Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, pp. 417-430.

5. In the Name of the People: Authoritarian Republics (September 21, 23)

- Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, pp. 1-16.
- Merriman, *History of Modern Europe*, pp. 613-619, 626-628, 638-640.
- Ronald Wintrobe, *Political Economy of Dictatorship*, pp. 20-39.

6. In the Name of the People: Revolutionary Regimes (September 28, 30)

Paper 1 (revised) due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, September 30.

- Merriman, *History of Modern Europe*, pp. 927-954.
- Theda Skocpol, “Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution,” pp. 265-283.
- Eqbal Ahmad, “Comments on Skocpol,” pp. 293-300.

7. When Republics Fall: Democratic Breakdown (October 5, 7)

Paper 2 due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, October 7.

- Merriman, *History of Modern Europe*, pp. 1000-1014, 1020-1027.
- Sheri Berman, *Democracy and Dictatorship in Europe*, 234-256.
- Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, pp. 99-115.

8. REVIEW (October 12) and EXAM 1 (October 14)

- No new readings.

9. Power Struggles (October 19, 21)

Paper 2 (revised) due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, October 21.

- William Zimmerman, *Ruling Russia: Authoritarianism from the Revolution to Putin*, pp. 75-101.
- Gordon Tullock, *Autocracy*, pp. 151-166.
- H.E. Chehabi and Juan J. Linz, “A Theory of Sultanism I: A Type of Nondemocratic Rule,” pp. 3-25.

10. Foreign Occupation (October 26, 28)

- Ronald Robinson, “Non-European foundations of European imperialism: sketch for a theory of collaboration,” pp. 117-142.
- Michael Mann, “The autonomous power of the state: Its origins, mechanisms and results,” pp. 185-192 (remainder of article is optional).
- Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 146-176.

11. Post-independence Parties (November 2, 4)

Paper 3 due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, November 4.

- Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Decline of the Party in Single-Party African States,” pp. 201-214.
- Aristide R. Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The Party-States of West Africa*, pp. 1-19.
- Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, pp. 1-31.

12. Keeping Secrets (November 9, 11)

- Vaclav Havel, “The Power of Powerlessness,” pp. 1-9, 14-20.
- Katherine Verdery, *My Life as a Spy: Investigations in a Secret Police File*, pp. 195-209.
- Timur Kuran, “Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989,” pp. 7-48, but only need to read what you need to understand the argument.

13. Hegemony (November 16, 18)

Paper 3 (revised) due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, November 18.

- Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-building and citizenship*, pp. 39-57.
- Hyug Baeg Im, “Hegemony and Counter-hegemony in Gramsci,” pp. 123-140, 150-154, the other pages can be skipped or skimmed.
- David Greene, *Midnight in Siberia: A Train Journey into the Heart of Russia*, xiii-xvii, 159-172.

14. Video (November 23) and Holiday (November 25)

- No new readings.

15. REVIEW (November 30) and EXAM 2 (December 2)

- No new readings.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

COMMUNICATION

I am happy to field your questions, in person or by email, on substantive matters. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and information from classmates on what was covered. After doing so, you are welcome to approach me with outstanding questions. When communicating by email, plan for a 48-hour (or two business day) response time.

Grade calculation

Final grades will be determined on the basis of the below rubric. A = 94-100; A- = 90-93.999; B+ = 87-89.999; B = 84-86.999; B- = 80-83.999; C+ = 77-79.999; C = 74-76.999; C- = 70-73.999; D+ = 67-69.999; D = 64-66.999; D- = 60-63.999; F = 0-59.999. The professor will not alter grades calculated at the end of the semester.

Attendance and Workload

Students are expected to come ready and on time for all class sessions. In the classroom students are expected to comport themselves in a professional manner. By enrolling and remaining in this course students indicate they have understood the importance of carefully completing the weekly readings and being ready for in-class discussion led by Professor Brownlee. ***NB: If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for catching up on the material. That begins with consulting classmates, NOT with asking the Professor "So... what did I miss?"***

Religious holidays or official extracurricular activities

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day. If you miss a test due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence.

Students missing class for an official extracurricular activity must provide documentation at least fourteen days prior.

Academic accommodations

The University of Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY. All accommodations must be coordinated through the Office of the Dean of Students. Students needing accommodations should communicate this need to me before the third class meeting.

Cell Phones and other External Communications

During class, attention should be on course materials and no other external communication should occur (with the exception of Zoom for online sessions).

Syllabus Changes

The syllabus is subject to change by the professor. Any alteration in the course schedule will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

Time management is a valuable skill in college and life. This course is expected to make up one component in a full student schedule of classes, extracurricular activities, work, and other commitments. When needed, Professor Brownlee is glad to meet with students to discuss ways of organizing their schedule to carve out and protect the time needed for this class, e.g., thinking about when and where they study most effectively; then setting aside blocks of time that are reserved for homework for this class. Whatever a student's particular approach to managing time, any students seeking assistance are encouraged to **approach Professor Brownlee in the first two weeks of class.**

This course is expected to make up one component in a full student schedule of classes, extracurricular activities, work, and other commitments. The assignments and workload are designed to require approximately 5-7 hours, in addition to the time spent attending lectures. (If you do not have that kind of time to devote to this GOV 365, I would encourage you to select another class or choose another semester to take this class.)

Strictness is fairness. Most students are busy; all students merit equal treatment. Professor Brownlee will be strict about applying the announced policies uniformly.

The syllabus specifies the workload, deadlines, and grading rubric for the course. If any changes occur, they will be announced in class. In short, everyone knows the expectations for the class. Further, by taking the course, students are indicating that they will honestly strive to submit their best work punctually. Most students are busy. At the same time, all students merit equal treatment. Therefore, Professor Brownlee will be strict about applying the announced policies uniformly.

Option 2: Research the following question: Why does authoritarianism take hold in some electoral democracies but not in others? Indicate to Professor Brownlee that you are taking this option (and list any chosen partner, if one is selected) in class on Tuesday, November 12. The paper should examine a contrast in outcomes, i.e., places where authoritarianism did overtake electoral democracy and also places where it did not. Evidence may come from recent examples, historical examples, or some combination. The paper should draw on appropriate scholarly literature (at least five academic sources of the quality of texts on the syllabus) and course materials.

Research progress workshop. By Monday, December 2 at 12:00pm noon, students will post a 100-300 word synopsis of their research progress on Canvas for the rest of the class to read. In class, students will discuss their research experience, including posing questions and offering suggestions to one another. Students who submit a clear synopsis on time and participate actively in the workshop will receive full credit (5 points). Lower levels of participation will earn partial credit.

Paper. Students

Expectations and assessment of the paper

Papers will be graded using the rubric below. In each category the outcome will be assessed on the following 4-point scale: 4 = *Fully*, 3 = *Very much*, 2 = *Somewhat*, 1 = *Very little or not at all*.

Content

1. Evidence of outside research: To what extent has the paper made effective use of at least five scholarly sources beyond the required texts of the course?

2. Findings: How well has the paper presented a research question, then reported a coherent and compelling set of findings that bring the reader closer to an answer of that question?

Style

3. Formatting: How polished is the paper, in terms of having a title, listing the name(s) of the author(s), numbering the pages, citing sources appropriately, and fitting the word limit?

4. Clarity, concision, organization: How well has the author used concrete language, omitted needless words, and employed effective topic sentences?

5. Readability: To what extent does the paper read smoothly, charting a linear flow of ideas from introduction to conclusion?

For co-authored papers only

6. Division of labor: Is there a section explaining how both authors contributed to the research and writing of the paper. (-2 points if omitted)

TOTAL (out of a possible 20 points): _____