

INTL 4780 Special Topics in Comparative Politics: Dictatorships

Tuesday and Thursday, 12:45 am - 02:00 pm

Caldwell Hall 102

Fall 2022

Instructor: Ryan Yu-Lin Liou

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Office Hours: Thursday 10 am to noon & other times by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the politics of authoritarian rule by focusing on the survival of dictators and their demise. We will discuss the conditions that give rise to authoritarianism; the variety of dictatorships; the strategies authoritarian leaders use to retain power; the impacts of dictatorship on human rights and development; and the domestic and international sources of authoritarian demise. The goals of this course are twofold. Regarding the substantive topics, students will be able to:

- Understand and evaluate the key concepts of autocracy and democracy;
- Distinguish among different types of authoritarian rule;
- Explain how dictators get into power, survive, and fall;
- Have a greater appreciation for domestic and international influences on dictatorships, as well as better understanding of political transitions.

The practical skills you will obtain from participating in class:

- Acquire the ability to search for and organize information from a variety of sources;
- Evaluate the given information critically;
- Express ideas in a professional way on several topics.

Required Readings

This class will consist of a combination of lectures and discussions. As such, participation in course discussions will constitute an important part of the final grade, and students should come to class prepared, having completed the readings for the week **BEFORE** the class.

Course readings include journal articles, news article, and websites. Many of these readings contain statistical analyses and equations that may be difficult to comprehend. Students are not expected to review the portions with statistics/analyses/equations, nor will they be tested on them. Students can read or download the readings from the library website. I am happy to explain how to do it if instruction is needed. I will upload the readings to UGA's eLearning Commons (eLC).

Grade

Grading

- **Response Papers (30%; 15% each):** Students should submit **TWO** response papers based on the weekly topics. Each response paper should be around 3-4 pages. Late submission will be penalized at 0.5 points off for every day they are late. All papers must be formatted using the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)'s author-year in-text citations and a full list of bibliographic citations. I will provide a separate file for the rubric of response paper and discuss further details in class. The first response paper will be due **October 4th** at 11:59 pm. The second response paper will be due **November 10th** at 11:59 pm.
- **Participation (30%):** Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in discussions on readings. The participation grade will consist of two parts: quality and frequency of contributions to the class discussions and attendance.
 - Discussion: The participation grade will consist of two parts: quality and frequency of contributions to the class discussions. During the class, I will regularly ask questions. The questions aim to encourage the discussion in class. The quality of the class discussion relies on your comments on and responses to the readings and others' feedback.
 - Attendance: Two free class absences are allowed during the semester. Free absence means that students are not required to provide an explanation for the missing class, and the attendance grade will not be reduced. However, I will take 1 point off for each absence if students miss more than two classes. Under special circumstances, students may provide related documentation and a self-signed note with a reasonable excuse for the absence.
Latecomer Policy: Lateness for more than 10 minutes will be considered an absence. This is important because lateness will interrupt the class discussion. Also, it is not fair for other students who come on time.
- **Quiz (10%, 2% each):** There will be five quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will require students to answer simple questions demonstrating that they have done the readings. Due to the latecomer policy, students who are late or absent will not be allowed to re-take the quizzes.
- **Final Paper and In-Class Presentation (30%):** In the final paper, students need to select a specific country case, trace its development, and analyze how it fits with the arguments from the readings. It would be great if you can incorporate the concepts from what we learned from the class in your final paper. The paper should be around 8-10 pages, reference

excluded. I will provide a separate file for the rubric. The paper will be due **December 10th** at 11:59 pm. Late submission will be penalized at 5 points off for every day they are late. Papers later than December 13th will not be accepted. You will also present your analysis at Week 14 or Week 15. Presentations will be graded as a component of the final paper.

Grade Appeal

If you wish to appeal the grade received, you must submit a one-page computer-edited (e.g. in Word) statement to me at least 24 hours after receiving the grade. The statement must clearly and thoroughly explain the reasons why your works deserve a higher grade. The assignment will then be re-graded, taking the statement into consideration. The revised grade may be higher, lower, or the same as the initial grade.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be calculated on the following scale:

- 94 to 100: A
- 90 to 93: A-
- 87 to 89: B+
- 84–86: B
- 80–83: B-
- 77–79: C+
- 74–76: C
- 70–73: C-
- 67–69: D+
- 64–66: D
- 60–63: D-
- 59 and below: F

Course Policy and Useful Information

Class Etiquette

Although all perspectives are welcomed in the class, please keep in mind that not everyone shares the same political stance or viewpoint. Since we are in a political science class, it is likely to have debates on undecided issues.

In addition, when email me (or others), please use appropriate language. Email etiquette is the skill you would want to acquire when you are still in school. Here is a link you can refer to if you would like to confirm the dos and don'ts: ["Your Recent Email to Your Professor."](#)

Electronic Devices

Use of mobile phones is prohibited during the class. The participation grade will be reduced if you are found using mobile phones in class. You may use laptops in class, but only for class-related reasons.

Preferred Name and Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records

Changes to the Syllabus Could Occur

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy

I expect you to do your own work and to abide by all university policies on academic integrity and professional conduct. As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Disabilities Accommodation

- If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the [Disability Resource Center](#). They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting the Disability Resource Center.
- Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

I reserve the right to change the syllabus based on the course's progression. If any change is to be made, I will send out a notice one week in advance.

Week 1, 08/18: Course Introduction

- Please read syllabus carefully.

Week 2, 08/23 & 08/25: What Are Dictatorships? How Are Democracies and Dictatorships Different?

1. Frantz. 2018. *Authoritarianism: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press. Ch. 1-2, pp. 1–30.
2. Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2): 51–65.

Week 3, 08/30 & 09/01: How Do Dictators Get Power?

1. Frantz, Ch. 6, pp. 86–103.
2. Kendall-Taylor, Andrea, Erica Frantz, and Joseph Wright. 2017. "The Global Rise of Personalized Politics: It's Not Just Dictators Anymore." *Washington Quarterly* 40(1): 7–19.
3. Wright, Geddes, Frantz & Derpanopoulos. 2016. "[Are Coups Good for Democracy?](#)" *Washington Post*.

Week 4, 09/06 & 09/08: Are All Dictators the Same? How Do They Differ?

- Quiz I (9/8)
1. Frantz, Ch.5, pp. 64–85.
 2. Magaloni, Beatriz, and Ruth Kricheli. 2010. "Political Order and One-Party Rule." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 123–43.
 3. Lindsay Maizland. 2022. "[Myanmar's Troubled History: Coups, Military Rule, and Ethnic Conflict](#)." *Council on Foreign Relations*.

Week 5, 09/13 & 09/15: How Do Dictators Stay in Power (1) – Repression

1. Frantz, Ch. 7, pp. 104–110.
2. Way, Lucan A., and Steven Levitsky. 2006. "The Dynamics of Autocratic Coercion after the Cold War." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39(3): 387–410.
3. Escribà-Folch, Abel. 2013. "Repression, Political Threats, and Survival under Autocracy." *International Political Science Review* 34(5): 543–60. (Skim)
4. Edel, Mirjam, and Maria Josua. 2018. "How Authoritarian Rulers Seek to Legitimize Repression: Framing Mass Killings in Egypt and Uzbekistan." *Democratization* 25(5): 882–900.

Week 6, 09/20 & 09/22: How Do Dictators Stay in Power (2) – Cooptation

1. Frantz, Ch. 7, pp. 111–121.
2. Knutsen, Nygard & Wig. 2017. "You'd think dictators would avoid elections." *Washington Post*.
3. Magaloni, Beatriz. 2008. Credible power-sharing and the longevity of authoritarian rule. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(4-5), 715-741.
4. Donno, Daniela, and Anne Kathrin Kreft. 2019. "Authoritarian Institutions and Women's Rights." *Comparative Political Studies* 52(5): 720–53.

Week 7, 09/27 & 09/29: How Do Dictators Stay in Power (3) - Information Manipulation

- Watch documentary film: *North Korea: Inside the Mind of a Dictator* in class (9/29).
 - Quiz II (9/29)
1. Christopher Ingraham. 2018. "Russia and other authoritarian countries are fudging their GDP reports." *Washington Post*.
 2. Soest, Christian von, and Julia Grauvogel. 2017. "Identity, Procedures and Performance: How Authoritarian Regimes Legitimize Their Rule." *Contemporary Politics* 23(3): 287–305.
 3. Pan, Jennifer, Zijie Shao, and Yiqing Xu. 2022. "How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing." *Political Science Research and Methods* 10(2): 317–32. (Skim)
 4. Yeung, Eddy S F. 2022. "Overestimation of the Level of Democracy Among Citizens in Nondemocracies." *Comparative Political Studies*. Online first.

Week 8, 10/04 & 10/06: What Are The Effects of Dictatorships? Are Dictatorships Good for Human Development?

- Mid-term review, catch up, and reflect (10/4)
 - First response paper due (10/4)
1. The Economist. 2018. "[Apartheid with Chinese characteristics: China has turned Xinjiang into a police state like no other.](#)"
 2. Baum, Matthew A., and David A. Lake. 2003. "The Political Economy of Growth: Democracy and Human Capital." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(2): 333–47. (Skim)
 3. Miller, Michael K. 2015. "Electoral Authoritarianism and Human Development." *Comparative Political Studies* 48(12): 1526–62.
 4. Wang, Yi Ting, Valeriya Mechkova, and Frida Andersson. 2019. "Does Democracy Enhance Health? New Empirical Evidence 1900–2012." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(3): 554–69.

Week 9, 10/11 & 10/13: Civil Resistance in Dictatorships (1)

- Watch documentary film: *A Force More Powerful* on the protest against the dictatorship of General Pinochet in class (10/11).
 - Quiz III (10/13)
1. Chenoweth. 2011. "[Think Again: Nonviolent Resistance.](#)" *Foreign Policy*. August 24.
 2. Hassan, Mai, and Ahmed Kodouda. 2019. "Sudan's Uprising: The Fall of a Dictator." *Journal of Democracy* 30(4): 89–103.
 3. Nepstad, Sharon E. 2013. "Mutiny and Nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring Military Defections and Loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 337–49.
 4. Kim, Nam Kyu, and Alex M. Kroeger. 2019. "Conquering and Coercing: Nonviolent Anti-Regime Protests and the Pathways to Democracy." *Journal of Peace Research* 56(5): 650–66.

Week 10, 10/18 & 10/20: Civil Resistance in Dictatorships (2)

- Watch short video: [Hong Kong's huge protests, explained](#) in class (10/18).
 - One-page proposal including description of your main ideas and planned approach for your final paper (10/20 due).
1. Lerner, Alexis M. 2021. "The Co-Optation of Dissent in Hybrid States: Post-Soviet Graffiti in Moscow." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(10): 1757–85.
 2. Girod, Desha M., Megan A. Stewart, and Meir R. Walters. 2018. "Mass Protests and the Resource Curse: The Politics of Demobilization in Rentier Autocracies." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35(5): 503–22.
 3. Bellin, Eva. 2012. "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring." *Comparative Politics* 44(2): 127–49.
 4. Chenoweth. 2016. [How Social Media Helps Dictators.](#) *Foreign Policy*. November 16.

Week 11, 10/25 & 10/27: International Interventions (1) - Economic Sanctions

- Quiz IV (10/27)
- 1. Escribà-Folch, Abel, and Joseph Wright. 2010. "Dealing with Tyranny: International Sanctions and the Survival of Authoritarian Rulers." *International Studies Quarterly* 54(2): 335–59.
- 2. Peksen, Dursun, and A. Cooper Drury. 2010. "Coercive or Corrosive: The Negative Impact of Economic Sanctions on Democracy." *International Interactions* 36(3): 240–64. (Skim)
- 3. von Soest, Christian, and Michael Wahman. 2015. "Are Democratic Sanctions Really Counterproductive?" *Democratization* 22(6): 957–80. (Skim)
- 4. Grauvogel, Julia, Amanda A. Licht, and Christian von Soest. 2017. "Sanctions and Signals: How International Sanction Threats Trigger Domestic Protest in Targeted Regimes." *International Studies Quarterly* 61(1): 86–97.
- 5. Liou, Ryan Yu-Lin, Amanda Murdie, and Dursun Peksen. "Pressures from Home and Abroad: Economic Sanctions and Target Government Response to Domestic Campaigns." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Forthcoming.

Week 12, 11/01 & 11/03: International Interventions (2) - IOs and INGOs

1. Pevehouse, Jon C. 2002. "Democracy from the Outside-In? International Organization and Democratization." *International Organization* 56(3): 515–49. (Skim)
2. Nygård, Håvard Mogleiv. 2017. "The Role of International Organizations in Regime Transitions: How IGOs Can Tie a Dictator's Hands." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34(4): 406–30.
3. Debre, Maria J. 2021. "The Dark Side of Regionalism: How Regional Organizations Help Authoritarian Regimes to Boost Survival." *Democratization* 28(2): 394–413. (Skim)
4. Murdie, Amanda, and Tavishi Bhasin. 2011. "Aiding and Abetting: Human Rights INGOs and Domestic Protest." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(2): 163–91.
5. Gruffydd-Jones, Jamie J. 2019. "Citizens and Condemnation: Strategic Uses of International Human Rights Pressure in Authoritarian States." *Comparative Political Studies* 52(4): 579–612.

Week 13, 11/08 & 11/10: Losing Power and Transitions to Democracy?

- Quiz V (11/8)
- Second response paper due (11/10)
- 1. Frantz, Ch. 4, pp. 55-63 & Ch. 8, pp. 133–147.
- 2. Krcmaric and Escribà-Folch. 2017. "[Where do ousted leaders go?](#)" *Washington Post*. January 30.

3. Coleman and Lawson-Remer. 2013. "A User's Guide to Democratic Transitions" *Foreign Policy*. June 18.
4. Riedl, Rachel Beatty, Dan Slater, Joseph Wong, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2020. "Authoritarian-Led Democratization." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23(1): 315–32.

Week 14, 11/15 & 11/17: Democratic Backsliding and Presentations (1)

- In class presentations (11/15).
 - Class canceled due to ISA conference (11/17).
1. Haggard, Stephan, and Robert Kaufman. 2021. "The Anatomy of Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 32(4): 27–41.
 2. Svobik, Milan W. 2020. "When Polarization Trumps Civic Virtue: Partisan Conflict and the Subversion of Democracy by Incumbents." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 15(1): 3–31.

Week 15, 11/22 & 11/24: Presentations (2)

- In class presentations (11/22).
- No class on November 24: Thanksgiving Break.

Week 16, 11/29 & 12/01: Wrap up and Final Paper Review

1. Frantz, Ch. 9, pp. 148–154.

Week 17, 12/8: Final Paper Due