

INTL 4315: COMPARATIVE DEMOCRACY

Spring 2025

Instructor: Solbi Kim	Time: MWF, 12:40 – 1:30 pm
Email: Solbi.Kim@uga.edu	Place: Sanford Hall 314

1. Course Descriptions

Course Pages:

1. <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d21/home/3393869>

Student Hours: Room B01, 202 Herty Dr., 2:00 – 4:00 pm Mondays or by appointment.

Objectives and Learning Outcomes: This course is designed to equip students with a theoretical understanding of the multifaceted nature of democracy and democratization within a comparative framework. The course also explores various interconnected factors that influence democracy, such as political institutions, systems, and the roles of civil society, gender, and social media. By the end of the semester, students will be able (better) to:

- Explain theoretical frameworks that define, conceptualize, and measure democracy while considering global democratization trends.
- Investigate the key actors and institutions that shape democratic systems, including political parties, electoral systems, civil society, citizen participation, gender, minority representation, and the influence of social media.
- Evaluate contemporary challenges to democracy, such as the rise of authoritarianism, populism, and the dynamics of digital activism.
- Connect theory to practice by analyzing real-world case studies, participating in interactive class discussions, writing reflective memos, and a comprehensive final essay.

Required Textbook: There are no required textbooks for this class. However, I highly recommend reading *Democratization* (2nd ed.) by C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, R. F. Inglehart, and C. Welzel (2019), published by Oxford University Press. All articles and chapters will be made available on eLC.

2. Course Structure and Requirements

This course is designed to maximize student engagement and active participation, emphasizing collaboration, application of material, and critical thinking over traditional lectures. The structure aims to create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that values diverse perspectives and learning styles.

- **Mondays and Wednesdays:** Each class will include a lecture covering the theoretical and empirical background of the week's topic, alongside discussions, group activities, and case studies that encourage students to critically engage with the topic's discussion questions. These highly interactive sessions encourage students to engage deeply with the material and their peers.

- **Fridays:** Fridays are designated as Reflective Reading Days for reflection and preparation. Instead of in-class activities, students are expected to write a reflection memo on eLC, based on the week's lectures and assigned readings, explaining a particular idea or offering additional critical insights. This time is also intended to read the assigned materials for the following week, ensuring students are well-prepared to engage actively in upcoming discussions.

Grading Policy: Syllabus Quiz (5%), Attendance (5%), Class Participation (10%), Reflection Memos (15%), Midterm Quiz (25%), Journal Reflections (15%), Final Essay (25%).

- **Syllabus Quiz (5%):** The quiz consists of multiple-choice questions based on the syllabus.

The due is **1/25 (Saturday), 11:59 pm**.

- **Attendance (5%):** Regular attendance is expected in this course, as it significantly contributes to your learning experience. You are allowed up to three absences without justification. For each additional absence beyond the allowed *three*, the grade will be deducted.

– Please note that you must email me in advance if you anticipate being late. Late arrivals beyond 15 minutes into the class may be treated as an absence. Also, please be aware that lateness without prior email notification may be treated as an absence. Failure to notify me after the class will also be considered an absence.

– If you are out for a prolonged period, please get in touch with me. I also encourage you to reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance. They can contact all your professors on your behalf.

- **Class Participation (10%):** Simply showing up to class does not constitute participation. You are expected to participate actively in class and group discussions. Active participation is essential for your learning journey in this course. Class activities and assignments are designed to facilitate skill-building and critical thinking. Participation involves actively engaging in class activities, presenting arguments grounded in assigned readings and research, and asking insightful questions. 5% of the participation will be evaluated based on the first half of the semester, and the other 5% will be evaluated based on the second half.

- **Reflection Memos (15%):** Each student must submit a reflection memo on eLC **every Friday**, based on the week's lectures and assigned readings, explaining why a particular idea or ideas were interesting and offering additional critical insights. Each memo must be at least **150 words**.

- **Midterm Quiz (25%):** The quiz consists of multiple-choice and short-answer questions (the instructor will offer detailed instructions in the class). The midterm quiz will be delivered electronically and will cover content up until this point. Although this quiz will be open-note and book, I **HIGHLY** recommend studying beforehand.

The due is **2/28 (Friday), 11:59 pm**.

- **Journal Reflection (15%):** Each student must submit a memo of at least **300 words** to the journal reflection board on eLC. This memo will focus on critical reflection, research problem identification, research question formulation, and hypothesis generation, related to democracy and democratization from a comparative perspective. Detailed guidance on each component will be provided later.

The due is **4/6 (Sunday), 11:59 pm**.

- **Final Essay (25%):** This essay identifies one research question related to comparative public opinion and participation, ideally from in-class discussions, reflection memos, and journal reflections. Students will provide their own answers (which can be based on the existing theories) to the question and test their answers using a case study. The grading will be based on the following criteria.

- Research Question (3%): Find an interesting research question extended from the readings and class discussions and explain.
- Literature Review (5%): Include brief descriptions of the source’s theory, methodology, and application to your argument and paper based on Journal Reflections.
- Theory (5%): Provide your main arguments and hypothesis(es)
- Case Study (5%) Select a proper case(s) for answering the question and explaining the case selection strategy.
- Conclusion (4%): Summarize the paper and describe what we know better after reading your paper.
- References (3%): 5-7 of your main **ACADEMIC** sources (e.g., journal articles, research center papers) that are used in your project.

The due is **5/5 (Monday), 5 pm**.

The paper format is double-spaced, 12pt, Times New Roman, at least five pages (except for references). For citation, please follow the [APA Style](#), [Chicago Manual of Style](#), or [MLA Style](#). Students should submit their papers to the course page on the eLC.

- The overall class grade will be calculated on the following scale:

93.00–100	A	74.00–76.99	C
90.00–92.99	A–	70.00–73.99	C–
87.00–89.99	B+	67.00–69.99	D+
84.00–86.99	B	64.00–66.99	D
80.00–83.99	B–	60.00–63.99	D–
77.00–79.99	C+	0–59.99	F

Grading Disputes: If you wish to dispute a graded assignment, you can send me a one-page memo within one week of receiving the graded assignment. The memo should address the feedback provided on the assignment with your class and reading notes. I will carefully review the assignment and its grade, given that the memo provides a reason to do so. After regrading, you must accept the reviewed grade, even if the grade is lower than the original assignment.

Late Work Policy: Late work, defined as submitting assignments after the established deadline, will incur a deduction of 10% of the grade. Work submitted as makeup for an excused absence is exempt from this policy.

- There will be **NO** late work policy for the **Syllabus Quiz**, **Reflection Memos**, and **Midterm Quiz**.
- **Journal Reflection** submitted **after 11/3, 11:59pm, but before 11/4, 11:59pm (via eLC)** will be considered as late work. 10% of the grade will be deducted. No later submission can be accepted.
- **Final Essay** submitted **after 12/11, 5pm, but before 12/12, 5pm (via eLC)** will be considered as late work. 10% of the grade will be deducted. No later submission can be accepted.

Re-Scheduled/Missed Works: If you are unable to complete an assignment due to a valid reason (e.g., personal health issues, starting an internship), you must email me at least one week before the deadline to discuss rescheduling options. Please be aware that contacting me after the deadline may result in the inability to accommodate a makeup assignment. Your prompt communication and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Communication: I will inform you about the course and any updates to the syllabus via email. If you have any questions, please email me at solbi.kim@uga.edu. Please do not reply to messages sent from @uga.view.usg.edu, as those emails are generated automatically, and I cannot view or respond to them.

- When emailing me, please use your UGA email account and include the course number in the subject line (e.g., [INTL 4315]). I will typically respond to emails within 24 hours. Before reaching out, check the syllabus to confirm that your question has not already been addressed.
- Please begin your email with an appropriate salutation, including my name (e.g., "Dear Professor Kim"), and conclude with your name.
- I believe that most students are familiar with the basic principles of professional email communication, but if you need additional guidance, feel free to visit: [How to Email a Professor](#).

Important Dates:

Syllabus Quiz Due	1/25 (Saturday), 11:59 pm, eLC
Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr. Day - No Class	1/20 (Monday)
Midterm Quiz Due	2/28(Friday), 11:59 pm, eLC
Spring Break - No Classes	3/3–7 (Monday–Friday)
Journal Reflection Due	4/6(Sunday), 11:59 pm, eLC
Final Essay Due	5/5(Monday), 5 pm, eLC
Grades Due	5/12(Monday), 12 pm

3. University Policies

Academic Honesty: Please see the UGA Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

In addition, unless explicitly stated, artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as Chat-GPT, must not be used to generate responses for student assignments. Using such programs for any course assignments, including reflection memos, journal reflections, final essays, and in-class participation, is not allowed in this course and could result in failing this class and other undesirable outcomes.

Disclaimer: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; changes communicated to the class by the instructor may be required.

Accommodations due to disability: 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 <http://drc.uga.edu>. See https://drc.uga.edu/content_page/sample-access-statements for additional examples.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program, which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.
- UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health at any time, any place. Whether on campus or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.
 - Well-being Resources: <https://well-being.uga.edu>
 - Student Care and Outreach: <https://sco.uga.edu>
 - University Health Center: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu>

- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: <https://caps.uga.edu> or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: <https://healthpromotion.uga.edu>
- Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

The Use of AI for Coursework Policies: At UGA, the default rule for student use of AI in their coursework is that it is not permitted unless explicitly authorized by the course instructor before turning it in. In this class, in line with UGA policy, a detailed statement about using AI tools must be disclosed when you submit your assignment.

If you're not sure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying from AI, I recommend that you don't have both your assignment and the AI tool open on the same device. Instead, you can just take notes in your own words while you interact with the AI tool and then use them to remember what you've learned and inform your work. Lastly, AI tools can be very wrong and biased, so it is your job to check the validity and usefulness of any AI result you use.

4. Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction

- 1/6: Why Are You Taking This Course?
Write a brief reflection (1-2 paragraphs) explaining why you are taking this course. Discuss your academic interests, career goals, or any objectives you hope to achieve in this class.

Submit your response on eLC by 1/7 (Tuesday), 5 pm.

- 1/8: Syllabus Review
- 1/10: No Reflection Memo

Week 2: What is Democracy?

- 1/13: Definition of Democracy

Readings

- Dahl, R. A. (2015). What is Democracy? In *On Democracy* (2nd ed., pp. 35–50). Yale University Press.

- 1/15: Quality of Democracy

Readings

- Diamond, L., & Morlino, L. (2004). The Quality of Democracy: An Overview. *Journal of Democracy*, 15(4), 20-31.

- 1/17: Reflection Memo 1

Week 3: Why Democracy Matters?

- 1/20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Class)
- 1/22: Values of Democracy

Readings

- Dahl, R. A. (2015). Why Democracy? In *On Democracy* (2nd ed., pp. 44–61). Yale University Press.

– Sen, A. (1999). Democracy as a Universal Value, *Journal of Democracy*, 10(3), 3-17.

- 1/24: Reflection Memo 2

Syllabus Quiz Due: 1/25 (Saturday), 11:59 pm.

Week 4: Measuring Democracy

- 1/27: Measuring Democracy

Readings

– Bernhagen, P. (2009). Measuring Democracy and Democratization. In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, R. F. Inglehart, & C. Welzel (Eds.), *Democratization* (pp. 54–66). Oxford University Press.

- 1/29: In-Class Activity (Comparing Democracy Index)

What are existing measures of democracy? Do you think these measures are valid and reliable?

Readings

– Boese, V. A. (2019). How (not) to Measure Democracy. *International Area Studies Review*, 22(2), 95-127.

– Freedom House: <https://freedomhouse.org/reports/freedom-world/freedom-world-research-methodology>

– IDEA: <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/tools/state-democracy-assessments>

– Polity: <https://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html>

– V-Dem: <https://v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/>

- 1/31: Reflection Memo 3

Week 5: Theories of Democratization

- 2/3: Social and Economic Factors

Readings

– Robinson, J. A. (2006). Economic Development and Democracy. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9(1), 503-527.

– Lipset, S. M. (1959). Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review*, 53(01), 69-105. (*Optional but highly recommended*)

- 2/5: Political Culture

Readings

– Gorodnichenko, Y., & Roland, G. (2021). Culture, Institutions and Democratization. *Public Choice*, 187, 165-195.

– Inglehart, R. F. (2019). Cultural Evolution: People's Motivations are Changing, and Reshaping the World. *Social Forces*, 98(4), 1–3.

- 2/7: Reflection Memo 4

Week 6: Authoritarianism

- 2/10: What is Authoritarian Regimes?

Readings

- Hadenius, A., & Teorell, J. (2007). Pathways from Authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, 18(1), 143-157.

- 2/12: Survival of Authoritarianism

Readings

- Repucci, S., & Slipowitz, A. (2022). [The Global Expansion of Authoritarian Rule](#). *Freedom House*, 2022-03.
- Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2023). Introduction. In *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of Tyranny in the 21st Century* (pp. 3-29). Princeton University Press. (*Optional*)

- 2/14: Reflection Memo 5

| Week 7: The International Context

- 2/17: Latin America and Southern Europe

Readings

- Puddington, A. (2015, August 3). [Latin America Shows That Democratization Is Possible Anywhere](#). *Freedom House*.
- Bunce, V. (2003). Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience. *World Politics*, 55(2), 167-192.

- 2/19: China and Russia

Readings

- Mattingly, D. (2024, October 14). [China's Soft Sell of Autocracy Is Working: And America's Efforts to Promote Democracy Are Failing](#). *Foreign Affairs*.
- Gandhi, J., & Lust-Okar, E. (2009). Elections Under Authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12(1), 403-422. (*Optional*)

- 2/21: Reflection Memo 6

| Week 8: Midterm

- 2/24: Midterm Quiz Review

***Midterm Quiz Available After Class**

- 2/26: Reading Day

- 2/28: **Midterm Quiz Due: 2/28(Friday), 11:59 pm** (No Class)

| Week 9: Spring Break

- **3/3 – 3/7 : No Classes**

| Week 10: Democratic Institutions

- 3/10: Political Parties and Party Systems

Readings

- Morlino, L. (2019). Political parties. In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 213-227). Oxford University Press.
- Aldrich, J. H. (2008). Political Parties in and out of Legislatures. In R. E. Goodin (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science* (pp. 196-216). Oxford University Press.

- 3/12: Parliamentary vs. Presidential Systems

Readings

- Norris, P. (2008). Presidential and Parliamentary Executives. In *Driving Democracy: Do Power-Sharing Institutions Work?* (pp. 132–156). Cambridge University Press.
- Horowitz, D. L. (1990). Comparing Democratic Systems. *Journal of Democracy*, 1(4), 73-79.

- 3/14: Reflection Memo 7

Week 11: Electoral Systems

- 3/17: Types of Electoral Systems

Readings

- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell, P. (2018). Dimensions of Variation in Electoral Systems. In E. S. Herron, R. J. Pekkanen, & M. S. Shugart, (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems* (pp. 23-40). Oxford University Press.

- 3/19: In-Class Activity (Political System Design)

How would you design a political system? What factors would you prioritize to ensure effective decision-making, representation, and accountability?

Readings

- Lijphart, A. (2004). Constitutional Design for Divided Societies. *Journal of Democracy*, 15(2), 96-109.

- 3/21: Reflection Memo 8

Week 12: Civil Society and Democracy

- 3/24: Social Capital and Civil Society

Readings

- Letki, N. (2019). Social Capital and Civil Society. In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 172-181). Oxford University Press.
- Paxton, P. (2002). Social Capital and Democracy: An Interdependent Relationship. *American Sociological Review*, 67(2), 254-277.

- 3/26: Political Participation

Readings

- McAllister, I. & White, S. (2019). Conventional Citizen Participation. In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 197-211). Oxford University Press.
- Rom, M. C., Hidaka, M., & Walker, R. B. (2022). [How Do Individuals Participate Other than Voting?](#) *Introduction to Political Science*. Open Textbook Library.

- 3/28: Reflection Memo 9

Week 13: Case Studies

- 3/31: TED Talks on Democracy
- 4/2: **Conference (No Class)**

- 4/4: Reflection Memo 10

Journal Reflection Due: 4/6(Sunday), 11:59 pm.

Week 14: Women and Minorities in Democracy

- 4/7: Gender and Democracy

Readings

- Paxton, P. & Velasco, K. (2019). In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 158-170). Oxford University Press.
- Muschett, M. & Vaeza, M.-N. (2024, January 4). [There is No Democracy Without Gender Equality](#). *UNDP*.

- 4/9: Minorities and Democracy

Readings

- Rovny, J. (2023). Antidote to Backsliding: Ethnic Politics and Democratic Resilience. *American Political Science Review*, 117(4), 1410-1428.
You can refer to the article by Rovny J. (2023, February 2). [Why Ethnic Politics can Act as a Check on Democratic Backsliding](#). *LSE Blogs*.

- 4/11: Reflection Memo 11

Week 15: Media and Democracy

- 4/14: Digital Activism

Readings

- Diamond, L. & Whittington, Z. (2019). In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 254-266). Oxford University Press.
- Biswal, K. K., & Panda, B. N. P. (2024, October 26). [From Hashtag to Action: The Digital and Online Activism](#). *The Sunday Guardian Live*.

- 4/16: Digital Authoritarianism

Readings

- Roberts, T., & Oosterom, M. (2024). Digital Authoritarianism: A Systematic Literature Review. *Information Technology for Development*, 1-25.
- Polyakova, A., & Meserole, C. (2019). Exporting Digital Authoritarianism: The Russian and Chinese Models. *Policy Brief, Democracy and Disorder Series*, 1-22.

- 4/18: Reflection Memo 12

Week 16: Democratic Futures

- 4/21: Threats to Democracy

Readings

- Noakes, S. & Wilson, C. (2023). Threats to Democracy: Backsliding, Coups and Populism. In *Democratization: A Thematic Approach* (pp. 138-161). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Carothers, T., & Press, B. (2022, October 20). [Understanding and Responding to Global Democratic Backsliding](#). *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*.

- 4/23: Still Democracy

Readings

- Welzel, C., Inglehart, R., Bernhagen, P., & Haerpfer, C. W. (2019). In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, C. Welzel, & R. Inglehart (Eds.), *Democratization* (2nd ed., pp. 424-431). Oxford University Press.
- Welzel, C. (2021). [Why the Future is Democratic](#). *Journal of Democracy*, 32(2), 132-144.

- 4/25: Reflection Memo 13

| Week 17: Class Reflection

- 4/28: Final Class Wrap-Up and Reflection

Final Essay Due: 5/5(Monday), 5 pm.