

PRINCETON SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
RESEARCH SEMINARS
Fall 2020

WWS 403 – Making Democratic Institutions Work

Monday, 1:30-4:20 PM

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Politics in democratic countries is today in a state of turmoil. Trust in national institutions has reached a historical low. In advanced industrial economies, slightly over one in three people expresses confidence in their governments. Only 20 percent of Americans think that politicians care about their opinions – a number sharply down from almost four in five in the late 1950s. In France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the proportion is even lower, at around 10 to 15 percent. In turn, such a wave of disaffection has given way to growing disengagement from traditional party politics. In Western Europe, electoral abstention has doubled since the 1970s, mainly among the youngest cohorts. Amongst those electors that vote, close to one quarter are casting their ballots for far right and far left parties. Populist and nationalist alliances now govern a handful of European countries. In a context of increasingly polarized politics, in 2016 close to half of American voters elected a president that promised to remake the international system of global cooperation and open economies that the United States designed and built after World War Two.

This seminar will examine the performance and overall health of our democratic institutions. In particular, we will examine the following questions: 1/ How do representation and representative institutions work in democratic regimes? 2/ How do politicians and parties compete in elections? 3/ Which are the sources of the critical trends (populist, political alienation, etc.) we are witnessing today? 4/ How well informed are citizens? Does it matter for democracy? 5/ What is (and should be) the relationship between technical knowledge (generated by economists, the medical profession, etc.) and democratic decision-making? 6/ Why and how do countries democratize and remain democratic? 5/ Does globalization constrain democratic rule?

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to methods of assessing different ways to think about the democratic policy process, electoral politics and the policy-making community. The seminar will require students to actively participate in class and will culminate in student presentations of a proposed research project that could potentially become the basis for a senior thesis.

Course Procedures and Evaluation

- In principle this course will be taught in person, unless the University decides to move all courses online.
- Reading: You will be expected to read ALL of the readings on the syllabus for each week.
- Participation: You must attend every class meeting; be prepared to discuss the readings; and participate actively in class discussions.
- Response Papers: You will complete three short papers (around 3 pages) answering one of the week's discussion questions. You are free to choose the weeks in which to write these short papers. The paper (with the answer to the questions of that week's session) will be due by 6 pm the day before class. No exceptions will be made and no extensions will be granted. The answers should not just summarize readings, but show reflection on how the readings address important issues, are flawed in particular dimensions, or can be developed or improved in specific directions.
- Junior Paper. As stated in the Research Seminar Manual, students have to select a research question (by week 2) and develop a research proposal (by week 4) that clearly states the research question, and empirical strategy (quantitative or qualitative). The proposal should include a preliminary bibliography and identify data sources and/or officials/experts who might be interviewed. By the tenth week, each student should produce a rough draft of their research paper. Papers should not exceed 24 pages (including appendices and footnotes, but excluding the title, table of contents, briefing paper, and bibliography.) After receiving comments from the seminar leader, students should revise their papers appropriately and submit the final paper by January 15.

The evaluation of students in the ROB Seminar will be based on their active participation in class (20%), the three short papers (20%) and on the research seminar paper (60%)

Note. A passing grade in both the seminar and methods lab is required to pass the class. A failing grade in either the seminar or the lab will result in a failing grade for the semester in the class, even if one earns an 'A' in one component.

Readings

Books marked with (B) have been ordered at the Labyrinth and put on reserve. All other readings have been put on electronic reserve.

E-reserve readings will be accessible on Blackboard.

They can also be accessed at: <http://libweb5.princeton.edu/ereserves/logon.asp>.

Week 1. Representative Democracy: Classical Theory (and Its Analytical Companion) (1). (August 31)

Required reading

Schumpeter, Joseph A. 1942. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy. Chapters 21 (“The Classical Doctrine of Democracy”) and 22 (“Another Theory of Democracy”), pages 250-283.

Melvin J. Hinich and Michael C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pages 21-37.

Week 2. Representative Democracy: A Critique (2). (September 7)

Required reading

Melvin J. Hinich and Michael C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pages 37-45, 50-55 (until “case 2”), 61-69.

Rein Taagepera, R. and Shugart, M. S. 1989. *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Read chapter 3.

Gary Cox. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Read chapter 4.

Week 3. Institutions and Political Geography. (September 14)

Required reading

Jonathan Rodden. 2019. *Why Cities Lose*. New York: Basic Books. Chapters 2 to 8. (B)

Further reading

John Aldrich. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America (American Politics and Political Economy Series)*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Rein Taagepera, R. and Shugart, M. S. 1989. *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Anthony Downs. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Chapters 6 and 7.

Week 4. Democratic Accountability. (September 21)

Required Reading

David Foster Wallace. “Up, Simba!” In Consider the Lobster and Other Essays. New York : Little, Brown and Company, 2005. Available in
<https://princeton.overdrive.com/media/DF9AA785-90B5-4065-86FD-D4F485B5BD2E>

Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes and Bernard Manin, eds. 1999. *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1, pages 29-54.

Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 7 (“A Chicken in Every Pot”), pages 177-212.

Week 5. Information and Politics: A Changed Public Sphere? (September 28)

Required reading

Berelson, Bernard R. Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1, 6, 7 and 11. (B)

Andreas Jungherr, Gonzalo Rivero, Daniel Gayo-Avello. 2020. *Retooling politics: how digital media are shaping democracy*. Chapters 2 and 4.

Further reading

Huckfeld and Sprague. 1995. Citizens, politics and social communication: Information and influence in an election campaign. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7 (“Networks in context: The social flow of political information”), pp. 124-145.

Prior, Markus. 2013. Media and Political Polarization. *Annual Review of Political Science*.

De-Wit, Lee et al. 2019. “Are Social Media Driving Political Polarization?” *Greater Good Magazine*. University of California at Berkeley. January 16.

Week 6. Managing Democracy in Diverse Societies. (October 5)

Required reading

Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 3-4, 6. (B)

Huber, John D. and G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 1994. "Congruence Between Citizens and Policymakers in Two Visions of Liberal Democracy." *World Politics* 46 (April): 291-326.

Further reading

Robert Ford & Matthew J Goodwin. 2014. *Revolt on the Right: Explaining Support for the Radical Right in Britain (Extremism and Democracy)*. London: Routledge. Pages 107-142 ("Origins: a long time coming").

Dancygier, Rafaela. 2017. *Dilemmas of Inclusion*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 & 3.

Week 7. Democracy and the Welfare State. (October 19)

Required Reading

Alberto Alesina and Edward L. Glaeser. 2004. *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe: A World of Difference*. Oxford University Press. Read chapters 2-3 and 6-7. (B)

Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal. 2006. *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press. Chapter 4.

Further reading

Gilens, Martin. 2014. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Read chapters 1-4, 8.

Bartels, Larry. 2010. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton University Press. I.

Garfinkel, Lee Rainwater & Timothy Smeeding. 2006. "A Re-Examination of Welfare States and Inequality in Rich Nations" *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 25: 897-919, 2006.

Przeworski, Adam and Covadonga Meseguer. 2006. "Globalization and Democracy." In Pranab Bardhan, Samuel Bowles and Michael Wallerstein, eds. 2006. *Globalization and Egalitarian Redistribution*. Princeton University and Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 7.

Week 8. Getting to Democracy. (October 26)

Required reading

Rice, Condoleezza. Keynote Speech at 75th Anniversary of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. Princeton University. September 30, 2005.

Boix, Carles. 2006. "The Roots of Democracy" *Policy Review*.

Treisman, Daniel. 2018. "Is Democracy in Danger? A Quick Look at the Data." UCLA. Unpublished manuscript.

Gunitsky, Seva. 2014. "From Shocks to Waves: Hegemonic Transitions and Democratization in the Twentieth Century." *International Organization* 68 (3): 561-597.

Further reading

Carles Boix. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge University Press. Read chapters 1-2.

Carles Boix. 2011. "Democracy, Development and the International System." *American Political Science Review*. 105 (November): 809-827.

Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi. 1997. "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49.

Week 9. Getting to Democracy (2). (November 2)

Required reading

Robert Mickey. 2015. *Paths Out of Dixie. The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South, 1944-1972*. Princeton University Press. Pages 1-91, 281-334.

Week 10. Democracy and the Policy “Planner”. (November 9)

Required readings

Jason Brennan. 2016. *Against Democracy*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 6 (“The Right to Competent Government”).

John Kay and Mervyn King. 2019. *Radical Uncertainty*. Chapters 1, 13-16, 21-23.

Donald A. Schön. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Chapter 8.

Weeks 11-12. Discussion of JP Drafts. (November 16 & 23)