

POL410H12: Topics in Comparative Politics III: Populism, Elections, and Representation

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Description

This course is broken into three parts. In the first, we will consider some democratic theoretic, folk theoretic, and empirical accounts of why and how democracy works. In the second section, we will consider the populist challenge to democracy. In the third, we will reconsider the actual performance of democracy and, perhaps, discuss how it can be redeemed.

Marking scheme

Response/reflection papers	3 x 20%=	60%
Research report		20%
Participation		20%

Response/reflection papers

For each of the three sections of the course, you are to write a single reflection paper of 8-10 pages, double-spaced. The paper will be in response to one of the questions posed at the beginning of each section. Graduate students should draft a 10-15 page paper that answers two of the questions. Papers should draw on the readings from that section (and others, if you like) to provide an answer to the question(s). Response papers are due one week after the end of each section. The first two should be handed in at the start of class on February 6 and March 13. The final paper can be delivered in hard copy to my mailbox at SPPG by April 10 at 4 pm.

Late reflection papers will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

Research Report: A case of democratic failure

You will be placed into groups of three students. I will randomly assign students to these groups. In your groups, you will produce one research report demonstrating a case of democratic failure. The cases should be modelled on one of the the analyses presented in Chs 5-7 in Achen and Bartels. Research reports should be ~15 pages, but can be longer if you like. You should collect original data, whether quantitative or historical/case based. Research reports are due two weeks after our final class: April 17, 4 pm. They should be submitted in a hard copy to my mailbox at SPPG.

Late reports will be docked 5 percentage points per day.

Participation

You are expected to be prepared to discuss all readings in class. I reserve the right to call on you unprompted. I expect you to make a level effort to understand the readings, to be clear about what you don't understand, and equally clear about what your thoughts are on the papers. I will determine participation based on a global assessment of your participation in the course.

Technology in class

Technology is not your friend, in a classroom, at least. The empirical evidence on this is very clear. My own "ethnographic" data are the same. If someone is looking at a laptop in a seminar they are not paying attention to the seminar. So, I have a very strong preference for no laptops in class. I would instead recommend you create a physical copy of all readings, place them in a binder (or two) and work from this. You will do better.

These are good stories outlining why you shouldn't use a laptop.

Holstead, Carol E. 2015. "The Benefits of No-Tech Note Taking," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 4.

Shirky, Clay. 2014. "Why I Just Asked My Students To Put Their Laptops Away," *Medium* (personal blog), September 8.

Hamilton, Jon. 2008. "Think You're Multitasking? Think Again," *NPR.org*, October 2.

Phones should absolutely not be present in class. If there is an emergency, ask a person to call you and take the call outside of the classroom. Please avoid all texting.

Office hours

I will be keeping office hours on Tuesdays from 2-4 in my office on the third floor of the Canadiana Gallery. I can meet outside of office hours, but I have limited time. If you'd like to make an appointment, please email Christina (Christina.mcintyre@utoronto.ca) and let her know what the meeting is about.

Required Texts

Please purchase the following texts. The rest of the readings will be made available through a common dropbox link.

Achen and Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Werner. 2016. *What is Populism?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Readings by Week

Week 1 – January 9 - Introduction

Section 1: How Does Democracy Work?

Section Questions

1. Is democracy possible without political parties?
2. What is better evidence of effective democracy: big or small policy changes after elections?
3. How do electoral systems matter for representation?
4. Discuss: democratic theorists need to read more empirical political science?

Week 2 – January 16 – Representation

Urbinati and Warren. "The Concept of Representation in Contemporary Democratic Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Powell. "Political Representation in Comparative Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Wlezien. 1995. "The Public as Thermostat: Dynamics of Preferences for Spending." *American Journal of Political Science*.

Week 3- January 23 – Political Parties

Dalton et al. 2011. *Political Parties and Democratic Linkage*. Preface, introduction, Chs 2, 4-6. .

Kedar. 2005. "When Moderate Voters Prefer Extreme Parties: Policy Balancing in Parliamentary Elections." *American Political Science Review*.

Budge et al. 2012. *Organizing Democratic Choice: Party Representation over Time*. Introduction, Chs 11-13.

Week 4 – January 30 – Electoral systems

(This class will be moved to be held Feb 2, time and location TBD).

Golder and Stramski. 2010. "Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions." *American Journal of Political Science*.

Powell. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*. Chs 1-4, 8, 9.

Przeworski et al. 1999. *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*. Chs 4, 6, 8.

Loewen. 2017. "Democratic Stability, Representation, and Accountability: A Case for Single-Member Plurality Elections in Canada."

Section 2: What is the populist alternative?

Section questions

1. Is populism a national or international phenomena?
2. What is the most relevant difference between right wing and left wing populism?
How relevant is it?
3. Where is populism most likely?
4. Discuss: Donald Trump is not a populist.

Week 5 – February 6 - What is populism?

Muller. 2016. *What is Populism*. Entire text.

Judis. 2016. *The Populist Explosion*. Entire text.

Mudde and Kaltwasser. 2012. Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or corrective for democracy? Chs 1, 10.

Week 6 – February 13 – Populism in the United States 1

Gest. 2016. *The New Minority*. Entire text.

Sykes. 2017. *How the Right Lost Its Mind*.

Case and Deaton. "Rising morbidity and mortality in midlife among white non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st century." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Week 7 – February 27 – Populism in the United States 2

Erikson. 2015. "Income Inequality and Policy Responsiveness." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Mudde. 2016. *Far Right in America*. Entire text.

Ellis and Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. Chs 6, 7.

Lowndes. 2016. "Populism in the United States." *Oxford Handbook of Populism*.

Week 8 – March 6 – Populism in Europe

Golder. 2016. "Far Right Parties in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science*

Mudde. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Introduction, Chs 1-3, 5-8, Conclusion.

Section 3: What is good about democracy, anyways?

Section Questions

1. What is the best empirical defense of democracy?
2. If voters are stupid, should politicians respond to their demands?
3. Who is more important to a functioning democracy: smart voters or smart politicians?
4. Was Churchill wrong about democracy being the worst form of government, except for all the others?

Week 9 – March 13 – Can democracy be redeemed?

Achen and Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists*. Chs 1-3

Healy et al. 2010. "Irrelevant Events Affect Voters' Evaluations of Government Performance." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*..

Optional but very helpful.

Fowler and Montagnes. "College football, elections, and false-positive results in observational research." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Healy et al "Determining False-Positives Requires Considering the Totality of Evidence." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Loewen and Rubenson. "Canadian War Deaths in Afghanistan: Costly Policies and Support for Incumbents." Working paper. (Latest version will be shared at the beginning of March).

Week 10 – March 20 – Can Elites Save Democracy?

Sheffer et al. 2018. "Non-Representative Representatives: An experimental study of the decision-making of elected politicians." *American Political Science Review*.

Walgrave et al. ND. "Representatives' Perceptions of Priorities." Working paper.

Brennan. 2016. *Against Democracy*. Chs 7-9.

Esaiasson and Holmberg. 1996. *Representation from Above: Members of Parliament and Representative Democracy in Sweden*. Chs 4-6, 12, 15.

Week 11 – March 27 – Democracy for Realists 2

Achen and Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists*. Chs 4-7.

Week 12 – April 3 – Democracy for Realists 3

Achen and Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists*. Chs 8-11.