

**University of Toronto**  
**Department of Political Science**

**POL 300H1F: Autocracy and Authoritarianism: Acts, Practices and Regimes**

(May-June 2013)

Mondays and Wednesdays 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

SS 1073

Instructor: Elliot Storm (e.storm@utoronto.ca)

Office hours: Mondays 2-4 SS 3118

In 2003 Adam Przeworski noted that “dictatorships are by far the most understudied area in comparative politics.” In an attempt to address this deficit, POL 300H1F will expose students to theories and empirical examples of authoritarian governance in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with a general but not exclusive focus on the “developing world.” Beginning with an overview of some of the major theoretical traditions and methodological issues in the study of dictatorship, we will then explore key actors, institutions, ideas and structures in a variety of historical and geographic contexts. The class will be anchored by five case studies of countries variously defined as authoritarian, post-authoritarian or partly democratic: Egypt, México, Nigeria, North Korea, and Russia.

Over the course of POL 300, students will be provided with the opportunities and tools necessary to meet two overarching learning objectives. First, students who successfully complete the course will do so with substantive knowledge of the chosen cases, concepts and theories of dictatorship. Students will be able to distinguish among different types of authoritarian acts, practices and regimes, and to generalize their knowledge to other cases. Second, students will learn how to analyze and evaluate the various ways that authoritarianism is classified, studied and explained within the field of comparative politics. Students will accomplish this not only by devoting ongoing attention to the methodological choices and strategies made by scholars, but by making similar decisions as they complete their own assignments and participate in class discussions.

### **Required Texts**

Ezrow, Natasha, and Erica Frantz. *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and their Leaders*. New York: Continuum, 2011.

Additional readings include journal articles (available through the University’s library system) and selections from books (posted on Blackboard).

### **Course Format and Requirements**

This class will be taught in a lecture-style format. Teaching methods will include lectures, videos, class discussions, quizzes, and group work.

Methodological critique	15%
Paper proposal	10%
Research essay	35%
Participation	20%
In-class quizzes	20%

## Assignment Guidelines

Methodological critique (15%): This assignment asks you to assess the Freedom House report for one “partly free” or “unfree” country of your choosing (choose a case other than Venezuela, which we will discuss in class). You do not need to defend or condemn the Freedom House report as such, but should rather critically evaluate its methodological merits and deficiencies by drawing on the material from the second lecture (“measurement and classification”). Some issues you may consider: How do the methodological strategies used by Freedom House prioritize or deemphasize particular issues? What descriptive themes emerge in the report? What evidence exists that might challenge or contradict the narrative Freedom House presents? Your paper should be 4 pages in length and is due at the beginning of class (6:10 pm) on **May 22**.

Paper proposal (10%): The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with feedback during the preparation of your research paper (see details below), specifically in terms of selecting sources, organizing your ideas, and developing an argument. Proposals should be 2 pages long (not including bibliography) and should *not* be in point form. Proposals should 1) outline your basic argument; 2) indicate the major points of your argument; and 3) indicate what evidence you will use to support your argument, both in terms of empirical and historical data and with explicit reference to the arguments other scholars have made about the topic. Proposals should be accompanied by a bibliography listing the sources used, including a minimum of six non-syllabus, scholarly (peer-reviewed) sources. If you are unsure what constitutes a peer-reviewed source please consult with me. Proposals are due at the beginning of class (6:10 pm) on **May 29**.

Research essay (35%): This research essay gives students the opportunity to pursue an in-depth examination of a key topic related to the study of authoritarianism. A short list of possible topics will be posted on Blackboard in the first week of class, although students may choose another topic provided it is discussed with and approved by me first. Regardless of topic, all papers should 1) relate to one of the weekly seminar topics, 2) make use of the appropriate assigned readings, and 3) explicitly and systematically compare at least two cases (historical or geographic) of authoritarian acts, practices or regimes. Papers will be evaluated based on the logic of the argument, the quality of research, and clarity of writing. The length should be 10 pages, excluding references and bibliography. Essays are due at the beginning of class (6:10 pm) on **June 19**.

Participation (20%): Students are expected to attend class regularly. Everyone is expected to come to class having read and thought about the material carefully enough to actively participate in class discussions. Formal grades are based on two types of participation:

1) Blog entries (10%): To give students the opportunity to explore key themes of the course in ‘real time,’ we will make use of the blog service on Blackboard. For any five of the six weeks of this course, students will write a 200-300 word blog entry that discusses a news item or current event related to the subject of authoritarianism. These entries need not be overly analytical or formal but should make some reference to a specific event or process. Procedures for this exercise will be discussed in the first lecture.

2) Classroom participation (10%): Students are encouraged to participate in discussions during lecture. Additionally, at various points throughout this course students will be given in-class assignments (group or individual) related to the lecture topic of the day. Exercises may be based on case studies or theoretical problems, and will be administered with a specific learning objective in mind (constructing arguments, identifying variables, the process of comparison, etc.). Assignments will be submitted at the

end of class.

In-class quizzes (15%): Four unannounced quizzes based on readings or lectures will be administered over the course of the term. Quizzes will typically consist of identifications or short-answer questions. The lowest grade will not be included in the student's final grade.

## **Course Policies**

Assignment format: All assignments should be double spaced, use Times New Roman font, have one-inch margins, and use a recognized citation style such as Chicago or APA. Marks may be deducted for not meeting these requirements. Pages should be numbered and stapled together. If possible, please print double-sided.

Submission process: Paper copies of all assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class (6:10 pm). Assignments submitted after 6:10 pm will be treated as though they were submitted the following day (penalized 5%). Students are advised to keep draft work and hard copies of their papers even after the marked assignments have been returned. Electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Late penalties: Given the compressed nature of this summer course it is imperative that students submit their work on time in order to receive prompt feedback. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day for up to five days, including weekends. Any assignments submitted more than five days late will receive a grade of 0. Late assignments should be submitted to the receptionist's office in the Department of Political Science (Room 3018, Sidney Smith Hall) to be date-stamped. Students should also email me to let me know to expect their assignment at the office.

Grading and appeals: Grading will follow the University of Toronto's grading regulations as detailed in the Arts and Science 2012-2013 Calendar ([http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules\\_&\\_Regulations.html](http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html)). Appeals will only be considered within one week of the date to which assignments are handed back, and will be considered only after the student provides a one page explanation of the basis of the appeal. Grades may go up or down upon appeal.

Extensions and absences: In cases where unforeseen events render you unable to complete assignments on time, extensions may be granted provided you follow two steps. *First*, students must submit official documentation that justifies an extension. In the case of illness or injury this consists of a University of Toronto Verification of Illness or Injury form completed in its entirety by the relevant medical professional. *Second*, students must email me to inform me of your need for accommodation within two days of the missed deadline. Attaching a medical form to a late assignment without prior consultation is not acceptable. Extension requests based on workload issues will not be accepted.

Technology: Laptops and tablets are not prohibited, but their use must be limited to activities directly related to the class. Students are not permitted to record the instructor or other students unless explicitly authorized by the individual(s) in question. Please refrain from texting, using Facebook, watching YouTube, etc. Students who are obviously directing their attention to devices rather than class activities may be asked to leave and/or will have marks deducted from their participation grades.

Email: Email should be used primarily for brief communication rather than extended discussion about course material. If you do not receive a response after two days please send a follow-up email.

Accessibility: The University of Toronto and its instructors are committed to meeting the needs of students who require temporary or ongoing accommodations to ensure that all aspects of the educational experience are accessible. If you require accommodations, please consult Accessibility Services (<http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/index.htm>; 416-978-8060; [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca)) for information on university policies and support systems.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct: According to the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, it shall be an offence for a student knowingly:

- a) to forge or in any way alter or falsify any document or evidence required for admission to the University, or to utter, circulate or make use of any such forged, altered or falsified document, whether the record be in print or electronic form;
- b) to use or possess an unauthorized aid or aids or obtain unauthorized assistance in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work;
- c) to personate another person, or to have another person personate, at any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work;
- d) to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work;
- e) to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere;
- f) to submit for credit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted.

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's guide on academic writing: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-toplagiarize>

## Schedule

### **May 13: Introduction: Basic Questions and Key Concepts**

What is authoritarianism? How does it differ from democracy, illiberalism, poor governance and political violence? How can we distinguish between and among authoritarian acts, practices and regimes?

Freedom House. "Freedom in the world 2013: Democratic breakthroughs in the balance."

[http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FIW%202013%20Booklet%20-%20for%20Web\\_0.pdf](http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FIW%202013%20Booklet%20-%20for%20Web_0.pdf) (especially pages 1-13).

### **May 15: Measurement, Classification and Explanation**

How do we compare, measure and classify dictatorships and authoritarianism? Does the study of authoritarianism require the use of different methods than the study of democracy?

Ezrow, Natasha, and Erica Frantz. "Authoritarian Politics: Typologies." In *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and Their Leaders*, 1-26.

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13.2 (2002): 51-65.

Freedom House. (2012). "Freedom in the World" methodology section

(<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2012/methodology>) and checklist questions

(<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2012/checklist-questions>)

### **May 20: Victoria Day - No Class**

### **May 22: The Causes, Origins and Persistence of Authoritarianism**

How and why do authoritarian regimes originate? What mechanisms and dynamics contribute to the endurance of dictatorships?

Ezrow and Frantz, "Causes of Dictatorship" (27-53), "Coups" (96-112), and pages 54-61.

### **May 27: The Economics of Dictatorship**

What is the relationship between authoritarianism and economic development? Do particular economic policies sustain or undermine authoritarian regimes? How does wealth (or lack thereof) contribute to dynamics of authoritarianism?

Ezrow and Frantz, "Dictatorship and the Economy" (127-141).

Wu, Chin-en. "When Is Democracy Better for Economic Performance and When Is It Not: The Interaction Between Polity and Structural Factors." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 47 (2012): 365-388.

Bagaji, Ali S. Yusufu, Joseph Odoaba Achegbulu, Abu Maji, and Natala Yakubu. "Explaining the Violent Conflicts in Nigeria's Niger Delta: Is the Rentier State Theory and the Resource-Curse Thesis Relevant?" *Canadian Social Science* 7.4 (2011): 34-43.

### **May 29: Leaders and Elites**

To what extent do individual leaders and/or elites determine the character of dictatorship? How do elites manage internal conflict over policy issues and handle issues of succession?

Ezrow and Frantz. "The Survival of Authoritarian Leaders: Strategies and Trends" (81-95) and "Personalist Dictatorships in Sub-Saharan Africa and Beyond" (215-239).

Lim, Jae-Cheon. "North Korea's Hereditary Succession: Comparing Two Key Transitions in the DPRK." *Asian Survey* 52.3 (2012): 550-570.

### **June 3: Parties and Elections**

Why do authoritarian regimes so often maintain party and electoral systems given the lack of interest in democratic accountability? How do parties in authoritarian contexts differ internally from parties in democratic polities?

Ezrow and Frantz, pages 67-77 and "Single-Party Dictatorships in Eastern Europe, Asia and Beyond" (191-214).

Blaydes, Lisa. "Elections and the Muslim Brotherhood." In *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*, 148-170. New York: Cambridge UP, 2011.

### **June 5: Rule of Law**

Why is rule of law important in non-democratic regimes? How do constitutions, courts and judicial systems undermine or consolidate authoritarianism?

Ginsburg, Tom, and Tamir Moustafa. "Introduction," from *Rule By Law: The Politics of Courts in Authoritarian Regimes*, edited by Ginsburg and Mustafa, 1-22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. [Available online]

Magaloni, Beatriz. "Enforcing the Autocratic Political Order and the Role of Courts: The Case of México." In *Rule By Law: The Politics of Courts in Authoritarian Regimes*, edited by Ginsburg and Mustafa, 180-206. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. [Available online]

Schuler, Catherine. "Reinventing the Show Trial: Putin and Pussy Riot." *The Drama Review* 57.1 (Spring 2013): 7-17.

### **June 10: States and Security Forces**

What coercive mechanisms and institutions do authoritarian regimes use to maintain power and control?

Ezrow and Frantz. "Military Dictatorships in Latin America and Beyond" (166-190).

Howard-Hassmann, Rhoda. "State-Induced Famine and Penal Starvation in North Korea." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 7.2-3 (2012): 147-165.

Saro-Wiwa, Ken. "On the Death of Ken Saro-Wiwa." In *Writers Under Siege: Voices of Freedom from Around the World*, 135-140. Edited by Lucy Popescu and Carole Seymour-Jones. New York: New York

University Press, 2007.

### **June 12: Social Policy**

Does social policy crafted in dictatorships differ from social policy in democratic regimes? When does social policy shift from being regulatory to authoritarian?

Justesen, Mogens. "Democracy, Dictatorship and Disease: Political Regimes and HIV/AIDS." *European Journal of Political Economy* 28 (2012): 373-389.

Stote, Karen. "The Coercive Sterilization of Aboriginal Women in Canada." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 36.3 (2012): 117-150.

Young, Alan. "The State is Still in the Bedrooms of the Nation: The Control and Regulation of Sexuality in Canadian Criminal Law." *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 17.4 (2008): 203-220.

### **June 17: Media and Technology**

In what ways are media and technology used by authoritarian regimes, and in what ways can/do they undermine dictatorship?

Deibert, Ron, and Rafal Rohozinski. "Control and Subversion in Russian Cyberspace." In *Access Controlled: The Shaping of Power, Rights, and Rule in Cyberspace*, edited by Ronald Diebert, John Palfrey, Rafal Rohozinski and Jonathan Zittrain, 15-34. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010.

Howard, Philip, and Muzammil Hussain. "The Role of Digital Media." *Journal of Democracy* 22.3 (July 2011): 35-48.

Lynch, Marc. "After Egypt: The Limits and Promise of Online Challenges to the Authoritarian Arab State." *Perspectives on Politics* 9.2 (June 2011): 301-310.

### **June 19: Ends and Transitions: Politics After Dictatorship**

How do we best explain the variation in the reasons and ways that authoritarian regimes end? How do legacies of authoritarianism condition post-authoritarian political arrangements?

Ezrow and Frantz, pages 61-67.

Priban, Jiri. "Varieties of Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 8 (2012): 105-121.

Flores-Macías, Gustavo. "Mexico's 2012 Elections: The Return of the PRI." *Journal of Democracy* 24.1 (2013): 128-141.