POS 346: Problems of Democracy

Spring 2015 (SLN 17185)

Tu/Th 10:30-11:45am, EDC 117

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Course description

One of the key problems of democracy is defining it. There are many forms of democracy, including—but not limited to—American liberal democracy, European social democracy, and China's people's democracy. These forms of democracy embrace, to different degrees, the ideals of liberty and equality. We will explore how these ideals clash and can be reconciled within the informal practices and formal democratic institutions in America and other countries. We will begin with Alexis de Tocqueville's observations of the social conditions of American democracy in the early 1800s, shortly after the birth of the nation. Then we will examine modern iterations of Tocqueville's claim that healthy democracies require civic engagement. After applying democratic measures to American democracy, we will consider case studies of emerging democracies abroad.

Required reading

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America, Abridged with an Introduction by Michael Kammen* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009). ISBN-13: 978-0312463304 ($15)

- Russell J. Dalton, *Selected Chapters from Citizen Politics: Custom Electronic Edition* (Slimpack) ISBN: 9781483319025 (Sage, 2013).

- Lawrence LeDuc, Richard Niemi, and Pipa Norris, eds., *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in a Changing World, Fourth Edition* ISBN: 9781446281987 (Sage: 2014).

Course Grading and Requirements

Analytical Summaries/Presentations (two, 11 points each)	22
Participation and Attendance	11
Weekly tweets	11
Exams and quizzes (two, 12-point exams and two, 6-point quizzes)	36

Group Case Study/Presentation	20
(Grading schema: 97-100=A+, 93-96=A 90-92=A-, etc.)	100

Details of Course Requirements

Analytical Summaries and Presentations (22 points= two analyses, 11 points each)

You will be assigned to summarize and analyze arguments within two of the assigned readings. Each of these 500-word analyses will include a brief précis (summary of the argument) and reaction to/critique of the reading. The précis should paraphrase the argument and conclusion in your own words (rather than relying on quotations) and outline the type of evidence used. The reaction to the reading can be a critique or application of the reading's argument/insight. The summaries are due by midnight BEFORE the assigned class. Late assignments will be penalized 2 points for every 6 hours after their deadline. The written portion of the summary is worth 8 points and should be submitted under the "Analyses and Assignments" Bb section.

During class discussion, I will randomly call upon students assigned to that day's reading to present either the argument and/or your reaction to it. Everyone assigned to that day should be present and prepared to speak briefly. This mini-presentation is worth 3 points.

Participation and Attendance (11 points= 11 randomly-chosen days, 1 point each)

I will randomly take attendance 11 times during the semester. If you are absent on one of those days, you will miss the point. One or two points can be made up with participation during other classes. At the end of the semester, I note whether students have regularly participated and "bump up" borderline grades accordingly.

Weekly tweets (11 points: 22 tweets, 0.5 point each)

To enhance our in-class and out-of-class discussions of democracy, I require Twitter accounts and will occasionally include Twitter feeds during class. By Week 2, you should enter your Twitter handle under our Bb "Analyses and Assignments" section and be able to use Twitter (Twitter.com has a 5-minute tutorial). By Week 3, you should be tweeting two tweets per week about the course topics and include a notification to our class Twitter account (@asupos346). Tweets MUST connect the current week's class discussions and/or readings to an outside world event, article, commentary by you or somebody else, etc. If you just tweet about a world event and do not tie it in to our discussion/reading, only half credit will be awarded. You also can re-tweet items of interest, but you need to add an original comment to introduce it. All weekly tweets are due NO LATER than Saturday evening, 11:59 pm. Late tweets are not accepted.

Exams and quizzes (36 points= two, 12-point exams and two, 6-point quizzes)

The 60-minute exams and 30-minute quizzes include true-false and multiple-choice questions on the assigned readings. They will be available for 48 hours within their related Bb unit. Prior to each exam/quiz, you can submit questions (for extra credit) that may be included in the

assessments. Exam 2 is during finals week. There is not a cumulative final exam.

Case Study and presentation (20-point case study with presentation)

Based in part on your preferences, you and 3-4 other students will be assigned to a country and topic for a group case study (e.g., Egyptian or Tunisian constitutions, local elections in China, etc.). The group will determine how to delegate work on the assignment. The project requires scholarly research and application of democratic measures/criteria to an emerging democracy (worth 20 points, 15 points for written project, 5 points for in-class, panel presentation). After summarizing two or three scholarly research articles on the topic and/or region, you will outline your democratic measures, and use them to evaluate the country/topic. The written portion of the project should be 7-8 pages. Drafts of case study's Background and Literature Review sections are due in early April and should be submitted under the "Analyses and Assignments" Bb section. Late assignments will be penalized 2 points for every 6 hours after their deadline.

In mid-April, representatives from each group will share their results in a conference panel format during class. Other group members will prepare questions for the panel.

Extra credit (8 points= 3 exam/quiz questions, 3 attendance days, and 2 voluntary surveys)

One week prior to each exam or quiz, you can submit a multiple-choice question for possible inclusion in the exam. Each question is worth up to 1 EC point (weaker questions could earn 0 or 0.5 pts). The best questions will be used during class discussions and/or included in the exam. Also, I will randomly choose three times during the semester in which your mere attendance earns you 1 EC point. Lastly, there are two voluntary surveys (1 point each). The surveys are part of an ongoing research project, take 10 minutes to complete, and are provided at the start and at the end of the semester.

Academic dishonesty

Plagiarism and cheating on essays and exams is dishonest, disrespectful, and lame. At a minimum, I will give students a zero on the assignment. Multiple or egregious violations will result in expulsion from class. In addition, ASU's Provost defines the academic integrity policy as follows: Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity.

Accommodations for Disabilities

I am happy to accommodate any student with a disability registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact them and provide our course number and my email address.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Due dates are shown for assessments and assigned readings for books by Tocqueville, Dalton, and Leduc books, and a few readings available within our Bb site.

Democracy in America: Then and Now

Week 1

Tu 1/13   Welcome and Syllabus review

Th 1/15   Tocq (democratic despotism): Volume II, Part IV, (pp.161-167)

Week 2

Tu 1/20   Tocq (social equality): Volume I, Author's Intro and Chs 1-2 (pp. 37-53)
                  and Vol II, Chs 26-29 (pp. 140-152)

Th 1/22   Tocq (sovereignty): Vol I, Chs 3-6 (pp. 53-69)

Week 3

Tu 1/27   Tocq (tyranny of the majority): Vol I, Chs 7 & 8 (pp. 69-84)

Th 1/29   Tocq (Individualism): Vol II, Chs 15-20 (pp, 109-126) **--EC question due--**

 Week 4

Tu 2/3   Tocq (self-interest Well Understood): Vol II, Chs 21-25 & 34, and review
                  Part IV again (pp. 161-170)

Th 2/5 Exam 1 (online) –No Class (available on 2/5, 12:01am; complete by 2/6, 11:59pm)

Measures of Democracy

Week 5

Tu 2/10   Bb: Robert A. Dahl, "What Political Institutions Does Large Scale
                  Democracy Require?"

Th 2/12   Bb: Philippe Schmitter & Terry Karl,"What Democracy is…and Is Not"

Week 6

Tu 2/17   Bb: Robert D. Putnam "Bowling Alone"

Th 2/19   Bb: Dietlind Stolle and Marc Hooghe "Review Article: Inaccurate,
                  Exceptional, One-Sided or Irrelevant?…" (1st half: pp. 149-159) **--EC due--**

Week7

Tu 2/24   Bb: Stolle and Hooghe "Review Article…" (2nd half: pp. 159-167)

Th 2/26 Quiz 1 (online) -No Class (available on 2/26, 12:01am; complete by 2/27, 11:59pm)

Week 8

--Case Study Topic Preferences Due on Monday, 3/2 (11:59pm)--

       Tu 3/3   Dalton: Ch2 "The Nature of Mass Beliefs"

       Th 3/5   Dalton: Ch 3 "How We Participate"

Week 9

       SPRING BREAK- no classes

Week 10

       Tu 3/17   Dalton: "Who Participates?" **--EC question for Quiz 2 due--**

       Th 3/19   Dalton: "Citizens and the Democratic Process"

       Fri 3/20   Quiz 2 on Dalton (online- due 11:59pm)

Comparing Democracies

Week 11

       Tu 3/24   LeDuc, Chs 1 and 2

       Th 3/26   LeDuc, Ch 3

Week 12

       Tu 3/31   LeDuc, Ch 4

       Th 4/2   LeDuc, Ch 6

--Drafts of Case Study Background and Literature Reviews due Friday, April 3rd (11:59 pm)--

Week 13

       Tu 4/7   LeDuc, Ch 9

       Th 4/9   LeDuc, Ch 10

Week 14

       Tu 4/14   LeDuc, Ch 11

                  ~~LeDuc, Ch 7~~

       Th 4/16   No class meeting—Case Study group preparations

Week 15

--Written Case Studies Due on Monday, April 20th (11:59 pm)--

       Tu 4/21   Case Study Panel Presentations

                  ~~LeDuc, Ch 8~~

       Th 4/23   Case Study Panel Presentations

       --Fr 4/24 EC question for Exam 2 due--

Week 16

    Tu 4/27   Case Study Panel Presentations

    Th 4/29   Case Study Panel Presentations

M/Tu 5/4-5   Exam 2 (available on 5/4, 12:01am; complete by 5/5, 11:59pm)