

PLSC 206
Democratic Transitions

Albion College-Fall 2018
Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.-9:50 a.m. (Robinson 404)

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Office Hours: Monday: 10:00-11:00 am Fridays: 2:00-3:00 pm, Robinson Rm. 303

Course catalog description

Why do some countries democratize while others do not? By examining different traditions of democratization literature students acquire the tools necessary to make reasoned judgments about urgent political problems in comparative politics. These problems include but are not limited to: democracy, human rights, authoritarianism, elections, and representation.

Academic integrity

All students are expected to understand and follow the College's guidelines regarding academic integrity: "As an academic community, Albion College is firmly committed to honor and integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. Therefore, as a member of this academic community, each student acknowledges responsibility for this or her actions and commits to the highest standards of integrity. In doing so, each student makes a covenant with the college not to engage in any form of academic dishonesty, fraud, cheating or theft" (Albion Catalog). Suspected violations will be reported to the student and the college officials immediately. Confirmed instances of academic dishonesty may result in failure of the course and other consequences as outlined by the College. If you are unsure about whether your actions may fall under these guidelines, please do not hesitate to speak with me about your concerns.

Course requirements

Two In-Class Exams: 60%

Students must complete two in class exams (midterm and final) worth 30% each. You will be able to earn up to 100 points on each exam. Your scores will be transformed to a standard numeric grade using the following formula: $\frac{x}{20} - 1$, so if you earn 80 points on your midterm that would translate to 3.0.

Presentation: 20%

Each student is required to give one presentation based on one chapter from *How Democracies Die* book. Presentations will be graded on a 4.0 scale.

Participation & Attendance: 20%

I will primarily grade participation on attendance and active participation in and quality of contributions to class discussion and completion of in-class assignments and activities. However, if you miss more than two classes your participation grade will not be higher than 3.7. If you miss more than four classes, 3.3 is the highest grade you will be able to earn; and so on.

Grading scale and formulas

1. Your four grades will be weighted to receive one numeric grade. For example, if your scores were:
 - a. In class participation = 3.50 (worth 20%)
 - b. Midterm = 3.50 (worth 30%)
 - c. Final = 3.10 (worth 30%)
 - d. Presentation = 4.0 (worth 20%)Your overall numeric grade would be 3.48.
2. Your numeric grade will be then applied to Albion's scale:

Albion's Scale	Score Needed
4.0	3.8 and above
3.7	3.79-3.50
3.3	3.49-3.15
3.0	3.14-2.85
2.7	2.84-2.50
2.3	2.49-2.15
2.0	2.14-1.85
1.7	1.84-1.50
1.3	1.49-1.15
1.0	1.14-0.85
0.0	0.84 and below

3. 3.48 would translate to 3.3 on your official transcript.

Textbooks

- Haerpfer et al., *Democratization*, Oxford University Press (2009)
- Daniel Ziblatt, Steven Levitsky, *How Democracies Die*, Penguin Randomhouse (2018)

Other notes

- Be sure to regularly check your albion.edu email for course announcements.
- Please refrain from using technology – cellphones, laptops – during the class period.
- Audio recordings are not allowed.
- If the vocabulary of politics is unfamiliar to you, it may be a good idea for you to read political coverage in a major daily newspaper (New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal), other online news source (CNN, FOX, Daily Beast, or Bloomberg) or watch the NewsHour on PBS.
- Please bring your textbooks to class
- You are responsible for contacting appropriate offices if you need special accommodations for exams. I need to be informed about such events at least two weeks in advance.
- Be respectful of others

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

27 August.

Read Democratization, Chapter 1 & 2

Monday. Introduction

Wednesday. Democratic and Undemocratic States

Week 2

3 September.

Read Democratization, Chapter 4

Monday. No class-Labor Day

Wednesday. Long Waves and Conjunctions of Democratization

Week 3

10 September.

Read Democratization, Chapter 5 & 6

Monday. The Global Wave of Democratization

Wednesday. Theories of Democratization

Week 4

17 September.

Read Democratization, Chapter 9 & 11, and How Democracies Die, Introduction & Chapter 1

Monday. Political Culture, Mass Beliefs, and Value Change

Wednesday. Social Capital and Civil Society + Presentation #1

Week 5

24 September.

Read Democratization, Chapter 12 & 13, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 2

Monday. Social Movement, Trade Union, and Advocacy Networks

Wednesday. Conventional Citizen Participation + Presentation #2

Week 6

1 October.

Read Democratization, Chapter 16, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 3

Monday. In class movie

Wednesday. The Media + Presentation #3

Week 7

8 October.

Monday. Mid-term review

Wednesday. Mid-term exam

Week 8

15 October.

Read Democratization, Chapter 17

Monday. No class-Fall Break

Wednesday. Failed Democratization

Week 9

22 October.

Read Democratization, Chapter 14 & 15, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 4

Monday. Political Parties

Wednesday. Electoral Systems and Institutional Design in New Democracies + Presentation #4

Week 10

29 October.

Read Democratization, Chapter 18 & 20, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 5

Monday. Southern Europe

Wednesday. Post-Communist Europe and Post-Soviet Russia + Presentation #5

Week 11

5 November.

Read Democratization, Chapter 21

Monday. The Middle East and North Africa

Wednesday. No class-Dr. Tatarczyk attending academic conference

Week 12

12 November.

Read Democratization, Chapter 19, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 6

Monday. In class movie

Wednesday. Latin America + Presentation #6

Week 13

19 November.

Read Democratization, Chapter 22

Monday. Sub-Saharan Africa

Wednesday. No class-Thanksgiving Break

Week 14

26 November.

Read Democratization, Chapter 24, and How Democracies Die, Chapter 7 & 9

Monday. Conclusions and Outlook: The Future of Democratization

Wednesday. The Unraveling & Saving Democracy

Week 15

3 December.

Monday. Final exam review

Wednesday. Final exam review cont.

Final Exam

Tuesday, 11 December from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

***I reserve the right to amend this syllabus**