

PO 241 Democracy and Autocracy (GD)

Spring 2016, Tues/Thurs, 9:30-10:45, Simperman 212

Instructor: Alex Street, Ph.D., who lives at 242 Simperman Hall.

Contact: email astreet@carroll.edu, phone 406 447 4331.

Office hours: tbd.

Course description: Winston Churchill described democracy as “the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.” We will discuss definitions of and alternatives to democracy, debate the pros and cons, and study how democratic politics emerges and spreads.

Course objectives: You will learn to: a) debate definitions of democracy, b) see the fragility of democracy and the strengths of less equal political systems, c) evaluate current challenges to democracy and what’s needed to overcome them, d) edit wikis.

Course activities:

Reading: Read the assigned texts before class each day. Read critically—what is convincing, what is not? It often helps to take notes or write short summaries. These texts are the main basis for class discussion and learning.

Discussion: We will discuss the texts and other source material in class, and you will earn credit for attendance and active participation.

Wikipedia edits: We’ll put our learning to use by improving the online encyclopedia’s coverage of democratic and anti-democratic politics. Along the way you will also learn how to edit a wiki, a useful life skill.

Mini-papers: You will write 2 mini-papers, each just 2 pages long. This gives you practice in analytic thinking and writing, and prepares you for the exams.

Midterm exam: You will have a choice of which essay question to answer. You will be told the long-list of possible essay questions in advance. Grades are based on the same rubric that I use for the mini-papers.

Election report: You’ll write a 6-page paper on a recent election in a country of your choice (but not the US), including background on the political system. To share your learning, you’ll add/update a Wikipedia page on this election.

Final exam: You will have a choice of which essay questions to answer, on topics from the entire semester. You will be told the essay questions in advance, and indeed you will have the chance to write the questions. Grades are based on the same rubric that I use for the mini-papers.

Contact: We will communicate in class, in office hours, via Moodle and by email. I will respond to email within 1 business day (24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays). Students are expected to read their email within 1 business day.

Some important dates
January 19: first day of class
January 26: last day to add/drop class without getting “w” on transcript
March 3: midterm exam
March 7-11: spring break
April 14: last day to withdraw from class
May 5: last day of classes
May 9: election report paper due by 8pm
May 11: final exam in same classroom, starting at 8am(!)

Grades: Your final grade will be based on:

- 2 mini-papers, each worth **8%** of the final grade
- Midterm exam, **16%**
- Final exam, **24%**
- Wikipedia work
 - o Complete four training modules, each at **1%** (total 4%)
 - o Edit(s) to the Wikipedia entry for Carroll College, **2%**
 - o Edit and improve an article on a topic/theory/author covered in class
 - Your edits, and a 1-2 page summary of the changes: **8%**
 - Your feedback for your partner: **4%**
- Credit for attendance and active participation, **10%**
- Election paper
 - o **4%** for the oral presentation and explanation of Wikipedia edits
 - o **20%** for the final paper

Letter-grades will be calculated as follows:

A	93-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-92%	C	73-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%
B	83-86%	D	60-69%
B-	80-82%	F	below 60%

Technology: you are not allowed to use your laptop, tablet or phoned during class. They are too much of a distraction for you and for other students. However you can

use these tools, in the special sessions where we work on Wikipedia editing in class. I will be explicit about when you should bring these tools to class.

Special accommodations: If you believe that you may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact Kevin Haddock in order to discuss your needs and to determine a reasonable accommodation plan. You may contact him in the Academic Resource Center, Borromeo Hall Room 115 (phone: ext. 4504; email: khaddock@carroll.edu).

Late work, grade disputes: Late assignments will be accepted without penalty only if you can provide documentation of a medical emergency, or equivalent. Other late assignments will be docked 5 percentage points each day after the deadline (e.g., from 87% to 82%, the difference between a B+ and a B-). This penalty continues up to a maximum of 50 points for work that is 10 days late. After that, you can still hand in your work and get a maximum of half the available credit. The final deadline for this kind of late work is Monday, May 2nd, 2016.

If you think you will be late with an assignment, get in touch as early as possible. Students who have to travel, e.g. for athletics or debate, should look ahead in the course outline and plan their work around their travel. Extensions can be arranged, but **ONLY** in advance and under exceptional circumstances.

If you disagree with the grade on an assignment, you can ask for a re-grade. You will have to explain, in writing, why you feel that the grade was wrong. Note that the re-grade will be final, and it could also be lower than the original.

Academic integrity: Students must adhere to high standards of academic integrity. You should be honest and clear about the sources you draw upon, and your own contributions. Plagiarism, i.e. representing the ideas of other people as your own work, must be avoided. Assignments that are (partially) plagiarized will receive a Fail, and serious cases may have greater consequences such as failing the class or discipline through the Dean's office. We consider this issue so important because plagiarism runs against the very idea of a "liberal arts" education, which aims to liberate people to hold their own opinions for their own reasons.

When you refer to the work of others, provide complete citations in the author-year style (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html), with complete "references" at the end of the document, as in this syllabus.

You should familiarize yourself with Carroll's Academic Integrity Policy (<http://www.carroll.edu/files/files/academics/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf>).

Copyright: All course materials for Carroll College courses are the exclusive property of the individual(s) who created them. It is illegal to share or sell any

course materials you may obtain as a student in this class, whether on paper or in digital form. Unauthorized reproduction and distribution of Carroll College course materials may be grounds for disciplinary and/or legal action.

** The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus. This will allow me to respond to current events such as the coming revolution. Students will be notified if this happens, with as much advance warning as possible. **

My commitment to you, and your WARNING: You came to Carroll to learn about the world, to stretch and strengthen your mind, to meet inspiring people, and to prepare for an exciting future. You are also here to have fun. Part of my job is to ensure that the fun doesn't get in the way of the learning. It is too easy to slip into a lazy pattern of students pretending to work, and professors pretending to teach. That will not happen in this class. You are expected to actively participate. I will give you frequent feedback to help you stay on track.

Political science is an unusual discipline. Just about everybody already has an opinion on politics. Argument is built into the subject. In part, political science is always about how the world *should* work. Sometimes, even the facts are contested. For these reasons, political science rarely offers the "right" answer. Students sometimes find this frustrating.

Instead of telling you the right answer, I focus on the skills that you can use to work out what *you* believe. Rather than memorizing facts, we focus on learning how to build a logical argument, how to convey that argument, and how to tell which claims fit the available evidence. In my view this makes political science a relevant discipline. Nowadays it is easy to find information. The important thing is to know how to summarize, scrutinize and communicate. These are the skills we teach, and you will learn them by doing, by arguing about politics.

The focus on arguments is also why I mostly assign original texts that make a novel claim about the world, rather than textbooks, which tend to offer dry summaries (plus they're a [rip-off](#)). In political science we often read for the argument. What are the key claims? Are you convinced? Why, or why not? The texts are complements to class discussion. They provide details, explain ideas, and may inspire or alarm or annoy you. We will discuss key ideas from these texts in class but we will generally *not* go over the texts in detail, so it is your responsibility to learn from them, and to ask questions if you don't understand.

Learning is difficult, but exciting. The political world is fascinating and complex. I will try to help you understand it better. If you are having trouble please ask questions, talk to me, and challenge me if you think I am wrong.

Finally, despite all this contention, it is crucial to show respect for others in the class. We can always learn from others, even (especially?) when we disagree.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: Introduction

- Tuesday, January 19: Class preview
 - o Activity: we will discuss the syllabus and our goals for the class
- Thursday, January 21: Democracy is rare, and vulnerable
 - o Read: Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, *The Dictator's Handbook*, Ch. 1

Week 2: Defining democracy

- Tuesday, January 26: Easier said than done
 - o Read: Schmitter and Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is... And Is Not"
 - o Activity: we'll plan background reading on Egyptian politics
- Thursday, January 28: Democracy as a verb
 - o Read: Tilly, "Grudging Consent"

Mini-paper 1: "Many scholars say that democracy is about more than just elections. What else is needed? Do the other requirements just ensure that elections are meaningful, or do they confer other benefits?" Explain your answer using arguments and evidence from the texts we have discussed in this class. Write 2 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. Due via Moodle by 8pm, Friday 1/29.

Week 3: Case study 1, Democracy in Egypt?

- Tuesday, February 2: Whence, and whither the revolution?
 - o Read: Chenoweth and Stephan, "Drop Your Weapons"
 - o Read: El-Tamami, "Cairo: September 2014"
 - o Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgjIgMdsEuk> (5 mins)
- Thursday, February 4: Guest lecture
 - o No reading
 - o Activity: We'll discuss Egyptian politics with an expert

Week 4: Origins of democracy

- Tuesday, February 9: Rights and traditions
 - o Read: Lepore, "The Rule of History," *and* listen to...
 - o http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2015/05/nicholas_vincen.html (about 1 hour)
- Thursday, February 11: Economic origins?

- Read: Acemoglu and Robinson (A&R), *Economic Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship*, Preface and Chapter 1

Week 5: More origins

- Tuesday, February 16: Democracy and inequality
 - Read: A&R, *Economic Origins*, Chapter 2
- Thursday, February 18: Futurocracy
 - Read: A&R, *Economic Origins*, Conclusion

Mini-paper 2: “A&R present a theory based on abstract groups of elites and citizens. They provide little evidence on how people at the time actually thought. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this style of argument?” Explain your answer using theory and evidence from the texts we’ve discussed in this class. Write 2 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. Due via Moodle by 8pm, Friday 2/19.

Week 6: Case study 2, Civil Italy

- Tuesday, February 23: Civic traditions
 - Read: Putnam, “What makes democracy work?”
- Thursday, February 25: Civil society
 - Read: Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, Chapter 5

Week 7: Case study 2 continued, Uncivil Italy

- Tuesday, March 1: Sicily
 - Read: Gambetta, *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection*, excerpts
- Thursday, March 3: **Midterm exam**

(March 7-11, spring break. NOTE we have a lot to cover in week 9, so please read ahead during the break)

Week 9: Case study 3, Democratic breakdown in Germany

- Tuesday, March 15: The German question
 - Read: Winkler on Germany political history
 - Read: Berman, “Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic”
 - Activity: skim the handout “editing Wikipedia” on our WikiEdu page.

- Thursday, March 17: The Nazi state
 - o Read: Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” excerpt
 - o Read: Hitler, *Mein Kampf* excerpt
 - o Read: Kershaw, “Working Towards the Führer”
 - o **Activity:** read the handouts “citing sources,” “using talk pages” and “avoiding plagiarism” on our WikiEdu page. We’ll discuss editing with a mystery guest expert.

Week 10: Revolutions and how to stop them

- Tuesday, March 22: Power to the people
 - o Read: Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, *The Dictator’s Handbook*, Ch 8
 - o **Activity:** complete the Wikipedia training modules “Wikipedia Essentials” and “Editing Basics” before class (by 9:30am, 3/22)
- Thursday, March 24: Power in perversity
 - o Read: Wedeen, “Acting As If”
 - o **Activity:** complete the training modules “Evaluating articles and sources” and “Sources and Citations” before class (9:30am, 3/24).

Week 11: Censorship

- Tuesday, March 29: What *is* censorship?
 - o Read: Osnos, “China’s Censored World”
 - o Read: Hessler, “Travels with my Censor”
 - o Listen: <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/out-loud-censorship-in-china> (about 13 minutes)
 - o **Activity:** make at least one small improvement to the Wikipedia entry on Carroll College, and come to class ready to explain your edits.
- Thursday, March 31: How censorship works
 - o Read: King, Pan and Roberts, “Reverse-engineering censorship”
 - o Watch: <https://vimeo.com/151768150> (1 hour, you can skip Q&A)
 - o **Activity:** evaluate Wikipedia’s coverage of one of our topics in class so far (e.g. “democracy”), or one of the authors or theories (e.g. “social capital”). Come to class ready to talk about how it could be improved.

Week 12: Mixing democracy and autocracy

- Tuesday, April 5: Non-democratic elections
 - o Read: Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, *The Dictator’s Handbook* Ch 3

- Read: Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno and Brusco, “Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism,” Introduction
- Thursday, April 7: Democracy versus the military in Argentina
 - Read: Goldman, “Children of the Dirty War”
 - Activity: edit the Wikipedia entry on your chosen topic. We will discuss your progress and answer questions in class.

Week 13: Social effects of democracy

- Tuesday, April 12: Gender
 - Read: Lawless, “Female Candidates and Legislators”
 - Read: Beaman, Duflo, Pande and Toplova, “Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls”
 - **Activity:** working in pairs, review each other’s Wikipedia edits and offer comments for further improvement. Be sure to refer to the handout “evaluating Wikipedia” on the course WikiEdu page.
- Thursday, April 14: Party and society
 - Read: Clark, Golder and Golder, *Comparative Politics*, Chapter 14
 - **Activity:** finalize the Wikipedia edits and write a 1-2 page summary of the changes that you made and your reasoning (but you can include screen-shots in an Appendix that can be as long as you like)

Week 14: Wikiweek1

- Tuesday, April 19: Working on your election reports and Wikipedia edits
 - No required reading
- Thursday, April 21: Working on your election reports and Wikipedia edits
 - No required reading

Week 15: Wikiweek2

- Tuesday, April 26: Election report in-class presentations
 - No required reading
- Thursday, April 28: Election report in-class presentations
 - No required reading

Week 16: Democracy vs. liberty

- Tuesday, May 3: An old debate, still relevant
 - Read: Mill, *On Liberty*, chapter 1

- Read: Modood, "The Liberal Dilemma"
 - Read: Hansen, "The Danish Cartoon Controversy"
 - Read: Cole, "Unmournable Bodies"
- Thursday, May 5: Last day, review

~~~~Final papers due Monday, May 9 by 8pm~~~~

~~~~Final exam May 11 at 8am~~~~

References

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Beaman, Lori, Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova. 2012. "Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls: A Policy Experiment in India." *Science* 335: 582-6.

Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World Politics* 49(3): 401-29.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce and Alastair Smith. 2012. *The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior is Almost Always Good Politics*. New York: PublicAffairs.

Chenoweth, Erica and Maria J. Stephan. 2014. "Drop Your Weapons: When and Why Civil Resistance Works." *Foreign Affairs*, July/August.

Clark, William R., Matt Golder and Sona N. Golder. 2013. *Principles of Comparative Politics, Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cole, Teju. 2015. "Unmournable Bodies." *The New Yorker*, January 9. Accessed 14 January, 2016.

<http://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/unmournable-bodies>

El-Tamami, Wiam. 2015. "Cairo: September 2014." *Granta*, 28th January. Accessed 28 January, 2015. <http://granta.com/cairo-september-2014/>

Gambetta, Diego. 1996. *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goldman, Francisco. 2012. "Children of the Dirty War." *The New Yorker*, March 19.

Hansen, Randall. 2006. "The Danish Cartoon Controversy: A Defence of Liberal Freedom." *International Migration* 44(5): 7-16.

Hessler, Peter. 2015. "Travels With My Censor." *The New Yorker*, March 9. Accessed 9 March, 2015.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/09/travels-with-my-censor>

Hitler, Adolf. 1986. "Mein Kampf." In *Political Leadership: A Source Book*, edited by Barbara Kellerman, 438-44. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

King, Gary, Jennifer Pan and Margaret E. Roberts. 2014. "Reverse-engineering censorship in China: Randomized experimentation and participant observation." *Science* 345. DOI: 10.1126/science.1251722

Kershaw, Ian. 1993. "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship." *Contemporary European History* 2(2): 103-18.

Lawless, Jennifer L. "Female Candidates and Legislators." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2015: 349-66.

Lepore, Jill. 2015. "The Rule of History." *The New Yorker*, April 20. Accessed April 15, 2015. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/04/20/the-rule-of-history>

Mill, John S. *On Liberty*. <http://www.econlib.org/library/Mill/mlLbty1.html> Accessed 11 January, 2016.

Modood, Tariq. 2006. "The Liberal Dilemma: Integration or Vilification?" *International Migration* 44(5): 4-7.

Osnos, Evan. 2014. "China's Censored World." *The New York Times*, May 2. Accessed 14 January, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/03/opinion/sunday/chinas-censored-world.html>

Putnam, Robert D. 1994. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. "What Makes Democracy Work?" *National Civic Review* 82(2): 101-6.

Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is... and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 103-10.

Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno and Brusco. 2013. *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distribution Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles. 2007. "Grudging Consent." *The American Prospect* 3(1): 17-23.

Weber, Max. 1994 [1919]. "Politics as a Vocation," in Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (ed. and trans.), *Weber: Political Writings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wedeen, Lisa. 1998. "Acting 'As If': Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40(3): 503-23.

Winkler, Heinrich August. "Farewell to the German Question." Accessed January 17, 2016. <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/history>