



Course PSCI 6352, Empirical Democratic Theory
Professor Robert Lowry
Term Spring 2012
Meetings Tuesday 4:00-6:45 pm, Science Learning Center 3.102

Professor's Contact Information

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General Course Information

Course Description	The goals of this course are threefold: first, to make students conversant in some of the major controversies in normative democratic theory throughout history; second, to train students to understand how this theory has shaped empirical investigations in contemporary political science; and third, to understand how the findings of empirical research, in turn, have contributed to normative and empirical theory about democracy in political science.
Learning Objectives/Outcomes	On completing this course, students will be able to: 1. explain how empirical and normative work come together in empirical democratic theory; 2. assess critically the theoretical assumptions that underlie empirical work in democracy theory; 3. assess the state of the research literature in various fields involving empirical democratic theory, including participation and representation.
Required Texts & Materials	The following books should be purchased from the campus bookstore or your favorite alternative supplier: Robert A. Dahl, <i>Democracy and its Critics</i> . Yale University Press, 1991. ISBN: 978-0-30004-938-1. David Held, <i>Models of Democracy</i> , Stanford University Press, 3 rd ed. 2006. ISBN: 978-0-804-75472-9 Arend Lijphart, <i>Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries</i> . Yale University Press, 1999. ISBN: 978-0-300-07893-0 Robert D. Putnam, <i>Making Democracy Work</i> . Princeton University

	<p>Press, 1993. ISBN: 978-0-691-03738-7</p> <p>William H. Riker, <i>Liberalism against Populism: A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice</i>. Waveland Press, Inc., 1982. ISBN: 978-0-88133-367-1.</p> <p>Fareed Zakaria, <i>The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad</i>. W.W. Norton & Company, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-393-33152-3</p> <p>The following book is available through the McDermott Library website as an eBook, but you may want to get your own copy:</p> <p>Bruce Ackerman and James S. Fishkin, <i>Deliberation Day</i>. Yale University Press, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-300-10-964-1</p> <p>Additional readings are listed at the end of the syllabus and indicated in the assignments by numbers in brackets. The list of readings may be revised as we proceed.</p>
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Academic Calendar

Date	Topic(s)	Reading Assignment
Jan. 17	Introduction	
	THE BIG PICTURE	
Jan. 24	Theories of democracy through time	Held, Intro and ch. 1-5; [15]
Jan. 31	“ “	Held, ch. 6-11
Feb. 7	Pros and cons of liberal democracy	Dahl, ch. 1-14
Feb. 14	Modern liberal democracy	Dahl, ch. 15-22; Lijphart ch. 1-3
Feb. 21	Variations in democratic institutions Paper topics due	Lijphart, ch. 4-17
Feb. 28	Democratization; Illiberal democracy	[1]; [16]; Zakaria, ch. 1-4
	ISSUES AND PROBLEMS	
March 6	Representation and accountability Midterm exam distributed	[3]; [4]; [6]; [2]; [8]; [9]
March 13	No Class – Spring Break	
March 20	Social choice and voting Midterm exam due	Riker
March 27	Public choice models of democracy	[10]; [11]; [12]; [13]; [14]
April 3	Direct democracy	[5]; [7]; Zakaria, ch. 5
April 10	Presentations	
April 17	Presentations	
April 24	Deliberative democracy	Ackerman and Fishkin
May 1	Social capital and civil society Papers Due	Putnam
May 12	Final exam, 4:00 pm	

Course Policies

Grading Criteria	<p>Grades will be based on the following criteria:</p> <p>Class participation - 20 % Take-home midterm exam distributed <u>March 6</u> and due <u>March 20</u> – 25 % Final exam <u>May 8</u> – 25 % In-class presentation of paper work in progress <u>April 10 or 17</u> – 5 % Final term paper due <u>May 1</u> – 25 %</p> <p>The term paper is described in the “Notes on the Term Paper” section that follows. Topics are due in class <u>February 21</u>. Students will make in-class presentations of their work in progress. These should be relatively polished presentations, although you do not have to hand in the paper yet; the idea is that you will take feedback from the presentation and incorporate it into your final paper due on the last day of class.</p>
Late Work and Make-up Exams	<p>Late papers and take-home exams will be penalized 20 % for each day they are late without a legitimate excuse. If for any reason you will have trouble being in class for student presentations, notify me <u>in advance</u>. Make-up final exams will be allowed only in the case of a documented medical, family or work emergency.</p>
Class Attendance	<p>Attendance is mandatory at student presentations April 10 and 17. Attendance on other days is expected, and unexcused absences will affect your class participation score.</p>
Other UTD Policies	<p>Additional UTD policies regarding student conduct and discipline, academic integrity, email use, withdrawing from class, grievance procedures, incomplete grades, disability services, religious holy days, and resources to help you succeed can be found at http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies.</p>

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

Notes on the Term Paper

For the term paper, you should write a critical analysis of the literature on a particular question; a theoretically-driven case study; or a design for an empirical research project. Papers should be about 12-15 double-spaced pages of text and footnotes (maximum 12-point font), plus a list of references and any appendices, tables or figures.

Below are a few thoughts on each of the options:

Critical Analysis

A critical analysis of the literature is not just a summary. The goal is to draw on existing research to analyze and answer an important question about democratic theory and its empirical applications.

The paper should start by identifying a research question and explaining why it is important. Examples of the kinds of questions that might be addressed include:

- Under what conditions should majoritarian or consensual approaches to democracy be preferred?
- Why do (or don't) people vote, and why should we care?
- Are ballot initiatives as a form of direct democracy a good idea?
- Are majority-minority districts and/or gender quotas for representative bodies good ideas?
- Under what conditions is it legitimate for the candidate or party who wins an election to claim that they have a "mandate" from the voters?

It should then summarize existing research that is relevant to the question, identify the strengths and weaknesses of different arguments, and seek to come to a conclusion. If further research is required on a specific topic in order to answer the larger question, identify the topic and state how the answer could influence your final conclusion.

Case Study

A case study involves a detailed examination of one (or perhaps more) real political systems or events that illustrates some important point about a theory. Interesting case studies often are those that test a theory by applying it to a situation where it may seem counterintuitive, or explain why some cases may be exceptions to the general rule.

A well-written case study must do at least two things in addition to analyzing the case itself: (1) explain why the case to be studied is an interesting and important one; (2) address the issue of generalizability. Is this a "representative" case that gives us insights into other situations and if so, how do you define the population that this case represents? Is it an exceptional case and if so, how does it limit the extent to which the theory can be generalized?

It is often useful to contrast two or more cases that represent different variations, but the tradeoff is that the more cases you address, the less detail you can present on each one.

A few possible topics:

- Does direct democracy work better in Switzerland than California, and if so why?
- Why has India been able to sustain a democratic system, given its relative lack of economic development and cultural homogeneity?

Empirical Research Design

The goal for this option is to develop a plan that could be used to conduct an original, empirical investigation. It should include the following elements:

1. A statement of the research question. Why is it an interesting/important question? What contribution will be made to the academic literature or contemporary policy debates?
2. A brief summary of previous research on this question.
3. One or more testable hypotheses to be explored. Explain the reasoning behind each hypothesis.
4. Identification of the relevant dependent, independent, and control variables to be studied.
5. A plan for operationalizing key variables and collecting data.
6. Identification of techniques for analyzing the data and testing the hypotheses, to the extent you can.
7. Discussion of problems that you might encounter.

The project should be one that a graduate student might actually complete. Possible research questions might include:

- What are some of the implications of legislative term limits for representation?
- Under what conditions is deliberative democracy feasible and desirable?
- Is Acemoglu's and Robinson's theory of the origins of democracy supported by the experience of countries other than the ones included in their study?

Style

The paper should begin with a short (no more than 150 words) abstract.

Papers should be well organized and use subheadings to denote major sections.

Pages should be numbered.

You don't have to use either footnotes to endnotes, but if you do I prefer footnotes.

For citation style, consult "The Chicago Manual of Style Online" (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) and use the author-date system.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

The following readings can be accessed through the library website. Those designated as **eReserve** are on electronic reserve for this course. The others may be found by searching for the author (in the case of **eBooks**) or journal title and then browsing for the relevant edition.

- [1] Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2006. "Paths of Political Development" and "Our Argument." In *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* 1-47. Cambridge University Press **eReserve**
- [2] Cameron, Charles, David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review* 90(December):794-812.
- [3] Eulau, Heinz, John C. Wahlke, William Buchanan, and Leroy C. Ferguson. 1959. "The Role of the Representative: Some Empirical Observations on the Theory of Edmund Burke." *American Political Science Review*. 53(September):742-56.
- [4] Fenno, Richard. 1978. "Perceptions of the Constituency." In *Home Style: House Members in their Districts* 1-30. Little Brown & Company. **eReserve**
- [5] Frey, Bruno S. 1994. "Direct Democracy – Politico-Economic Lessons from the Swiss Experience." *American Economic Review* 84(May):338-342.
- [6] Htun, Mala. 2004. "Is Gender Like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups." *Perspectives on Politics* 2(September):439-458.
- [7] Matsusaka, John G. 2004. *For the Many or the Few: The Initiative, Public Policy and American Democracy*, chapters 1, 6-9. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. **eBook**.
- [8] Meier, Kenneth J. 1975. "Representative Bureaucracy: An Empirical Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 69(June): 526-542.
- [9] Meier, Kenneth J. and Laurence J. O'Toole, Jr. 2006. "Democracy and Political Control of the Bureaucracy." In *Bureaucracy in a Democratic State: A Governance Perspective* 21-44. The Johns Hopkins University Press. **eReserve**
- [10] Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. "Two-Party Competition – Deterministic Voting." In *Public Choice III*, Ch. 11, 230-248. New York: Cambridge University Press. **eBook**
- [11] Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. "Multiparty Systems." In *Public Choice III*, Ch. 13, 264-302. New York: Cambridge University Press. **eBook**

[12] Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. "The Paradox of Voting." In *Public Choice III*, Ch. 14, 303-332. New York: Cambridge University Press. **eBook**

[13] Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. "Legislatures and Bureaucracies." In *Public Choice III*, CH. 17, 386-405. New York: Cambridge University Press. **eBook**

[14] Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. "Interest Groups, Campaign Contributions, and Lobbying." In *Public Choice III*, Ch. 20, 472-500. New York: Cambridge University Press. **eBook**

[15] Oliver, J. Eric. 2001. "Remaking the Democratic Metropolis." In *Democracy in Suburbia*, 187-213. Princeton University Press. **eReserve**

[16] Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87(September):567-576.