

POLS 4205 Comparative Democratization

Dr. Adam Hii
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Office hours: email me

Since we will not see each other in a classroom, I'd like to be sure you understand how this course will run: Go to the "Welcome Page" on iCollege and read through the information there (including this syllabus). Then, when you're done, take the quiz called "Course Overview Quiz," get a 100%, and you can move on to access the rest of the class. **You cannot see the rest of the course content until you take and get 100% on the quiz!** Much of the information is below in addition to the other places on the iCollege course website.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The global state of democracy has been under scrutiny with the rise of populist movements across the globe, the expansion on misinformation, regime changes and democratic backsliding, and questions about what role and responsibilities a democratic government has towards its citizens. A recent report on the Global State of Democracy highlights the challenges democratic governments face via 6 primary challenges:

1. The crisis of representation of political parties and the rise of populism.
2. Patterns and conditions of democratic backsliding.
3. The empowerment of civil society in a shrinking civic space.
4. Managing electoral processes in challenging environments.
5. Corruption and the role of money in politics.
6. The impact of information communications technologies on democracy.

With these challenges also come significant opportunities for proponents of democracy to highlight the benefits of the political system. Understanding these challenges and opportunities is vital to making sense of the numerous political issues and international relations.

Students who complete this course will:

- 1) Understand how the concept of democracy has changed over time.
- 2) Know what contributes to state formation and transitions towards democracy.
- 3) Understand the factors leading to democratic consolidation or democratic backsliding.
- 4) How concepts of democracy interact with other political phenomenon.

Contacting Me

If you need to reach me with any questions, want to set up an office hours appointment, or any other reason you need to reach out, please do so via my GSU email. The message system in iCollege is checked much less frequently than GSU email and thus if you wish to reach me please do so via that.

Required Text

Tilly, Charles. 2007. *Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ISBN-13: 978-0521877718

ISBN-10: 978-0521701532

In addition to this book there will be several individual book chapters or journal articles assigned as readings throughout the semester. Links to or copies of those readings will be available on iCollege.

Course materials may not be shared with others outside of the class without my written permission.

Course components/grade breakdown

Discussion Posts	300 points total (50 points per week assigned)
Democracy Case Study	400 points total (150 points for the final case study and 50 points each for the other five written assignments)
Recorded Presentation	100 points
Exams	200 points total (100 points for each exam)

Discussion Posts – 50 points each

There will be six discussion posts throughout the semester. Every week when there is a discussion post you must complete your post by 11:59pm on Thursday of that week. This is to allow time for conversation with your peers as each week there is a discussion post you are also required to respond to at least one other person's discussion post from that week. Those responses are due by 11:59pm on the Sunday of that week (72 hours after the initial discussion post is due).

These posts will be related to the readings and topics for that week. While these are less formal than the written assignments since we want to communicate with each other and share thoughts and ideas (doing our best to imitate an in-class discussion), any outside facts should still be cited. Each discussion post due week is listed in the syllabus below under the week-by-week overview, and more details on each post can be found on the iCollege course website.

Democracy Case Study Written Assignments– 50 points for the individual pieces and 150 points for the completed case study

Students will complete 6 written assignments related to a democracy case study. In Week 3 students will pick a case study country to research throughout the semester based on the parameters that can be found on iCollege for case study selection. Then, students will do smaller assignments corresponding to various parts of the case study throughout the semester and then revise and combine these pieces into a large case study paper in Week 13 addressing the feedback they receive throughout the semester on the individual pieces. Each written assignment is listed below in the course outline and more information on each one is available on iCollege. All writing assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word Documents and cited appropriately.

Recorded presentation – 100 points

Students will prepare a recorded video presentation of approximately 10 minutes related to their democracy case study. This is due during finals week, and more details are on iCollege.

Exams – 100 points each

The two exams offered on iCollege will assess your understanding of major concepts in the course. The second exam only covers material after the first exam. The exam weeks are listed below in the course outline. Each exam will open on Monday at 12:01am the week they are assigned and close at 11:59pm the following Sunday. Exams will use LockDown browser and Respondus Monitoring enabled via iCollege. If you have never used this before the iCollege system will walk you through it when you first go to take an exam.

Late Work

Online courses such as these (especially with several scaffolding assignments related to a larger project) rely on students turning in work in a timely manner. That being said, things do happen. Late work can be accepted up to 4 days after the initial due date (not including the two exams or the final video presentation, no late work will be accepted on those); however, a 20% late penalty will be applied per day of those 4-days.

Grading Policy

This class will use plus-minus grading. Grades will roughly conform to the following scale:

A+ 98-100	B 83-86	C- 70-72
A 93-97	B- 80-82	D 60-69
A- 90-92	C+ 77-79	F <60
B+ 87-89	C 73-76	

Accommodation policies

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Access and Accommodation Center. Students will give a signed Accommodation Plan from the Office and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to me.

AI Policy

The use of artificial-intelligence (AI) tools – including but not limited to text, image, video, or code generators, research assistants, or problem-solving systems – is strictly prohibited for every assignment, quiz, exam, discussion, or draft in this course. All submitted work must be wholly your own, produced without AI assistance. Submitting AI-generated or AI-assisted work constitutes academic misconduct under the university's [Policy on Academic Honesty](#). If you are unsure whether an action constitutes AI use, ask me before proceeding.

Academic Honesty

Any violations of Georgia State's academic honesty policy will result in disciplinary action. **Plagiarism** includes but is not limited to:

- *Taking phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or statistical findings from a variety of sources and piecing them together into an essay (piecemeal plagiarism);*
- *Taking the words of another author and failing to note clearly that they are not your own. In other words, you have not put a direct quotation within quotation marks;*
- *Using statistical findings without acknowledging your source;*
- *Taking another author's idea, without your own critical analysis, and failing to acknowledge that this idea is not yours;*
- *Paraphrasing (rewording or rearranging words so that your work resembles, but does not copy, the original) without acknowledging your source;*
- *Using footnotes or material quoted in other sources as if they were the results of your own research; and*
- *Submitting a piece of work with inaccurate text references, sloppy footnotes, or incomplete source (bibliographic) information.*

Please review the Policy on Academic Honesty in full [here](#).

Course Outline

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Check out iCollege for updates on assignments as well as descriptions for all writing assignments and discussion posts. Keep in mind that your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation.

Each week will also have a video lecture that will be uploaded no later than Monday of that week going over assignments and expanding upon the topic in the reading. This is meant to supplement the reading so you should do the reading first then watch the video lecture. Readings from the Tilly Text are listed by chapter. Any reading listed below that is not from Tilly will be found on iCollege either as a link to that reading or the reading itself under the weekly modules.

During Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 I will also have an optional online meeting where students are welcome to drop in, ask questions about the material and I can go more in-depth/review topics that are brought up. These optional synchronous Q&A sessions will be held for one hour on Zoom (which can be accessed via our course website on iCollege). The day/time of these will be announced on iCollege during the first week of the semester.

Week One – Defining Democracy

Readings: Dahl “Polyarchy” and Tilly, Ch. 1.

Assignment: Discussion Post 1.

Week Two – Historical Development of Democracy

Readings: Tilly, Ch. 2 and Miller “Democratic Pieces”

Assignment: Discussion Post 2.

Week Three – Measuring Democracy

Reading: Lijphart

Assignment: Democracy Case Study Selection and Democracy Categorization Tracking.

Week Four – Democratization

Readings: Tilly, Ch. 3. and Huntington

Assignment: Discussion Post 3.

Week Five – Consolidation and Backsliding

Readings: Geddes and Morrison

Assignment: Democracy Case Study – Key Transition Event(s)

Week Six – Democracy and the Public

Readings: Tilly, Ch. 4 and Ch. 6

Assignment: Discussion Post 4.

Week Seven – Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy

Readings: Acemoglu and Robinson, and Barrington Moore Jr.

Assignment: First Exam

Week Eight – Political Parties

Reading: Ziblatt

Assignment: Democracy Case Study – Institutions and Actors Pre- and Post-Transition

Week Nine – War and Democracy

Readings: Oneal and Russett, and Reynol-Querol

Assignment: Discussion Post 5.

Week 10 – Democracy and Popular Control

Readings: Achen and Bartels, and Asher

Assignment: Democracy Case Study – Rights and Liberties Pre- and Post-Transition

Week 11 – Democracy and International Issues

Readings: Langlois, and Fritsch

Assignment: Democracy Case Study – International Relations Pre- and Post-Transition

Week 12 – Democracy and Inequality

Readings: Tilly, Ch. 5 and Fukuyama

Assignment: Discussion Post 6.

Week 13 – Rich Democracies and Welfare States

Reading: Wilensky

Assignment: Revised and completed Democracy Case Study due.

Week 14 – Thanksgiving Break**Week 15 – Populism and the Future of Democracy**

Readings: McCormick, and Welzel

Assignment: Second Exam

Week 16 – Final's Week

Assignment: Recorded presentation