Graduate Seminar: Democracy and Democratization

This seminar surveys the big debates on democracy and democratization from a Comparative Politics perspective. We start the semester by examining procedural definitions of democracy and the classic literature on the subject. The seminar is organized thematically, following some of the more persistent (and interesting) questions in the field. For example, we will examine the political economy of democratic transitions and the international factors that might enable (or hinder) regime change. In this seminar, students will read some of the most significant contributions made to the field.

Learning Outcomes:
This seminar is designed to help socialize graduate students into the discipline and create a foundation for future professional success.

Course Requirements (READ CAREFULLY):
1) Always attend class and be prepared to discuss ALL the material assigned for the week.
2) Write a short (3 pages long) theoretically critical paper on two or more of the assigned readings. Give a 15 minute presentation at the beginning of class of your critical argument. Make your paper available (via email) to the instructor and all your classmates by Monday 10PM. The number of short papers/presentations during the semester will be determined the first week of class.

3) Write a 1-2 page-long reaction paper to your classmate’s critical paper and present it in 5 minutes (immediately after the 15’ presentation). Your paper and presentation need to be critical as well. You must engage your classmate’s argument. You will give the instructor a copy of your reaction paper in class. The number of reaction papers/presentations during the semester will be determined the first week of class.

4) All students NOT presenting papers (requirements 2 and 3) must submit to the instructor by Monday 10PM (via email) a list of 5 (five) CRITICAL questions based on the readings, which will serve to trigger discussion in class.

5) Either write a final paper or take a final exam (practice comprehensive exam).

Course Evaluation is based on the following:
30% of final grade, short papers and presentations
30% of final grade, attendance and class participation throughout the semester
40% of final grade, final paper or “comps” type final exam

Attendance Notice:
All students are expected to attend class each and every time we meet. Only a highly contagious or severely grave disease is a valid excuse to miss class. As a significant percentage of your final grade depends on class participation, and you can only contribute to class discussion if you are present, it follows you cannot afford to be absent.

Week 1 August 21
**Introduction**
We will go over the syllabus and general expectations for the semester.

Week 2 August 28
**Procedural Democracy**

Week 3 Sept. 4
**Class and Democracy**

Week 4 Sept. 11
**Regime Transitions**

Week 5 Sept. 18
**The Political Economy of Democracy (I)**

Week 6 Sept. 25
**Classic Modernization Theory**  
Samuel Huntington. 1991. The Third Wave Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

**Week 7 Oct. 2**  
**The Political Economy of Democracy II (or Exogenous Democratization)**  

**Week 8 Oct. 9**  
**Endogenous Democratization and the Current Modernization Debate**  

**Week 9 Oct. 16**  
**Accountability and Democratization**  

**Week 10 Oct. 23**  
**Economic Voting**  

**Week 11 Oct. 30**  
**Institutional Legacies in Democratization**  


Week 12 Nov. 6  
**Class and Democratization (II)**


Week 13 Nov. 13  
**The International System and Democratization**

Kant, Emmanuel. *The Eternal Peace*


Week 14 Nov. 20  
**Recent Trends and Debates**


Geddes, Barbara. 1999. “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science* II.


Week 15 Nov. 27  
**Discussion of Final Papers and Course Wrap-up**