

## **POLI 333D: Measuring Democracy**

University of British Columbia, Department of Political Science, Term 2 2011-12

<http://www.faculty.arts.ubc.ca/bnyblade/poli333.html>

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/nybladepoli333>

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**Description** Orwell wrote that not only is there no commonly agreed upon definition of democracy, “but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it: consequently the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using that word if it were tied down to any one meaning.” In this course we consider how we might overcome this challenge, examining attempts to systematically conceptualize democracy, measure it cross-nationally and over time, and analyze some of its consequences.

*Note:* This course is formally designated as a Writing Intensive course. As such a greater focus is placed on discussing, practicing and critiquing writing than in most courses. Students will maintain a blog which they will use to share and comment on their writing and will receive extensive feedback on their writing assignments from classmates, TA and instructor.

### **Assessment**

Blog	30%	Participation	10%
First Paper	30%	Second Paper	30%

**Readings** All readings will be made available electronically on the course Vista Blackboard website. The total amount of reading in this class is comparable to most other third-year political science courses, but a major difference in this course is that many of the readings in the second half of the course rely on quantitative data using techniques and terminology you are not familiar with. As such, the readings will be challenging and we will spend extra effort working through how to understand, critically assess and write about them.

**Blogs** Becoming a better writer requires a great deal of practice. One particularly important form of writing is “short” expository writing, in which you seek to convey a clear and coherent message in a compelling fashion without belaboring the point. We will practice this sort of writing in this class in the form of blog posts. You will be expected to write a minimum of three posts per week on a blog, as well as post at least one comment per week on a classmate’s blog. You may use your own preferred blogging site if you wish for these assignments—the only requirement we have is that the blog posts are made available to your classmates, the instructor and TA. We encourage you to use UBC Blogs, which has appropriate access control features, and for which we will provide technical support.

The two required posts per week are:

One post on “democracy in the news”.

One “small assignment” post. (Assigned topic).

One “elective” post. (Free writing on anything likely to be of interest to the class.)

A full listing of the small assignment is available on the instructor’s course blog, as well as examples of the other types of posts.

## **Major Writing Assignments**

There are two major writing assignments for this class. The first paper is a 2000-word report comparing and contrasting measures of democracy for a specific region of the world. The second paper is a 2000-word report in which you critically assess the status of research in one of the debates over the consequences of democracy examined in the second half of the course. You will have the opportunity to “workshop” initial drafts of both papers with classmates. You will also have the opportunity to submit a first version of the paper which will receive extensive feedback, and then have the opportunity to revise and resubmit the paper for a better mark. In order to allow you to focus your efforts on writing, there will be no examinations in this course.

### **The First Paper**

You have been hired as a Research Associate with the Nyblade Foundation to work on their Regional Democracy Reports. One part of the RDR will focus on assessing measures of democracy for the countries in a certain region. There a wide range of regions (each with six countries), which you may consider. You have been entrusted with the initial draft of the ‘Measures of Democracy in X’ portion for one of the RDRs. In this report, you must (1) summarize major measures of democracy for countries in the region over time, (2) compare and contrast differences in the measures, and (3) assess the usefulness of the measures.

You will workshop the initial draft of the paper in class on February 16<sup>th</sup>. A revised draft of the report is due by the beginning of class on March 1st. Following submission you will receive a mark and detailed feedback, which you will use to ‘revise and resubmit’ your paper. You are expected to submit a revised version of your report based on the feedback by the beginning of class within 10 days of receiving detailed feedback on the original draft. Your overall mark on the paper will be the average of the marks on the two versions of the paper.

### **The Second Paper**

The Nyblade Foundation would like to spend further efforts fundraising for its democracy promotion efforts. It would like to be able to point out to potential donors the beneficial effects of democracy, but it would like to not be disingenuous in any claims it makes. Therefore, it is asking you to write up a concise but critical review of key articles in the debate as well as your assessment as to how strong the support for the potential beneficial consequence of democracy is. Links to supplementary readings for each topic will be made available on the course blog, and you are free to draw on any other related readings you find to be relevant. In the 2000-word report, you must (1) concisely and critically assess the argument and evidence made by the assigned articles in the debate you choose to write about and (2) provide a clear recommendation about whether (and if so, how) the Foundation could legitimately describe the evidence on the beneficial effects of democracy in this area to further their advocacy and fundraising.

You will have the opportunity to workshop initial ideas, drafts and outlines of the paper in class near the end of term, but unlike the first paper, there is no formal opportunity for a revising and resubmitting the paper.

You will workshop drafts of the paper in class on April 5<sup>th</sup>, and a revised draft is due by Noon, the 12<sup>th</sup> of April (the first Thursday of Final Examination period).

## **Core Readings**

**Note:** Links to all readings will be made available on the course blog. In addition to these core readings, links to supplementary readings for each topic for the second half of the course (useful for the second paper) will also be made available on the website.

### **Week 2. Defining Democracy**

- Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is... and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 3 (1991): 75-88.
- Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49 (1997): 430-51.

### **Week 3. Debating Definitions**

- Przeworski, Adam, "Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense", pp. 23-55 in Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón, eds., *Democracy's Value* (1999).
- Mackie, Gerry, "Schumpeter's Leadership Democracy," *Political Theory* 37:1 (2009): 128-53.
- Collier, David and Robert Adcock, "Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices about Concepts," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 537-65.

### **Week 4. Principles for Measurement**

- Adcock, Robert and David Collier, "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review* 95:3 (2001): 529-46.
- Herrera, Yoshiko M. and Devesh Kapur, "Improving Data Quality: Actors, Incentives and Capabilities." *Political Analysis* 15 (2007): 365-87.

### **Week 5-6. Measures of Democracy**

- Coppedge, Michael and Wolfgang H. Reinicke, "Measuring Polyarchy", *Studies in Comparative International Development* 25:1 (1990): 51-72.
- Alvarez, Michael, José A. Cheibub, Fernando Limongi and Adam Przeworski, "Classifying Political Regimes," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 31:2 (1996): 3-36.
- Reich, Gary, "Categorizing Political Regimes: New Data for Old Problems," *Democratization* 9:4 (2002): 1-24.

### **Week 7. Comparing Measures**

- Munck, Gerardo L. and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices", *Comparative Political Studies* 35:1 (2002): 5-34.
- Coppedge, Michael, Angel Alvarez and Claudia Maldonado, "Two Persistent Dimensions of Democracy: Contestation and Inclusiveness," *Journal of Politics* 70:3 (2008): 632-47.

### **Week 8: Consequences of Measurement**

- Paxton, Pamela. "Women's Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 35:3 (2000) 92-111.
- Doorenspleet, Renske, "Reassessing the Three Waves of Democratization," *World Politics* 52 (2000): 384-406.
- Elkins, Zachary, "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations" *American Journal of Political Science* 44:2 (2000): 287-94.

### **Week 9. Democracy→Economic Growth**

- Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi, "Political Regimes and Economic Growth," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7:3 (1993): 51-69.
- Gerring, John, Philip Bond, William T. Barndt and Carola Moreno, "Democracy and Growth: A Historical Perspective," *World Politics* 57 (2005): 323-64.

### **Week 10. Democracy→ International Peace**

- Oneal, John R. and Bruce Russett, "The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence and International Organizations," *World Politics* 52:1 (1999): 1-37.
- Gartzke, Erik, "The Capitalist Peace," *American Journal of Political Science* 51:1 (2007): 166-91.

### **Week 11. Democracy→Domestic Peace**

- Zanger, Sabine, "A Global Analysis of the Effect of Political Regime Changes on Life Integrity Violations, 1977-93" *Journal of Peace Research* (2000): 213-233.

### **Week 12. Democracy→Health and Welfare**

- Lake, David and Matthew Baum, "The Invisible Hand of Democracy", *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (2001): 587-621.
- Miller, Grant, "Women's Suffrage, Political Responsiveness, and Child Survival in American History," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 2008: 1287-1327

## **Legalese**

*Classroom and Online Conduct.* Students are responsible for helping create a positive atmosphere and are expected to treat each other with respect. Students should expect a certain degree of disagreement, criticism of arguments and debate in this class—debate is a central part of the academic enterprise. However, disagreement should be respectful, thoughtful and not personally directed.

*Plagiarism.* Students should be aware of their responsibilities in regards to academic integrity as they apply to this and all other courses they take here at UBC. For more information, check out the VP Academic website (<http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/>). As per department policy, essays must be submitted electronically for plagiarism prevention purposes, details will be provided to students in class and on the course blog.

*Late Assignments.* As most of the deadlines in this course affect your fellow students' learning experience, deadlines will be strictly enforced. To avoid a late penalty, a letter from Arts Advising (Buch A201, 822-4028) is required for any student handing in an assignment after the specified time. Unexcused late assignments will receive a 10 percentage point penalty if they are submitted within 48 hours of the deadline. After that no unexcused late assignments will be accepted.