POLS V3401: Democracy and Dictatorship in Europe
Mondays and Wednesdays 11:40am-12:55pm

Course Description: This course will examine the development of democracies and dictatorships in Europe from the ancien régime to the present day. It will analyze the nature and dynamics of European political history and use the European experience as a foundation upon which to build a broader understanding of how different types of political regimes emerge, function and are consolidated over time.

How did we get from here to there?

And what does it take to make democracy work?

Requirements/Grading:

*Lecture attendance is not optional. Students are expected to attend lectures.

*Sections: 15%. This course will combine lectures and sections. Students are expected to carefully read all relevant materials before class and be prepared to discuss them in section. Sections may be only be missed for a medical or family emergency (verification will be required for both). If your schedule changes one week, you should arrange to attend a different section after consulting with your TA.

STUDENTS WHO MISS MORE THAN TWO SECTIONS WITHOUT A VALID EXCUSE WILL FAIL THE CLASS.

*Take home exams: 40%. There will be two take home exams. (Each exam will be worth 20% of the grade.)

*Final exam: 30%. The final exam for this class will give students an opportunity to think holistically and synthetically about the material and topics covered in the course as well as analyze the “hows” and “whys” of political development more generally.
*Snap quizzes*: 15%. There will be a four snap (surprise) quizzes during the semester in class. Your top three grades will count. If you are absent for one quiz, that is the one that will be dropped. If you are absent for more than one quiz, you will get a zero on it. These quizzes cover basic facts from the previous lectures and readings. If you have been attending lectures and doing the reading, they will be painless.

All exams are take-home and must be taken when scheduled. **NO LATE EXAMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Exceptions will only be granted in cases of medical or family emergency (verification will be required for both).

All work must be done in accordance with the Barnard Honor Code, descriptions of which can be found at [http://www.barnard.edu/dos/honorcode](http://www.barnard.edu/dos/honorcode)

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**Subfield and Requirements:** This course fulfills Barnard College’s Historical Studies and Social Analysis II requirements. The course can count as a comparative politics course for Columbia students.

**Student Learning Objectives:** By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Identify key individuals, events, and turning points in modern European political history.
2. Identify and use some of the key perspectives on, and theories about, political development developed by social scientists.
3. Analyze a variety of arguments about the causes of the rise and fall of dictatorships and democracies in Europe during the modern era.
4. Develop and present their own arguments about the causes and consequences of key political episodes in modern European history.
5. Evaluate the relevance of Europe’s political development experience for countries at different stages of political development today.

**Readings:** All readings, except for those from the Merriman and Mazower volumes, will be available via courseworks. The Merriman and Mazower volumes will also be on reserve at the Barnard library. Reading/study questions to help guide you through the literature will be available with the readings on courseworks.
The ballot is stronger than the bullet.

Abraham Lincoln

September 5: Introduction
- Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, “Toward Consolidated Democracies,” Journal of Democracy, April 1996, Volume 7, Number 2, particularly pages 14-22, i.e. until section on “Two surmountable obstacles.


September 10: Theoretical Perspectives on Political Development

September 12: The Ancien Regime
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 7, pages 261-283 (NOT in vol. 2; available online via courseworks).
- E.N. Williams, The Ancien Régime in Europe, chapter 1, pages 1-19.

September 17: English Exceptionalism I
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 6, pages 222-248 (NOT in vol. 2; available online via courseworks).
- E.N. Williams, The Ancien Régime in Europe, chapter 20 (“Britain: Mixed Monarchy”).
- Documents: “The English Bill of Rights” and the coronation oath (http://www.jacobite.ca/documents/16890409.htm)

https://aeon.co/videos/war-conflict-bloodshed-upheaval-or-how-we-got-to-great-britain
Democracy is the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time.

E.B. White

September 19: The French Revolution
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 12 (“The French Revolution”) and Chapter 13 (“Napoleon and Europe”)
  “Declaration of the Rights of Man” ([http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp))

September 24: The French Revolution
- Alexis De Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution, Part 1, chapters 1, 2, and 5; Part 2, chapter 1; and Part 3, chapter 8.
- Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pages 47-67 (strongly suggested: 118-128, 174-205).

September 26: The 1848 Revolutions
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 16 (“The Revolutions of 1848”)
- *Documents*: Carl Schurz, A Look Back at 1848 (Excerpts: [http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1848schurz.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1848schurz.asp))
Democracy is when the indigent, and not the men of property, are the rulers.

Aristotle

October 1: The 1848 Revolutions
-Peter Stearns, *1848: The Revolutionary Tide in Europe*, chapters 10 and 11.

- **Documents:**
  Engels, “The Failure of Revolution in Germany.”
  National Song of Hungary:
  [http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1848hungary-natsong.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1848hungary-natsong.asp)

FIRST EXAM HANDED OUT IN CLASS

October 3: The French Third Republic

October 8: The Unification of Italy

FIRST EXAM DUE IN CLASS!
The strongest democracies flourish from frequent and lively debate, but they endure when people of every background and belief find a way to set aside smaller differences in service of a greater purpose.

Barack Obama

October 10: The Unification of Germany
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 17, subchapters: “The Unification of Germany” and “Conclusion.”
- Wolfgang Mommsen, Imperial Germany (Arnold 1996), chapter 1.

October 15: The Struggle for Democracy in France
- Merriman, A History of Modern Europe:
- Mazower, Dark Continent, pp. 3-32.

Videos summarizing WWI’s consequences:
Democracy is a charming form of government, full of variety and disorder, and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike.

Plato

October 17: English Exceptionalism II
(You should look back at the Birch reading from Sept. 21, esp. pages 34-42.)

October 22: The Collapse of Italian Democracy
-Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, chapter 25, subchapter: “The Dynamics of Fascism: Mussolini and Fascism in Italy.”
Democracy is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage.  

H.L. Mencken

October 24: The Collapse of the Weimar Republic
-Merriman, A History of Modern Europe,
   chapter 24, subchapter: Political Instability: Germany’s Fragile Weimar Republic;
   chapter 25, subchapter: The Third Reich.

October 29: The Collapse of Democracy in Spain
Democracy alone, of all forms of government, enlists the full force of men’s enlightened will.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

October 31: Rebuilding Democracy in Western Europe

SECOND EXAM HANDED OUT IN CLASS!

[November 5: No Class!]

November 7: The Postwar Order in Western Europe
- Alan Milward, European Rescue of the Nation State (Routledge 1999), chapter 2.

HAND IN SECOND EXAM IN CLASS!
“People, your government has been returned to you!”

Vaclev Havel

November 12: The Rise of Communism in Eastern Europe
- Mazower, The Dark Continent, chapter 8.

November 14: The Democratization of Southern Europe

November 19: The Decline of Communism and the Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe
- Mazower, The Dark Continent, chapter 11.

[November 21: No Class]

November 26: Democratic Decline in Eastern Europe
- Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, How Democracies Die, Intro and chapters 4 and 5.
I believe that all people aspire to be free. For too long, the people of the countries in the European Union, and perhaps Americans as well, have had a sense that political leaders are not defending their interests but defending special interests instead. There is a form of revolt on the part of the people against a system that is no longer serving them but rather serving itself.

Marine Le Pen

November 28: The Origins and Development of the European Union
- Desmond Dinan, Ever Closer Union (Lynne Rienner, 2005), chapter 1.

Documents: “The Schuman Declaration” (May 9, 1950).
Video explaining the EU: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O37yJBFRrfg
- Optional: Simon Hix, The Political System of the European Union (Palgrave Macmillan 2005), chapter 1 (This covers the basic structure and institutions of the EU. If you are already familiar with these things, you can skim this quickly).

December 3: Threats to Democracy in Western Europe Today
- “When a Political Movement is Populist”
https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/sep/02/trump-erdogan-farage-the-attractions-of-populism-for-politicians-the-dangers-for-democracy
- “Interview with Marine Le Pen”
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/interviews/2016-10-17/france-s-next-revolution
- Sasha Polakow-Suransky, “The Ruthlessly Effective Rebranding of Europe’s New Far-Right.”
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/01/the-ruthlessly-effective-rebranding-of-europes-new-far-right
https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-politics-of-anger-by-dani-rodrik-2016-03
https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/anti-globalization-backlash-from-right-by-dani-rodrik-2016-07
“If there is no struggle, there is no progress”

Frederick Douglass

December 6: Theoretical Perspectives on Political Development

- Mazower, The Dark Continent, epilogue.

December 11: Lessons Learned?

- “What’s Gone Wrong with Democracy,” The Economist, March 1, 2014.

https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/3f/19/3f19efc9-e25f-4356-b159-b5e0ec894115/v-dem_democracy_report_2018.pdf
(Pages 16-30, and whatever else you are interested in).