International Relations 555:

Democracy and Democratization in Comparative Perspective

Spring 2015

When: M 5:00-7:50 p.m.  Professor Gerardo Munck
Where: VKC 204  E-Mail: munck@usc.edu
Office Hours: M 2:00-3:20 p.m.  Office: VKC 326A
or by appointment

1. Course Description

This seminar explores efforts to generate and test theories of democratization and the endurance of democracy. After considering the concept of democracy, we start by considering some of the classics, published in the second half of the twentieth century, which still largely set the terms of the debate. Then we turn to the literature published after 2000 and consider how this literature has revised and built on ideas from the classics. We conclude with an overall assessment of knowledge about democratization and the endurance of democracy. All in all, we will discuss explanations that put an emphasis on the economy and culture as well as on politics itself.

2. Requirements

i) Five analytical essays (each essay is worth 10% of the final grade). These short essays (5 to 7 double-spaced pages) on the readings for one week will be due, at the latest, by Monday at 4 p.m. in my mailbox in VKC 330. I will ask that at least one student write an essay each week.

ii) Class participation (25% of the final grade) on the basis of the required readings, each and every week.

iii) A take-home exam (25% of the final grade). As a final assignment, students will be asked to write, as a sort of take-home exam, a roughly 10 page, double-spaced, paper, on a question to be assigned.
The following required books can be purchased at the university bookstore:


I have posted the readings for which I have electronic copies on the USC Blackboard, under course “Readings.” The readings are in folders organized by the number of each meeting.
Meeting 1: Introduction (Jan. 12)

No readings.

Monday, January 19: No class; Martin Luther King’s Birthday

I. Framing the Research Field and Setting the Terms of the Debate

Meeting 2: The Nature of Democracy (Jan. 26)

Schumpeter, Joseph, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1942). [Read only pages 240-73, starting with the section on “A Mental Experiment” and ending where the section on “The Principle Applied” begins.]


Meeting 3: Economic Modernization, Political Culture and Class Structure (Feb. 2)


Meeting 4: The State and External Factors (Feb. 9)


Monday, February 16: No class, Presidents’ Day.

Meeting 5: Political Actors and Strategic Choices (Feb. 23)


Meeting 6: State, Nation and Political Regime (March 2)


II. Revisiting, and Building on, the Classics

Meeting 7: Modernization Theory I: Economic Development (March 9)


March 16-20: Spring Break

Meeting 8: Modernization Theory II. Mass Political Culture (March 23)

Inglehart, Ronald and Christian Welzel, Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). [Focus on the discussion of democracy; that is, read closely the Introduction, Part II (esp. Chs. 7 & 8), and the Conclusion.]

Meeting 9: The Political Economy of Democracy I: Economic Inequality and Redistribution (March 30)


**Meeting 10: The Political Economy of Democracy II: Natural Resources and Rentier States** (April 6)


**Meeting 11: Political Regimes and Institutions** (April 13)


**Meeting 12: State and Nation: Sequences and Pre-requisites** (April 20)


III. Summing Up

Meeting 13: The State of Knowledge: What Do We Know? What Do We Not Know (April 27)


