International Relations 555:

Democracy and Democratization in Comparative Perspective

Spring 2013

When: M 5:00-7:50 pm
Where: VKC 104
Office Hours: M 3:30-4:50 p.m.  Professor Gerardo Munck
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Office: VKC 326A

1. Course Description

This seminar mainly explores efforts to generate and test theories of democratization, though some attention is also given to the challenge of conceptualizing democracy. Some of the key works that have shaped the field will be read and some new lines of research will be explored. Much of what we will read reflects this literature’s focus on Europe, Latin America, and post-Soviet Eurasia. But some African and Asian cases, and several global quantitative analyses, will be discussed. Emphasis will be put on the core theoretical and methodological issues addressed in this literature and less so on the historical facts they discuss.

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 3 p.m. in my mailbox in VKC 330. I will ask that at least one student write an essay each week.

ii) Class participation (20% of the final grade) on the basis of the required readings, each and every week.

iii) A take-home exam (30% 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 “Contents.” The readings are in folders organized by the number of each meeting.
Meeting 1: Introduction (Jan. 14)

Monday, January 21: No class; Martin Luther King’s Birthday

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

Meeting 2: The Nature and Value of Democracy (Jan. 28)

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


Meeting 3: Economic Modernization, Political Culture and Class Structure (Feb. 4)


Meeting 4: The State and External Factors (Feb. 11)


Monday, February 18: No class, Presidents’ Day.

Meeting 5: Actors and Strategic Choices (Feb. 25)


Meeting 6: Old Regimes and the State (March 4)

II. Revisiting Lipset, Almond and Verba, Moore, and Rokkan

Meeting 7: Economic Modernization (March 11)


March 18-23: Spring Break

Meeting 8: Unpacking Economic Wealth (March 25)


Meeting 9: Modernization and Civic Culture (April 1)


Meeting 10: Capitalism, Class and State Formation (April 8)

III. Summing Up and Looking Forward

Meeting 11: Foundations and Findings (April 15)


Meeting 12: Making Sense of the MENA Cases (April 22)


Meeting 13: Framing a New Agenda (April 29)