

GOV 94JW *Democracy in Practice in the Global South*
Spring 2021

Zoom Class Sessions:

Wednesdays, 9:45 AM – 11:45 PM

Canvas Site: <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/85207>

Instructor

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Course Description

This seminar explores how democracies operate on the ground in low- and middle-income countries today. What is the reality of how democracy works in practice versus how it is conceived and designed? What are developing countries' major democratic challenges and successes? How does a country's income level impact, and in turn is impacted by, democratic participation? Main themes to be covered include overarching issues like representation, accountability, and state strength, as well as more specific areas of democratic practice such as participatory democracy, civil society and activism, corruption, and managing diversity.

Drawing on both theoretical and empirical social science research, the course explores these questions by blending theory and case studies drawn primarily from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The course begins by reviewing the main ideals underpinning the establishment of democracy, considering questions of representation and accountability, as a foundation for later asking how those ideals are implemented in practice. We will also examine governance and the citizen-state relationship framed within the backdrop of state and institutional strength. From there, students will examine four challenges faced in the practice of democracy today: ensuring formal and informal participation in the political process; reducing corruption and

clientelism; addressing inequality and diversity; and responding to crises.¹ Throughout, the course considers how democratic practice is impacted by the politics of international development and by international and domestic forces more widely.

A large focus of the course will be on developing students' skills in evaluating and conducting original social science research. Most weeks, in addition to the thematic content, part of the class meeting will cover a particular research skill or step in the research process. For the course's final project, students have the option of either submitting a detailed project prospectus or conducting the empirical analysis and reporting results. Students will submit progressive components of the research project, receiving individual written feedback at each phase that will then be incorporated into a final paper.

Though this is a research-focused seminar, students with an interest in policy are encouraged to register, as we will consistently engage in class with policy questions and analyze how high-quality research can and should inform policy decisions. Students may also choose policy-related inquiries as their research question for the final project.

While covering multiple geographic areas, students are welcome to focus their thinking throughout the term on a particular country and/or region. For example, students can choose to orient their reading responses to assessing that week's readings in terms of the implications for understanding democratic practice in their country/region of focus. And most students' final projects will focus on only one country, offering another chance to tailor the course to students' country/region of interest.

A note on learning remotely: This is a new course, developed this academic year, which means I have designed it with the unique circumstances of fully remote learning in mind. That said, remote learning brings challenges for both you as the student and me as the teacher, and I welcome your suggestions throughout the course on how to make our remote learning experience the best that it can be.

In our weekly class meetings, discussion and engagement are key. To make these successful on zoom, we will work together to get each of you into the habit of dialoguing not only with me, but with each other. To that end, I would ask that you leave your camera and microphone on, and that we all commit to closing our email, phones, other browsers, etc. In my in-person classes, I have a no laptop policy, so I would ask that you simulate that policy in the sense of zoom being the only application you have open during our class session. We will take a break about half-way through class sessions to manage zoom fatigue. I will also use the breakout room function to give you the chance to work together in smaller groups.

To combat our increasing social isolation, one of the requirements of the course is to work with a group to lead the class discussion. I also strongly encourage you to informally get together to discuss the readings in advance of class and/or your final projects (and note this does not violate

¹ Given our current climate, I have added a week to the syllabus to consider how low- and middle-income democracies manage crises, explored through the lens of public health and the coronavirus pandemic.

the academic integrity policy, as I describe below). I encourage each of you to meet with me individually periodically throughout the term. If there is sufficient student interest, I can put together smaller working groups of students who share thematic and/or methodological interests and facilitate a few group meetings over the semester.

Course Objectives

This course has both thematic and methodological aims. By the end of the course, the goal is that students will have improved their skills in each of the following areas:

- Describing and analyzing the gaps between how democracy is conceived on paper versus how it happens on the ground, including differentiating between the reality of democratic practice across countries with distinct income levels
- Engaging in scholarly, open-minded debate about theoretical frameworks for understanding the practice of democracy in lower income countries
- Identifying and critiquing elements of research design and methodology in published academic research
- Independently conducting distinct phases of original social science research, including elaborating a research question and hypotheses, conducting a literature review, and for some students, implementing relevant research methodologies

Materials and Access

All required readings for this course will be available in digital formats, so no books or other materials will be required for purchase or physical check-out from libraries. All readings will be posted on the canvas website.

All course meetings will be conducted on Zoom. If you are having connectivity difficulties, please call in in using the phone so that you may still participate.

Assignments and Grading Procedures

There are two main components of the course: engaging with the thematic content through readings and class discussion; and developing and/or conducting an original research project. The assignments reflect these main components, and impact your final grade according to the following weights:

Class participation and engaging with the thematic material: 50%

- Preparing for, attending and actively participating in weekly class sessions: 20%
- Reading responses (9 out of 12 weeks): 20%
- Leading a class presentation and discussion (group project): 10%

Final research project: 50%:

- Research question memo: 5%
- Hypotheses to be tested, with literature review and revised research question: 15%
- Final paper: 30%

Preparing for, attending and actively participating in class sessions: Students are expected to attend every class. You are also expected to have done the reading in advance and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

Students are expected to contribute actively to the class discussion. Active and thoughtful participation comes in various forms: asking clarification questions, sharing your analysis of the material, responding to your classmates' comments, or pointing out where you disagree with the readings. Some students are lucky to find that speaking up in class is easy, while others are naturally quieter. If you fall towards the quieter range, come see me in office hours and we can discuss ways to make it easier for you to participate. Productively contributing to a group discussion is an important life skill we will be working to cultivate; to that end, I will be working hard to make sure those who tend to talk a lot learn to give everyone the floor, and those who tend to talk less, can practice speaking more.

Reading Responses: You will be asked to draft and post to canvas short, weekly reading responses *by 12 pm noon on Tuesdays (the day prior to the class meeting)*. These should include two components: 1) A discussion question for that week; 2) 1-2 paragraph response to the issues raised in the readings. For both of these components, think about the entire set of readings assigned, rather than focusing on only one reading. Consider, for example: Does one reading have a more compelling argument than another, and if so, why? What are the underlying implicit assumptions that we should make explicit? What have the readings missed? How do the readings contribute to the larger themes of the course?

You must write 9 responses across the 12 class sessions for which they are required (i.e., for every week except for the first class). In other words, you can choose not to write responses for 3 weeks, no questions asked.

There are a few reasons for assigning response papers: 1) Giving you an opportunity *before* the class discussion to analyze the readings and synthesize your thoughts on the group of assigned readings; 2) Practice writing out that synthesis, including critiquing arguments; 3) Allow students who are less inclined to speak up in class a way of communicating their ideas to me and to the class; 4) Giving me, and you all, a sense of how students are understanding that week's readings, and their main concerns, misunderstandings, and critiques. For all of these reasons, completing the reading responses should make our class discussions richer and more productive.

Leading a Class Presentation and Discussion: With one or two of your classmates, you will be asked to lead the beginning of the class session for about 20 minutes on a week of your choosing. Presentations can begin with a short synthesis of the main themes, but should use the majority of the time to lead a discussion. Focus on the bigger picture questions that cut across readings (I will use the remainder of class time to delve more deeply into the details of each reading). At the start of the term, students will submit their top 3 choices for presentation weeks, and I will form groups of 2-3 students each. You will have to meet with your group outside of the class meeting to decide on the main themes and discussion questions you will include. I will ask each group to submit to me by 12 pm noon one day before the class session a brief, one-page outline of your planned themes and discussion questions, so I can plan effectively for the remainder of the class period, and to guide you, if necessary.

The aim of this assignment is to: 1) Offer an extension of the reading responses in terms of creating an opportunity to synthesize across readings, but to do so more deeply for a week's readings that most closely match your interests; 2) Develop your skills in leading a class session and facilitating discussion; 3) Create an additional opportunity for students to collaborate with each other outside of class meetings.

Final Project: The capstone of the course is the opportunity to develop (and potentially execute) original research culminating in an approximately 20-page final paper. The project offers students the opportunity to delve more deeply into a particular democratic challenge we have covered in the course or that is related to a course theme (note I consider the requirement that it be "covered in" or "related to" the course very broadly). Research questions can be either policy-focused or more academic in nature.

Students have two options for the final paper. One is to write an in-depth research prospectus, and the other is to write a less detailed prospectus but actually conduct the empirical analysis and write up the results. The prospectus option might be better suited to students wanting a chance to develop a draft prospectus for their thesis and/or students wishing to use research methodologies – like in-depth qualitative interviews or ethnography – that are not possible to implement during the semester, especially given the realities of Covid and restricted travel.

Typically, some amount of each class session will be devoted to discussing a component of the research process, such that you will be building up research skills overtime. Students will have an opportunity to submit the different pieces of the project and receive feedback on them, before moving on to the next component. I will provide written feedback on each assignment, and we can also meet individually throughout the term to discuss progress and challenges. The final paper will combine and revise each of the first two assignments, incorporating feedback and your ongoing learning.

I introduce each of the assignments here, including how they build on each other and the main elements you will add at each iteration. More detailed instructions for each assignment will be circulated prior to the assignment due date.

- Research question memo: A brief, 1-2 page write up in which you describe your proposed research topic (what is the topic, why is it interesting to you and why might it be interesting to others) and identify at least 2 possible research questions stemming from this topic.
 - To do before the next assignment: Revise the research question memo; begin the literature review; use the results of the literature review to identify possible hypotheses
- Hypotheses memo: In 3-4 pages, briefly state your final research question, revise/update your framing and puzzle (i.e. why is this topic important and what academic and/or real-world puzzle does it address), then elaborate at least 3 possible answers to that question (hypotheses), drawing on existing academic research (i.e., a literature review).
 - To do before the next assignment: Revise the hypotheses memo; Expand the literature review; Identify your research methodology; If applicable, implement research and write up results.
- Final paper: The final paper (20 pages approx.) will revise each of the previous components, and so will include a clear presentation of your research question and puzzle, situating your question in the academic literature, presenting the main hypothesis you will test, and describing your methodology. For students writing a prospectus only, each of these sections will need to be more developed than for students conducting the research. For those conducting the research, the final paper should also describe the results and include a conclusion.

Due dates:

Research Question Memo: Friday Feb. 19

Hypotheses Memo: Friday, March 26

Final Paper: Date of registrar's assigned final exam for the course

Late Policy

All assignments will be submitted through canvas and are due by 9 PM EST on the due date (except for the reading responses which are always due on Tuesdays at noon EST).

All students are given an extension bank of 48 hours with which they can submit any assignment late, no questions asked. You can use the full 48 hours on one assignment or break it up across two assignments. In other words, you can submit one assignment 2 days late, or two assignments 1 day late.

After that, students will lose half of a letter grade (i.e., A to A-; B+ to B) for every 24 hours that an assignment is submitted late. The only exceptions to this policy are with a documented medical illness or other emergency, which includes written documentation from your resident dean.

Note that this extension bank policy *does not* apply to the response papers, given that you can opt to skip three of the response papers anyway, and because they are not as useful if you write them after class has already been held. If you have already used your three skipped weeks, and then you have a medical or other emergency and cannot complete the response paper, then as above, please provide written documentation from your resident dean, and you will not be penalized.

The policy also *does not* apply to the group presentations. As above, if you have an emergency that prevents you from being able to complete the class presentation assignment, please provide written documentation from your resident dean, and you will not be penalized.

Academic Integrity

Collaboration: I encourage most forms of collaboration between students, including discussing the readings in advance of the class meetings; providing peer feedback on written work; and discussing ideas, sources and methodologies for the final research project. However, any written work you submit for evaluation should be the result of your own research and writing. This means that you must independently compose all written assignments, including the reading responses and each of the assignments for the original research project. So while it is permissible, for example, to discuss possible research questions with your classmates, it is not permissible for your classmates to draft a research question or literature review for you, nor to conduct any part of the empirical analysis.

Citations: It is imperative that you properly attribute ideas to their true author. You must acknowledge not only direct quotes, but also summaries, paraphrasing or any arguments that come

from others. This includes properly citing any books, articles, news sources, and websites (note this is not an exhaustive list). You may use whichever citation style you wish (i.e., MLA, Chicago, etc.), but please remain consistent throughout the assignment, meaning select one citation style and stick with it.

In general: Please consult and follow the [Harvard Guide to Using Sources](#), as well as the [Harvard Honor Code](#), to which we are all bound.

If you have any concerns whatsoever about whether a particular type of collaboration is permissible, and/or if you need to cite in a particular case, please ask me *beforehand*.

Accommodations

Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the [Accessible Education Office \(AEO\)](#) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term (Friday, Feb. 5). All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation.

Contacting Me and Course Communications

I will hold regular office hours by appointment (<https://calendly.com/julieanneweaver>). I am happy to answer any questions over email or to discuss any issues, concerns or ideas one-on-one on zoom or over the phone. Note I have a 24-hour communications blackout policy prior to assignment due dates, during which I will no longer answer questions about that assignment.

Assistance and Additional Resources

At some point, every one of us will need to seek out some extra outside assistance, and this is especially true given the particular moment in which we are all living. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me to discuss your particular concern – I can guarantee you are not the only student facing it. In addition, for academic concerns, Harvard's [Academic Resource Center](#) has one-on-one appointments, workshops, peer tutoring, and many online resources covering topics like study skills, time management and reading effectively. For writing, the Harvard [Writing Center](#) is a great source for writing help, including one-on-one appointments to get writing feedback. There are also a huge array of centers and organizations at Harvard meant to support you in your non-academic life, including (to name only a few): Office of Diversity Education and Support; Office of BGLTQ Student Life; Women's Center; Center for Wellness; and Counseling and Mental Health Services (CAMS).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Jan. 27

Introduction

Overview of course themes and the research skills we will develop; Q&A about concerns and assignments; Establishing course norms; How to read effectively in the social sciences (reading exercise)

Week 2: Feb. 3

The Democratic Ideal

How are democracies defined and what are the main differences between democracies and non-democracies? What are the specific outcomes that democracies are designed to achieve?

Coppedge, Michael, et al. 2011. "Conceptualizing and measuring democracy: A new approach." *Perspectives on Politics*: 247-267.

Manin, Bernard, Adam Przeworski, and Susan C. Stokes. 1999. "Elections and Representation," In *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*, edited by Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, and Bernard Manin, Cambridge University Press.

Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should blacks represent blacks and women represent women? A contingent "yes"." *The Journal of politics* 61(3): 628-657.

Powner, Leanne C. 2014. *Empirical research and writing: A political science student's practical guide*. CQ Press, Ch.1: From research topic to research question. *NOTE*: Read pages 1-16 only; you do not need to complete the exercises on pages 16-17.

THE STATE, INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

What are the main democratic challenges developing countries face? What is governance? How does state and institutional strength impact democratic quality? How do international influences impact domestic democratic practice?

Week 3: Feb. 10

Governance and Democracy in Developing Countries: An Introduction

Olken, B.A., Pande, R., 2019. *Governance Review Paper*. J-PAL Governance Initiative.

Moss, Todd J., Gunilla Pettersson Gelande, and Nicolas Van de Walle. 2006. "An aid-institutions paradox? A review essay on aid dependency and state building in sub-Saharan Africa." *Center for Global Development working paper* 74.

Ottaway, Marina, and Thomas Carothers. 2000. "The burgeoning world of civil society aid." In *Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC. **NOTE:** Only read through page 8 (the rest of the chapter will be covered in Week 8).

Carothers, T. (1998). The rule of law revival. *Foreign Affairs*, 77(2), 95-106.

Week 4: Feb. 17 ***Institutions and Democratic Practice***

Research Question Memo Due This Week (Friday, Feb. 19)

Levitsky, Steven, and María Victoria Murillo. 2009. Variation in institutional strength. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 115-133.

Helmke, Gretchen, and Steven Levitsky. 2004. Informal institutions and comparative politics: A research agenda. *Perspectives on politics*, 2(4), 725-740.

MacLean, Lauren M. 2010. *Informal Institutions and Citizenship in Rural Africa: Risk and reciprocity in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 1: Introduction.

Ananth Pur, Kripa, and Mick Moore. 2010. "Ambiguous institutions: Traditional governance and local democracy in rural South India." *The Journal of Development Studies* 46(4): 603-623.

DEMOCRATIC IDEALS IN PRACTICE: REPRESENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

How do democracies fare in living up to the democratic ideals upon which democracy was founded? What is the nature of democratic representation on the ground? How and where is descriptive representation being implemented, and what has it achieved? Why do citizens face such difficulty keeping their politicians accountable?

Week 5: Feb. 24 ***Voting and Representation***

Baldwin, Kate. (2013). Why vote with the chief? Political connections and public goods provision in Zambia. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(4), 794-809.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2009. "Why voters in patronage democracies split their tickets: Strategic voting for ethnic parties." *Electoral Studies* 28(1): 21-32.

Chattopadhyay, R. and E. Duflo. 2004. "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in India". *Econometrica* 72, 1409-1443.

Hassim, Shireen. 2009. "Perverse consequences? The impact of quotas for women on democratization in Africa." In Shapiro, Ian, Susan C. Stokes, Elisabeth Jean Wood, and Alexander S. Kirshner, eds. *Political Representation*. Cambridge University Press.

Week 6: Mar. 3

Holding Politicians Accountable

Dunning, T., Grossman, G., Humphreys, M., Hyde, S. D., McIntosh, C., & Nellis, G. (Eds.). 2019. *Information, Accountability, and Cumulative Learning: Lessons from Metaketa I*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 1 (pages 3-15) and Ch 3 (pages 50-66, i.e. only read through section 3.2).

Weaver, Julie Anne. Forthcoming. "Electoral Dis-connection: The Limits of Re-Election in Contexts of Weak Accountability." *Journal of Politics*.

O'Donnell, Guillermo A. 1998. Horizontal Accountability in New Democracies. *Journal of Democracy* 9(3), 112-126.

Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. Doing a Literature Review. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(1), 127-132.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

How do citizens formally participate in democracies and what is the "right" amount of participation? How is participatory democracy designed and what are its impacts? To what extent is participatory democracy empowering or exclusionary? How do social groups engage in the political process, and how is this influenced by both domestic and international forces? How do theories of civil society, developed both internally and externally to developing countries, map on to the reality of social group formation and of social and political activism?

Week 7: Mar. 10

Formal Participation and Participatory Governance

Wampler, Brian. "When does participatory democracy deepen the quality of democracy? Lessons from Brazil." *Comparative politics* 41, no. 1 (2008): 61-81.

Casey, Katherine. 2018. "Radical decentralization: Does community-driven development work?" *Annual Review of Economics* 10: 139-163.

Evan S Lieberman, Daniel N Posner and Lily L Tsai. 2013. Does Information Lead to More Active Citizenship? Evidence from an Education Intervention in Rural Kenya. *World Development* Volume 60, August 2014, Pages 69–83.

Scott, J. C. 2008. *Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*. Yale University Press. Selections.

Week 8: Mar. 17

Civil Society, Activism and Social Change

Peruzzotti, Enrique, Smulovitz, Catalina, eds. 2006. *Enforcing the rule of law: Social accountability in the new Latin American democracies*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press. Ch 1, pages 3-27.

Carothers, Thomas, and William Barndt. 1999. "Civil society." *Foreign policy*: 18-29.

Watkins, Susan Cotts, Ann Swidler, and Thomas Hannan. 2012. "Outsourcing social transformation: Development NGOs as organizations." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 285-315.

Jamal, Amaney A. 2009. *Barriers to democracy: The other side of social capital in Palestine and the Arab world*. Princeton University Press. Ch 1 (page 1-20) and Ch 3 (page 50-76).

CORRUPTION AND CLIENTELISM

How does corruption operate and what are its impacts? Does corruption, clientelism or vote buying preclude democratic accountability? If so, how can these practices be upended?

Week 9: Mar. 24

Introduction to Corruption, Clientelism and Vote Buying

Hypotheses Memo Due This Week (Friday, March 26)

Fisman, Raymond, and Miriam A. Golden. 2017. *Corruption: What everyone needs to know*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.

Olken, Benjamin A., and Rohini Pande. 2012. Corruption in developing countries. *Annu. Rev. Econ.*, 4(1), 479-509.

Auyero, Javier. 2001. *Poor people's politics: Peronist survival networks and the legacy of Evita*. Duke University Press. Selected chapters.

NO CLASS MARCH 31 (WELLNESS DAY)

Week 10: Apr. 7

Can Corruption and Clientelism Be Reduced?

Fisman, R., & Miguel, E. 2007. Corruption, norms, and legal enforcement: Evidence from diplomatic parking tickets. *Journal of Political economy*, 115(6), 1020-1048.

Olken, B. A. 2007. "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia", *Journal of Political Economy*, 115(2).

Fujiwara, T., & Wantchekon, L. 2013. Can informed public deliberation overcome clientelism? Experimental evidence from Benin. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 5(4), 241-55.

Weitz-Shapiro, Rebecca. "What wins votes: Why some politicians opt out of clientelism." *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 3 (2012): 568-583.

IDENTITY AND DEMOCRACY

How do aspects of identity, like gender or ethnicity, impact political engagement, participation and exclusion? How should democracies address inequality and manage identity politics, and how does this work in practice?

Week 11: Apr. 14

Gender: Addressing Inequalities in Political Participation

Sarah Kahn, Ali Cheema, Asad Liaqat & Shandana Khan Mohmand. 2019. "Canvassing the Gatekeepers: A Field Experiment to Improve Women's Turnout in Pakistan's General Election". Unpublished working paper.

Prillaman, Sole. 2019. "Strength in Numbers: How Women's Groups Close India's Political Gender Gap." Unpublished working paper.

Gottlieb, Jessica. "Why might information exacerbate the gender gap in civic participation? Evidence from Mali." *World Development* 86 (2016): 95-110.

Clayton, Amanda, Amanda Lea Robinson, Martha C. Johnson, and Ragnhild Muriaas. "(How) Do Voters Discriminate Against Women Candidates? Experimental and Qualitative Evidence From Malawi." *Comparative Political Studies* (2019).

Week 12: Apr. 21

Ethnicity and Ethnic Politics

Adida, Claire, Jessica Gottlieb, Eric Kramon, and Gwyneth McClendon. (2017). Reducing or reinforcing in-group preferences? An experiment on information and ethnic voting. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 12(4), 437-477.

Miguel, Edward. 2004. "Tribe or nation? Nation building and public goods in Kenya versus Tanzania." *World politics* 56 (3): 327-362.

Burgess, R., R. Jedwab, E. Miguel, A. Morjaria, and G. Padró i Miquel. 2015. "The Value of Democracy: Evidence from Road Building in Kenya." *American Economic Review* 105(6): 1817-1851.

Yashar, Deborah J. 2005. *Contesting citizenship in Latin America: The rise of indigenous movements and the postliberal challenge*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 3, pages 54-82.

CONTEMPORARY SPOTLIGHT

How Do Low-Income Democracies Manage Crisis? A Case Study of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Applying the theories we have seen throughout the course, how do democracies fare in managing Covid-19 compared to non-democracies? What is it about democratic practice that makes it more or less suitable to addressing crises? What have we learned from Covid-19 that can help democracies better prepare for managing the next big crisis?

Week 13: Apr. 28

Readings TBA