

PSCI 215: Authoritarian Survival Fall 2022

Instructor: Menevis Cilizoglu

Assistant Professor of Political Science / Director of International Relations Concentration

menevisc@stolaf.edu

Class Meetings:

When: M-W-F 9:05-10:00 Where: HH 502

Office Hours:

When: Monday at 2:00-3:00 & Wednesday at 2:00-3:00 & Friday at 10:15-11:15

Where: HH 506

Course Description

40% of the world's governments are authoritarian; over half of the planet's population lives under non-democratic rule. Though dictatorships do not rely on popular consent to stay in power, they do face significant domestic and international challenges to their survival. This class covers the challenges authoritarian leaders face and explains how they try to stay in power. We will examine survival strategies related to ideology, coercion, cooptation, electoral manipulation, patronage distribution, economic growth, and civil-military relations. We will focus particularly on contemporary examples of political dynamics in authoritarian regimes.

You will engage with these topics through:

- reading peer-reviewed political science articles and case studies;
- an individual research project on an authoritarian country of your choice;
- being engaged with in-class discussions and activities, and
- watching and analyzing documentaries.

Learning Environment

All classes will be based on a discussion in various forms. To participate fully in these discussions, you must keep up with all the readings and attend class regularly. We all have a great deal to learn from the texts, but also from each other. I ask all of you to help the class be one in which others feel free to contribute their ideas. I understand that not everyone is willing or feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions with others in a classroom setting, and in a virtual setting. However, I hope that in the first few weeks we can foster a community where everyone feels that their opinions are valid and valued. It is of utmost importance that

every student feels comfortable speaking in class and that we are always respectful of one another. Students with concerns, challenges, or special circumstances of any sort are encouraged to let me know as soon as possible.

Expectations

Academic Honesty: I expect you to be diligent about avoiding plagiarism or cheating in any form. I am committed to treating Honor System violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its [terms](#).

Communication: Read this syllabus, all course materials, occasional email, and the expectations/assignment instructions I'll share along the way. You can ask me questions via email and during office hours.

Disability and Access Accommodation: I am committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. Students seeking accommodations, please contact [DAC](#) staff.

Preferred Gender Pronoun: This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Course Requirements

1) Research Project (50%)

You will work on a 4-step writing assignment that is intended to help you link the theories covered in class to real-world cases of authoritarian politics. The goal of the project is to analyze the current state of politics in an authoritarian country of your choice, identify the challenges the leadership of the country faces and the survival strategies they use, and to offer policy suggestions for individuals/groups/parties interested in democratization.

Library Resources for your Research Project: On September 23, we'll meet with Ann Schaezner, the Political Science Department's librarian. She will walk us through the course website/resources package we've created to help you with your research project. I also encourage you to be in contact with Ann if you have any research-related questions throughout the semester.

- **Paper 1: Country Selection - [5%]:** First, you will pick a country for your research project. Your country must be classified as "Partly Free" or "Not Free" in the [Freedom](#)

[House Database](#). Keep in mind that this selection is a commitment for the rest of the semester. Therefore, I advise you to pick a country you are interested in. I also strongly recommend you have a conversation with me before you commit to it. Moodle submissions are due at the beginning of the class on **September 23**.

- **Paper 2: Getting to Know Your Country - [10%]:** Next, you will conduct research on the regime characteristics of your country (electoral process, judicial system, constitution, rights and liberties etc..) and write a paper on the reasons why your country is classified as an authoritarian regime. Moodle submissions are due at the beginning of the class on **October 3**.
- **Country Presentations - [5%]:** On October 3 or 5, you will make a presentation to the class, introducing your country, its brief history, the current state of politics, and its authoritarian traits.
- **Paper 3: Authoritarian Survival [5% + 25%]:** You will identify the challenges faced by the leadership of your country and write a paper to assess the effectiveness of the survival strategies being employed by the leadership. First, on **December 7**, you will submit a 2-page outline of your paper (**5%**) and have a meeting with me to go over your outline and get feedback. Final papers are due on **December 15 at 4 pm (%25)**.

Further instructions on each step of this assignment are posted on Moodle.

2) Country Journal: (20%)

As a supplement to your research project, you will keep a “Country Journal”, submitting separate journals on 5 themes: protests, elections, media, economy, and military. I intend for this assignment to be a systematic aid to you in your research process. Your journals will have two main sections. First, you will follow the news about your country (current and historical) and summarize the relevant information on your country’s politics, leadership, and regime survival based on the theme of the journal. Next, you will report on the themes discussed in class each week and how it relates to your country. For instance, on our “Protests” week, you will conduct research on the major protests in the recent history of your country. Similarly, on our “Economic Hardship” week, you will conduct research on the economy of your country and what the current state of the economy means for the stability of the authoritarian leadership. Detailed instructions are posted on Moodle.

3) Documentary Responses: (20%)

Between November 28 and December 5, you will watch 4 documentaries before class. After watching each documentary, you have two tasks:

- Write five bullet points on how selected themes highlighted in the documentary can be linked to the scholarly literature we've read and the discussions we've had throughout the semester.
- Write three discussion questions to facilitate the discussion in class. Make sure that your questions are not intended to summarize the documentary, but to analyze and discuss them in relation to what we've learned in class previously.

Your documentary responses are due the night before each class via Moodle.

4) Participation: (10%)

Attendance will be taken regularly, as it is a prerequisite for participation. Your attendance is important both to your ability to master course material and to the overall quality of class discussion. But perfect attendance does not mean a perfect participation grade - you must be actively engaged in class to score well in this area. Being actively engaged can take many forms: asking and answering questions, sharing opinions, active listening, contributing to small group work, using Zoom's chat feature etc.. I understand that not everyone is willing or feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions with others in a classroom setting. However, I hope that in the first few weeks we can foster a community where everyone feels that their opinions are valid and valued. To facilitate participation and an engaging class, I encourage you to keep your camera on. If there are any circumstances because of which you prefer to keep your camera off or you can't participate in class, let me know.

Evaluation Policies

I follow the College's official grading benchmark. You can access them in the Academic catalog section on "grades."

93 and above: A	90-92: A-	87-89: B+	83-86: B
80-82: B-	77-79: C+	73-76: C	70-72: C-
67-69: D+	64-66: D	61-63: D-	60 and below: F

Policy on Make-ups and Late Submissions: You are expected to submit your work on time. The only allowable exception to this policy is a documented emergency. If you have other unexpected emergency situations that force you to submit your work late, please contact me as soon as possible. For late paper submissions, I will deduct 5 points for every late 24 hours.

Course Schedule and Readings

This course has no textbooks. All readings/videos/external links are shared via Moodle.

- **September 9 (Friday): Course Introduction**

- Read the syllabus.
- Fill out the course [survey](#).

Unit 1: Authoritarianism

- **September 12 (Monday): Conceptualizing Authoritarian Regimes**

- Glasius - "[What Authoritarianism Is and Is Not: A Practice Perspective](#)"

- **September 14 (Wednesday): Measuring Authoritarianism**

- Read [Freedom in the World 2019: Methodology](#)
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- **September 16 (Friday): Democracy in the World**

- Freedom House - [Democracy under Siege](#)

- **September 19 (Monday): Classifying Authoritarian Regimes**

- – Gandhi - "[Political Institutions under Dictatorship, Chapter 1: the World of Dictatorial Institutions](#)"
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- **September 21 (Wednesday): Hybrid Regimes**

- Diamond - "[Thinking about Hybrid Regimes](#)"
- Levitsky and Way - "[Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism](#)"

- **September 23 (Friday): Research Project: Country Selection & Library Day**

- Paper 1: Due at the beginning of the class via Moodle.

- **September 26 (Monday): Selectorate Theory**

- Bueno de Mesquita and Smith - "[The Dictator's Handbook, Chapter 1: The Rules of Politics](#)"

- **September 28 (Wednesday): Is There an "Authoritarian" Personality?**

- Smith and Cohen - "[Do Authoritarians Vote for Authoritarians? Evidence from Latin America](#)" (you can skim/skip the data analysis section)

- **September 30 (Friday): Authoritarian Personalities**

- Glasser - "[Putin the Great: Russia's Imperial Imposter](#)"
 - McGregor - "[Party Man: Xi Jinping's Quest to Dominate China](#)"
 - Genc - "[Erdogan's Way: The Rise and Rule of Turkey's Islamist Shapeshifter](#)"
 - Coronel - "[The Vigilante President: How Duterte's Brutal Populism Conquered the Philippines](#)"
 - Lendvai - "[The Transformer: Orbán's Evolution and Hungary's Demise](#)"
- **October 3 (Monday): Research Project: Getting to Know Your Country**
 - Paper 2: Due at the beginning of the class.
 - Country Presentations Day 1 Presenters: Aidan, Erik, Jonah, Julia
 - **October 5 (Wednesday): Research Project: Getting to Know Your Country**
 - Country Presentations Day 2: Karoline, Sasha, Max, Erika

Unit 2: Challenges

- **October 7 (Friday): Protests**
 - Joshua and Edel - "[To Repress or Not to Repress: Regime Survival Strategies in the Arab Spring](#)"
 - Yuen ad Cheng - "[Neither Repression nor Concession? A Regime's Attrition against Mass Protests](#)"
- **October 10 (Monday): Protester Tactics**
 - Thaler - "[Violence is Sometimes the Answer](#)"
 - Chenoweth and Stephan - "[Violence is a Dangerous Route for Protesters](#)"
- **October 12 (Wednesday): Protests: Case Studies**
 - Readings TBD
- **October 14 (Friday): Research Project: Journal 1: Protests**
- **October 17 (Monday): Fall Break**
- **October 19 (Wednesday): Authoritarian Regimes and Human Rights**
 - Gruffydd-Jones - "[Citizens and Condemnation: Strategic Uses of International Human Rights Pressure in Authoritarian States](#)" pp:579-589

- Donno and Kreft - "[Sometimes Autocrats Strengthen their Power by Expanding Women's Rights. Here's how that Works](#)"
- **October 21 (Monday): Elections Under Authoritarianism**
 - Gandhi and Lust-Okar - "[Elections under Authoritarianism](#)"
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- **October 24 (Monday): Stealing an Election**
 - Cheeseman and Klaas - "[How to Steal an Election in Broad Daylight](#)"
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- **October 26 (Wednesday): Election Monitoring**
 - Hyde - [The Pseudo-Democrat's Dilemma: Why Election Observation Became an International Norm](#) - Chapter 1
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- **October 28 (Friday): Research Project - Journal 2: Elections**
- **October 31 (Monday): Social Media**
 - Dewey et. al. - "[The Impact of Social Media on Social Unrest in the Arab Spring](#)" skip 32-48
 - Gladwell - "[Small Change: Why the Revolution will not be Tweeted](#)"
- **November 2 (Wednesday): The Internet**
 - Kalathil and Boas - "[The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution](#)"
- **November 4 (Friday): Social Media - TBD**
- **November 7 (Monday): Research Project: Journal 3: Media**
- **November 9 (Wednesday): Economic Hardship I**
 - Rozenas and Stukal - "[How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia's State-Controlled Television](#)" Skip the "Data and Methods" section and jump to the "Conclusion" section
 - Klein, Martinez and Tokdemir - "[It's the Economy, Stupid \(But Blame Minority Groups\)](#)"
- **November 11 (Friday): Economic Hardship II**
 - Grauvogel and von Soest - "[Sanctions can be Counter-productive in Instigating Democratic Reform in Authoritarian Regime](#)"

- Wood - "[A Hand upon the Throat of the Nation: Economic Sanctions and State Repression](#)" Skip pp.498-509
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- **November 14 (Monday): Foreign Aid? Friend or Foe?**
- Wright - "[To Invest or Insure? How Authoritarian Time Horizons Impact Foreign Aid Effectiveness](#)" pp: 971-977
- Easterly - "[Foreign Aid for Scoundrels](#)"
- **November 16 (Wednesday): Natural Resource Curse**
- Friedman - "[The First Law of Petropolitics](#)"
- Treisman - "[Is Russia Cursed by Oil?](#)"
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- **November 18 (Friday): Coup 1**
- Quinlivan - "[Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East](#)"
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- **November 21 (Monday): Coup 2**
- Powell, Chacha, and Smith - "[Failed Coups, Democratization, and Authoritarian Entrenchment: Opening Up or Digging In?](#)"
- Shaheen - "[One Year after the failed coup in Turkey, the crack-down continues](#)"
- **November 23 & 25: Happy Thanksgiving!**
- **November 28 (Monday): Documentary #1**
- Watch "[Bringing Down a Dictator](#)"
- **November 30 (Wednesday): Documentary #2**
- Watch "[General Idi Amin Dada](#)"
- **December 2 (Friday): Documentary #3**
- Watch "[The Regime](#)"
- Watch "[The Regime Responds](#)"
- **December 5 (Monday): Documentary #4**
- Watch "[Hugo Chavez Show](#)"

- **December 7 (Wednesday): Research Project: Outline Submission & Individual Meetings & Writing**
- **December 9 (Friday): Research Project: Individual Meetings & Writing**
- **December 12 (Monday): Conclusion**
- **December 15 at 11 am: Final Paper Submission**