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POLS 385: Repression and Control in Dictatorships Spring 2017

Course Description & Objectives

This three-credit course is an advanced seminar with a focus on state repression and control in dictatorships. Autocrats maintain power through the twin pillars of cooptation and coercion—i.e., carrots and sticks. The class material will touch on issues of cooptation; however, the bulk of the course deals with the ways in which autocratic governments control elite and mass actors. We investigate why dictators employ state repression, the ways in which they do so (including censorship, purges, and mass violence), and the institutions they use to carry out repression (e.g., secret police, courts). We also discuss the consequences of state repression for society, armed conflict, and regime stability.

Requirements

Readings

Students are expected to actively read the assigned readings before class. Take notes on the readings. Engage and challenge the argument and research design. By actively engaging the reading material, students will be equipped to participate in class and perform well on exams. Students may want to reread the material after it is discussed in class. The instructors will provide book chapters and manuscripts. Students are responsible for locating published academic articles on their own.

Class Participation (15%)

In order to be recognized for excellent participation, students must exhibit punctual arrival to class, consistent attendance, and active participation that shows engagement with the readings.

Two Examinations (50%; each 25%)

Students will take two exams on Tuesday, February 21 and Thursday, April 13, respectively. The exams will be composed of short-answer and essay questions, taken in-class and closed book. The first exam will cover all the material up to that exam. The second exam is cumulative, covering all the material up to that exam with greater emphasis on material covered during the second half of the class.

Paper (35%)

Instructors will provide a list of possible research questions and cases to investigate. Students will choose a research question and answer it with a theory or argument found in one of the readings in the class. They will choose and investigate a case to determine whether the chosen theory is empirically supported by the case. The expectation is that the paper is a rigorous, critical engagement with at least one of the thematic topics covered in this class. At a minimum, the paper should demonstrate an understanding of at least one argument made in the class readings: both its theoretical underpinnings and its empirical implications. Truly excellent papers will exhibit a thorough and thoughtful effort to investigate the case and the degree to which it confirms (or disconfirms) the chosen argument.

Grades for the paper will be assigned on the basis of completion of two tasks. First, students are required to submit a short memo that states their choice of research question, theory/argument to answer the question, and case to investigate. They also will provide an annotated bibliography of 8 to 10 sources (academic journals and books only) that they plan on using in their research. The body of the memo should be no more than one page, followed by the annotated bibliography. This memo is due on Tuesday, February 28. Second, students will submit a final draft of the paper. The paper is due on the last day of class, Thursday, April 20.

Extra Credit

No extra credit is available for the course.

Class Policies

Late Assignments/Makeup Exams: No makeup exams are given, with exceptions made *in advance* of the exam start for unusual circumstances such as illness, university sanctioned event, or family crisis. Students are responsible for obtaining a letter from the academic adviser in the college office if you need a makeup exam. Makeup exams are not offered in the case of conflict with vacation plans or other personal reasons. Papers and assignments will be docked a full letter grade for each day the assignment is late. For example, a B- paper turned in a day late will receive a C- grade.

ADSR Statement: Emory University is committed under the Americans with Disabilities Act and its Amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to providing appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, provide the instructor(s) with an accommodation notification letter from Access, Disabilities Services and Resources office. Students are expected to give two weeks-notice of the need for accommodations. If you need immediate accommodations or physical access, please arrange to meet with instructor(s) as soon as your accommodations have been finalized.

Honor Code: The honor code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the teacher is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

<http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

Writing Center. The Emory Writing Center offers individual conferences (45 minutes long) to Emory College students. It is a great place to bring any project at any stage in your composing process—brainstorming an idea, structuring a paper, or proof-editing a final draft. Writing Center tutors can talk with you about your purpose, organization, audience, design choices, or use of sources. They can also work with you on sentence-level concerns (including grammar and word choice), but they will not proofread for you. Instead, they will discuss strategies and resources you can use to become a better editor of your own work. The Writing Center is located in Callaway N-212. Visit writingcenter.emory.edu to make appointments.

Academic advising. The academic counselors at Emory College's Office of Undergraduate Education are invaluable resources for all academic-related questions during your time at Emory (e.g., choice of major, distribution requirements, resources for coping with personal problems interfering with academic progress, etc.). The main office is White Hall, Suite 300, but there are two other locations as well, in the

SAAC (Suite 310, Clairmont Campus) and the Woodruff Residential Center (Suite 337). Email college@emory.edu or telephone 404-727-6069 to make an appointment with Office of Undergraduate Education staff at any of those locations. Many other academic support resources are available to Emory undergraduates: see college.emory.edu/advising for more information.

Class Schedule

Regimes and repression

- Jan 10 (T): Introduction to the course. What is dictatorship? What is repression? How do states control civilians? Course administration.
- Jan 12 (Th): What is the relationship between human rights and repression? Human rights, repression, concepts, measurements, and data.
Read: Davenport, Christian. 2007. "State Repression and Political Order." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 1-23.
- Jan 17 (T): How to organize the study of dictatorships?
Read: Svobik, Milan. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2.
- Jan 19 (Th): How do dictators manage the twin threats to their power? Contracting on violence and the threat of coups.
Read: Svobik, Milan. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5.
"[Will Turkey's coup attempt prompt others nearby?](#)" *Washington Post: Monkey Cage* [blog] (July 30, 2016)
- Jan 24 (T): How do leaders coup-proof? Do coup-proofing actions impede coups?
Read: Powell, Jonathan. 2012. Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'état. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 56: 1017-1040.
- Jan 26 (Th): Why do autocrats engage in elite purges? Stalin and the Great Purges.
Read: Getty, J. Arch. 1983. "Party and Purge in Smolensk: 1933-1937." *Slavic Review* 42 (1): 60-79.

Informational and agency problems: during "ordinary times," elections, and civil conflict

- Jan 31 (T): What explains geographic variation in repression? Focal places and mass arrests in Ethiopia.
Read: Arriola, Leonardo. 2014. "Suppressing Protest During Electoral Crises: The Geographical Logic of Mass Arrests in Ethiopia." Manuscript.
- Feb 2 (Th): Does repression follow a temporal logic? Focal events and preventative detention in China.
Read: Truex, Rory. 2015. "The Temporal Logic of Repression in China: A Political Calendar Approach." Manuscript.

- Feb 7 (T): How do dictators get information to carry out repression? Collusion between firms and the state in Argentina.
Read: Klor, Esteban, Sebastian Saiegh, and Shanker Satyanath. 2016. "The Role of Social Networks in the Targeting of Violence: Labor Repression during Argentina's Last Dictatorship." Manuscript.
- Feb 9 (Th): What motivates citizens to denunciate their fellow citizens?
Read: Bergemann, Patrick. Forthcoming. "A Theory of Social Control and Denunciations." *American Sociological Review*
- Feb 14 (T): How do incumbents use violence to win elections? De facto redistricting in Kenya.
Read: Kasara, Kimuli. 2014. "Electoral Geography and Conflict: Examining the Redistricting through Violence in Kenya." Manuscript.
- Feb 16 (Th): Is repression effective in demobilizing the opposition? Electoral campaigning in Zimbabwe.
Read: Young, Lauren. 2016. "Mobilization under Threat: An Experimental Test of Opposition Party Strategies in a Repressive Regime." Manuscript.
- Feb 21 (T): * Midterm exam 1
- Feb 23 (Th): How can the dictator insure his agents carry out repression? Ethnic shuffling in Kenya.
Read: Hassan, Mai. Forthcoming. "The Strategic Shuffle: Ethnic Geography, the Internal Security Apparatus, and Elections in Kenya." *American Journal of Political Science*
- Feb 28 (T): When does the military refrain from shooting? Failure to repress in the Philippines and Indonesia.
Read: Lee, Terrence. 2009. "The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule." *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (5): 640-669.
* Research paper memos are due in class.
- Mar 7 and 9: Spring Break
- Mar 14 (T): Do elites increase repression at home to preempt potential rebellion? War, violence and displacement.
Read: Danneman and Ritter. 2014. "Contagious Rebellion and Preemptive Repression." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58 (2): 254-279.

[The Uprooted](#)
- Mar 16 (Th): Why do regimes delegate authority to non-state militias? Purges, civil wars, and the monopoly of violence.
Read: Eck, Kristine. 2015. "Repression by Proxy: How Military Purges and Insurgency Impact the Delegation of Coercion." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 924-946
- Subtle forms of repression*
- Mar 21 (T): Why and what do governments censor? Internet censorship in China.

Read: King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret Roberts. 2013. "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression." *American Political Science Review* 107 (2): 326-343.

- Mar 23 (Th): To what extent is silence a product of self-censorship? Private media in Russia.
Read: Crabtree, Charles, Christopher Fariss, and Holger Kern. 2015. "Truth Replaced by Silence: A Field Experiment on Private Censorship in Russia." Manuscript.
- Mar 28 (T): When is propaganda used to coerce rather than persuade? "Living a lie" in Assad's Syria.
Read: Wedeen, Lisa. 1998. "Acting 'As If': Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (3): 503-523.
- Mar 30 (Th): Do cults of personality influence citizens' behavior? A Field Experiment in the U.A.E.
Read: Bush, Sarah, Aaron Erlich, Lauren Prather, and Yael Zeira. 2016. "The Effects of Authoritarian Iconography: An Experimental Test." *Comparative Political Studies* 49 (13): 1704-1738.
- Apr 4 (T): How do autocracies use the law to repress? Military regimes in the Southern Cone.
Read: Pereira, Anthony. "Of Judges and Generals: Security Courts under Authoritarian Regimes in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile." In *Rule by Law: The Politics of Courts in Authoritarian Regimes*, edited by Tom Ginsburg and Tamir Moustafa. New York: Cambridge University Press. 23-57.
- Apr 6 (Th): Class cancelled (MPSA)
- Apr 11 (T): What is the legacy of judicial involvement in repression? Comparing Spain, Chile, and Argentina.
Read: Aguilar, Paloma. 2013. "Judiciary Involvement in Authoritarian Repression and Transitional Justice: The Spanish Case in Comparative Perspective." *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 7: 245-266.
- Apr 13 (Th): * Midterm exam 2
- Apr 18 (T): In-class workday on papers
- Apr 20 (Th): Overflow day/Conclusions
* Final drafts of research paper are due in class.