POLSCI 716: COMPARATIVE AUTHORITARIANISM  
(cross-listed with GLOBALST 719)  
Winter 2016-7, Term 2

Professor: Dr. Netina Tan  
Office: KTH 541  
Email: netina@mcmaster.ca  
Classes: Mondays, 11:30am - 2:20pm  
Class venue: KTH 732  
Office Hours: 11:30 – 1:00pm, Tuesdays or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this course, we examine the rise, persistence and breakdown of authoritarianism in the era of democracy. This is a timely and important topic as we are experiencing a stagnation in the number of democracies and a rise of hybrid regimes since the late 2000s. The line between electoral democracy and authoritarian regimes is increasingly unclear as autocrats use democratic institutions such as elections, parties and the legislature to co-opt dissent and maintain mass support. Drawing from comparative politics literature, we will begin the course by studying the origins and theoretical explanations of authoritarianism. After comparing the different types of regimes, we will examine how gender inequality, digital media and international factors affect authoritarian rule. We conclude by reflecting on the prospects of democratization in recent authoritarian breakdowns in Asia, the Middle-East and Sub-Saharan Africa.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This is a reading and discussion intensive course. It is specially designed to equip graduate students with a solid background in the study of regime change and stability. The aim is to familiarize students with the key concepts and theoretical debates in comparative authoritarianism literature. Students are encouraged to bring their empirical case knowledge of any country or region to class discussions and written assignments. **N.B. This course will be especially helpful for students taking the comprehensive examination in Comparative Politics.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) **Class Discussion and Participation (10%)**

Your attendance and active participation are central to succeeding in this course. Students are expected to complete all the reading assignments for each week and contribute actively to class discussions. You are welcome to bring current and relevant news items into class.

2) **Weekly Questions (10%)**

You will reflect on the weekly readings (Week 2-12, excluding Week 6) and prepare **2 questions** in advance to contribute to class discussion. You will upload your questions onto Avenue’s Discussion folder the night before (by 12am) our class.

3) **2 X Reading Leadership (20%) (Weeks 2-5, 8-9 and 12-13)**

You will lead two class discussions based on the required reading twice in the course (10% each leadership). You will sign up for your leadership roles and readings in our first class. You may like to upload
your outline onto Avenue before presentation so that the class can have access to your notes. During your leadership, you will highlight the key points in the article and raise at least 2 questions for discussion. If there are two or more leaders in a week, discuss amongst yourselves to ensure no overlap in the readings covered for the week. Each reading leadership should be no more than 15 mins. You will be evaluated based on the quality of your discussion points and the degree to which your questions advance the discussion or lead to fresh insights. You are welcome to use power-point slides and share hardcopies of your outline in class.

4) **Literature Review (15%) and Presentation (5%): Total = 20%**

**Literature Review (20%).** You will submit a 4-page (single-spaced) review of one of these books:

Select your book early in the course to ensure no overlap between students. Books marked with * are recommended for MA students. Do visit the library as soon as possible and get hold of your favorite book. Alternatively, please purchase a copy online.

To learn how to write a literature review, check the guidelines in the “Additional Resources” at the end of this syllabus. You will submit the literature review in hardcopy in class and upload a soft copy electronically on Avenue. **DUE = 13 Feb**

**Book Presentation (5%).** Before submitting your literature review, you will spend 10 minutes to present your book in class. Your presentation should summarize the thesis of the book in 1-2 sentences; assess the author’s use of primary sources, data; the relevance of the book for class discussion, highlight any favorite quotes or memorable aspect of the book that will help us remember the book or your recommendation to be included for the future study of this course. Ppt slides are welcome but not required. **DUE = 13 Feb**

5) **Outline (5%) + Presentation (5%) + Research Paper (30%): Total = 40%**

**Outline (5%)**
You will submit a 2-page outline on your proposed research question, thesis, logic of case selection and research method which you will use to write the research paper. I will evaluate your outline and offer feedback so that you’ll have time to revise before submitting your research paper. **DUE = 13 Mar**

**Research Paper Presentation (5%)**
3 weeks before submission of research paper, you will spend no more than 10 minutes to present your outline to the class. Your presentation should include your research question, reason for picking the topic or case; your central thesis about this regime type and expected findings. You may like to circulate 2-page outline to your classmates a day before hand. **Your classmates will ask questions, give suggestions and evaluate your presentation. DUE = 13 Mar**

**Research Paper (30%)**
You will submit an analytical research paper that is about 8 pages (no more than 3,500 words, single-spaced). You can select a topic that either deals with the causes, methods of control, a regime type OR effects of authoritarianism in the contemporary world. You will develop your research topic in consultation with me. A bibliography is required for all works cited. **DUE = 3 Apr**

6) **Summary of Course Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly questions</td>
<td>/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading leadership</td>
<td>/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper outline</td>
<td>/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper presentation</td>
<td>/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final research paper</td>
<td>/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>/100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wks</th>
<th>Mondays</th>
<th>9:00am -11:30am</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 Jan</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16 Jan</td>
<td>Origins and Theories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23 Jan</td>
<td>Typologies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30 Jan</td>
<td>Single-Party Regimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6 Feb</td>
<td>Personalist Regimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13 Feb</td>
<td><strong>Book Presentations</strong></td>
<td>Literature Review Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20 Feb</td>
<td>Mid-Term Recess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>27 Feb</td>
<td>Military Regimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 Mar</td>
<td>Electoral Authoritarianism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13 Mar</td>
<td>Research Paper Presentations</td>
<td>Research Outline due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20 Mar</td>
<td>Gender Equality and Regime Type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>27 Mar</td>
<td>Social Media and Mass Mobilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3 Apr</td>
<td>Authoritarian Breakdown</td>
<td>Final Research Paper due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RECOMMENDED READINGS


*For MA students, you may like to purchase one of these books as a guide:

Most of these books will be available in Mills Library (under Course Reserve).
WEEKLY READINGS

Week 1: Introduction


Recommended:

Week 2: Origins and Theories of Authoritarianism


Recommended:
Week 3: Typologies of Authoritarianism


Recommended:

Week 4: Single Party Regimes


Recommended:
Week 5: Personalist Regimes


Recommended:


Week 6: Book Presentations

Week 7: Mid-Term Recess

Week 8: Military Regimes


Recommended:


**Week 9: Electoral Authoritarian Regimes**


**Recommended:**


**Week 10: Research Paper Presentations**
Week 11: Gender Inequality and Regime Type


Recommended:

**Recommended:**

**Additional Resources:**
Week 13: Authoritarian Breakdown


Recommended:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Suggested Journals
Comparative Political Studies: http://cps.sagepub.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/
Commonwealth and Comparative Politics:
http://www.tandfonline.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/toc/fccp20/current#VGYXD9YfSo
Democratization: http://www.tandfonline.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/toc/fdem20/current#VGYVr9YfSo
Foreign Affairs: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/
Journal of Comparative Politics: http://jcp.gc.cuny.edu/
World Politics: http://journals.cambridge.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/action/displayJournal?jid=WPO

Websites and Datasets
Amnesty International: http://www.amnesty.org/
Democracy Web: http://www.democracyweb.org/toc.php
Freedom House: https://freedomhouse.org/
Human Rights Quarterly: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hrq/
IDEA Institutional Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: http://www.idea.int/
Pippa Norris Democratization Index: http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Data/Data.htm
Bertelsmann Transformation Index: https://www.bti-project.org/en/home/
Varieties of Democracy Index: https://www.v-dem.net/en/
Reporters Without Borders Index: https://rsf.org/en/ranking
World Values Survey: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp

Advice on Writing
Gerring, John. General Advice on Social Science Writing.
Elkins, Zachary. 2014. “Perspectives on the Craft of Writing.”

Bibliography Citation Guides
Chicago Manual of Style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html
McMaster Citation and Styles Guide: http://library.mcmaster.ca/citation-and-style-guides

How to write a Literature Review
UOT guide: http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice-specific-types-of-writing/literature-review
Cornell guide: http://guides.library.cornell.edu/cgi.php?q=31909&p=201910
CITATION AND STYLE GUIDELINES
All written work will follow the author-date citation style according to the Chicago Manual of Style available here: https://library.mcmaster.ca/citation-and-style-guides

Late Assignments
Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due dates. Assignments turned in after the beginning of the class will not earn full credit. 10 percent of the total grade will be deducted each day after the submission deadline (weekends count as one day). Late assignments will not be accepted 48 hours after the original deadline. To avoid late penalties and ensure fairness, a MSAF or medical certification that has been presented to Social Sciences Faculty Office is required. If you anticipate having problems meeting the deadlines, please contact me before the assignment is due to discuss your situation

In-class Behaviour
All cell-phones must be turned off and stowed away during class.

Academic Dishonesty
You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism (e.g. work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained).
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Special arrangements can be made for students with disabilities. If you need assistance because of a disability please consult with the Student Accessibility Services (SAS), MUSC Room B107, ext. 29652. Information is also available online, at http://sas.mcmaster.ca/. Once you have consulted with a program coordinator, you need to notify me as soon as possible with respect to your accommodation needs.

McMaster Statement on Electronic Resources
In this course, we will be using the Avenue2Learn site (avenue.mcmaster.ca). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with me.

Course Modifications
The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The student is responsible for keeping up with the changes, which will either be announced in class or via Avenue to Learn. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-Mail Communication Policy
Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.