

POLISCI 489: Electoral Politics in the Developing World

Fall 2021

Monday/Wednesday 11:30am–1:00pm

LSA Building, Room 3254

Faculty

Prof. Noah Nathan, Department of Political Science

Email: nlnathan@umich.edu

Office Hours: Fridays 10:30am–12:30pm, held virtually via Zoom. See Canvas for a Zoom link and signup sheet for slots.

Graduate Student Instructor: Peter Carroll, PhD Student, Department of Political Science

Email: peterpc@umich.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30am-12:30pm, held virtually via Zoom. See Canvas for a Zoom link and signup sheet for slots.

Course Description

This course examines how electoral competition operates in new democracies and competitive authoritarian regimes in the developing world. The course will cover contemporary political science research on a series of topics: How do politicians campaign and distribute resources to win elections? Why do some voters support corrupt, underperforming politicians while others choose effective leaders? Why are some elections stolen and rigged while others are free and fair? Why do some elections spark violence while others are peaceful? How can poor democracies transition away from patronage politics? Readings will draw on empirical cases from many world regions, including Africa, Latin America, the post-Soviet countries, South Asia, and the historical United States.

Assignments and Grading

- *NOTE: All assignments must be double-spaced in a standard 11pt or 12pt font with 1-inch margins.*
- *Final project – “Policy Briefing Memo” (35% of grade; of which, 5% for first draft “element”; 5% for second draft “element”; 25% for final submission):* Students will conduct research over the course of the semester on contemporary electoral politics in a developing country of their choosing. This assignment will culminate in a 15 page briefing report, due **Wednesday, December 15 by 11:59pm**. Before preparing the final report, students will first prepare two 5 page drafts of elements of the report. The first of these drafts is due **Friday, October 22 by 11:59pm** and the second is due **Monday, November 22 by 11:59pm**. Students will receive detailed feedback on each draft from the instructors, as well as via in-class workshop sessions, and then will have an opportunity to revise their drafts to include in the final report. Further details will be circulated in class.
- *Two short papers (40% of grade; 20% for each paper) –* There will be two 5-7 page papers based *only* on assigned course readings and lecture materials answering a prompt that I will circulate 10 days in advance. The goal is to practice writing a persuasive and efficient argumentative essay, while also demonstrating knowledge of course readings. Paper 1 is due **Thursday, September 30 by 11:59pm**. Paper 2 is due **Thursday, November 11 by 11:59pm**.

- *Class participation* (15% of grade) – Each student is expected to actively contribute to our class discussions. We expect that you will attend all class sessions and will be taking attendance and noting participation. There is no need to notify us to get an isolated absence excused. However, if we observe that you have repeated unexcused absences and/or are repeatedly not participating, your participation grade will be negatively affected.
- *Reading pop quizzes* (10% of final grade) – Our class discussions and activities will not work if students show up not having read. To incentivize reading, there will be 8 unannounced quizzes on the assigned readings, conducted at the beginning of the class sessions. These quizzes will take less than 5 minutes and will be *very easy* if you have done that day’s readings. I will drop each student’s worst score and average together the remaining 7 for their grade. *There are no make-ups for quizzes.* Any quiz that occurs during an unexcused absence will be scored as a 0. If a quiz occurs when you are out of class for an excused absence, I will still drop your worst score and average together the remaining quizzes for your grade (i.e., your best 6 quizzes will now be used to compute your grade, not best 7).

Writing Feedback

This is an Upper Level Writing Requirement (ULWR) course, designed to provide detailed feedback on student writing:

- Students must attend at least one office hours appointment with either me or the GSI (whoever has graded the relevant assignment) to discuss one of the draft elements of their final report. Extra office hours times will be made available to accommodate all students.
- There will be two peer-to-peer writing workshopping sessions held during class on **Monday, November 1** and **Wednesday, December 1**, in which students will help each other improve the two draft elements of their final report. Attendance for these two days *is required*.

Readings

All required readings will be posted on the Canvas webpage for the course. Please let me know if you have any problems accessing the course materials.

Course Policies

Please see the final page of the syllabus for the remaining course policies. This includes special policies related to COVID-19.

Course Schedule

Part I: Introduction

1. First meeting (August 30)

No assigned readings. Please attend – class involves a group activity.

2. Democratization in the developing world (September 1)

Assigned reading:

1. Diamond, 1999, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Johns Hopkins University Press. Chapter 1. (Focus on pgs. 1-7, 17-19.)
2. Levitsky and Way, 2010, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1. (Focus on pgs. 3-13, and, especially, 23-24. Be sure to see Table 1.1)

NO CLASS– Monday, September 6 (Labor Day holiday)

Part II: Why would voters support underperforming politicians?

3. Information constraints? (September 8)

Assigned reading:

1. Ferraz and Finan, 2008, “Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil’s Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. (Focus on pgs. 703–711; look at Figures III and IV; read conclusion, bottom of 743 through first paragraph 744.)
2. Faller, 2015, “The System Matters: Corruption and Vote Choice in Uganda,” *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*. (Focus on pgs. 428–433, 437–438).

4. Identity voting? Blind partisanship? (September 13)

Assigned reading:

1. Horowitz, 1985, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, University of California Press. Chapter 7. (Focus on pgs. 291–298; 306–312; 318–330).
2. Conroy-Krutz, Moehler, and Aguilar, 2016, “Partisan Cues and Vote Choice in Multiparty Systems,” *Comparative Political Studies*. (Focus on pgs. 3–15; look at Figure 2; bottom 24–25 (note: page numbers in the journal, not the PDF))

5. Vote buying? (September 15)

Assigned reading:

1. Brusco, Nazareno, and Stokes, 2004, "Vote Buying in Argentina," *Latin American Research Review*. (Focus on pgs. 66–70; 76–85)
2. Gilbert, "New Scrutiny on Vote Buying as Argentine Elections Near," *The New York Times*, 23 October 2015.
3. Cooper, "Cash, T-Shirts and Gallons of Booze: How Liberian Candidates Woo Voters," *The New York Times*, 8 October 2017

6. Coercion? (September 20)

Note: Short Paper #1 prompts circulated today

Assigned reading:

1. Fish, 2004, *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3. (Read pgs. 54–77)
2. Casey, "'It is Unspeakable': How Maduro Used Cuban Doctors to Coerce Venezuela Voters," *The New York Times*, 17 March 2019.

Part III: Distributive politics and implications for voters

7. What is clientelism? (September 22)

Mini-lecture at end of class on writing in political science.

Assigned reading:

1. Auyero, 2000, "The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account," *Latin American Research Review*. (Entire)
2. Hicken, 2011, "Clientelism," *Annual Review of Political Science*. (Focus on pgs. 289–296)

8. Is clientelism efficient? (September 27)

Assigned reading:

1. Kramon, 2016, "Electoral Handouts as Information: Explaining Unmonitored Vote Buying," *World Politics*. (Focus on pgs. 454–468 only)
2. Hicken and Nathan, 2020, "Clientelism's Red Herrings," *Annual Review of Political Science*. (Entire)

9. Where and when does clientelism happen? (September 29)

Note: Short Paper #1 due Thursday, September 30 by 11:59pm

Assigned reading:

1. Weitz-Shapiro, 2014, *Curbing Clientelism in Argentina*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (Focus on pgs. 1–5; 11–14) and Chapter 3.

10. Who do politicians target? Core vs. swing voters (October 4)

Note: Final Project prompts circulated today

Assigned reading:

1. Stokes et al., 2013, *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2. (Focus on pgs. 31–40; 43–48; 50–54).
2. Diaz Cayeros, Estevez, and Magaloni, 2016, *The Political Logic of Poverty Relief: Electoral Strategies and Social Policy in Mexico*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3. (Focus on pgs. 68–70 (Section 3.1); skip Section 3.2; pgs. 71–top of 75 (Section 3.3)).

11. When core voters benefit: ethnic favoritism (October 6)

Assigned reading:

1. Bates, 1983, “Modernization, Ethnic Competition, and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa,” in *State Versus Ethnic Claims*, Westview Press. (Entire, but make sure you understand the arguments in the “Political Competition” section, pg. 161, and the Conclusion, pgs. 163–166)

12. Is ethnic voting rational? (October 11)

Assigned reading:

1. Posner, 2005, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4. (Focus on pgs. 91–114)
2. Ferree, 2006, “Explaining South Africa’s Racial Census,” *Journal of Politics* (Read only the “Theories of Ethnic Voting” section; pgs. 804–806)

13. Who votes in new democracies? (October 13)

Assigned reading:

1. Kasara and Suryanarayan, 2015, “When Do the Rich Vote Less Than the Poor and Why? Explaining Turnout Inequality across the World,” *American Journal of Political Science*. (Focus on pgs. 613-616, 623-624)
2. Nathan, 2019, *Electoral Politics and Africa’s Urban Transition: Class and Ethnicity in Ghana*, Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 and 4.

NO CLASS – Monday, October 18 (Fall break)

14. Movie day! (October 20)

Note: First element of final project draft due, Friday, October 22 by 11:59pm

In class: “An African Election,” 2011, directed by Jarreth and Kevin Merz. Run time: 89 minutes.

Part IV: Political parties

15. Why do parties matter? Why do party systems matter? (October 25)

Assigned reading:

1. Hale, 2008, *Why Not Parties in Russia?*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (Focus on pgs. 1–7; 10–11; 19–22) and Chapter 4 (Focus on pgs. 150–186; 195-196).
2. Chhibber and Nooruddin, 2004, “Do Party Systems Count? The Number of Parties and Government Performance in the Indian States,” *Comparative Political Studies*. (Focus on pgs. 152–163; 180–181)

16. Where do party systems come from? I: Electoral rules and societal cleavages (October 27)

Assigned reading:

1. Hicken, 2009, *Building Party Systems in Developing Democracies*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (focus on pgs. 1–18) and Chapter 4.

17. Peer-review writing workshop #1 (November 1)

Note: Short Paper #2 prompts circulated today

Assigned reading:

1. We will workshop the first element of your final projects during class. You will be assigned to read several of your classmates' submitted assignments.

18. Where do party systems come from? II: Authoritarian legacies (November 3)

Assigned reading:

1. Riedl, 2014, *Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems in Africa*, Cambridge University Press. Preface, Chapter 1 (skim after page 27; but be sure to see Figure 1.3), Chapter 6.

19. How do party systems change? (November 8)

Assigned reading:

1. Greene, 2007, *Why Dominant Parties Lose: Mexico's Democratization in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (Focus on pgs. 1–10) and Chapter 7 (Focus on pgs. 210–244; 252–254).
2. Lupu, 2014, "Brand Dilution and the Breakdown of Political Parties in Latin America," *World Politics*. (Focus on pgs. 561-571, 579-585)

Part V: Electoral irregularities

20. Why do some governments steal elections? (November 10)

Note: Short Paper #2 due Thursday, November 11 by 11:59pm

Assigned reading:

1. Simpson, 2013, *Why Governments and Parties Manipulate Elections*, Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 (Focus on pgs. 1-11; 24–29) and 6 (all).
2. Svobik and Rundlett, 2016, "Deliver the Vote! Micromotives and Macrobehavior in Electoral Fraud," *American Political Science Review*. (Focus on pgs. 180-183)

21. Where does fraud happen? Which politicians engage in it? (November 15)

Assigned reading:

1. Ziblatt, 2009, “Shaping Democratic Practice and the Causes of Electoral Fraud: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Germany,” *American Political Science Review*. (Focus on pgs. 1–8; bottom of pg. 12–18)
2. Ofosu, 2019, “Do Fairer Elections Increase the Responsiveness of Politicians?,” *American Political Science Review*. (Focus on pgs. 963–970, Figure 1, Figure 2, 974–977)

22. Violence as electoral strategy (November 17)

Note: Second element of final project draft due, Monday, November 22 by 11:59pm

Assigned reading:

1. Wilkinson, 2004, *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 (skim).
2. Filkins, 2019, “Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi’s India,” *The New Yorker*. (Entire)

NO CLASS – Monday, November 22 and Wednesday, November 24 (Thanksgiving break)

23. Post-election violence in Kenya (November 29)

Assigned reading:

1. Boone, 2011, “Politically Allocated Land Rights and the Geography of Electoral Violence: The Case of Kenya in the 1990s,” *Comparative Political Studies*. (Entire)
2. Human Rights Watch, 2008, “Ballots to Bullets: Organized Political Violence and Kenya’s Crisis of Governance.” Pages 35-56 (“Organized Violence in the Rift Valley”).

24. Peer-review writing workshop #2 (December 1)

Assigned reading:

1. We will workshop the second element of your final projects during class. You will be assigned to read several of your classmates’ submitted assignments.

Part VI: The US as a developing democracy

25. Clientelism and its demise in the US and Europe (December 6)

Assigned reading:

1. Shefter, 1977, "Party and Patronage: Germany, England, and Italy," *Politics & Society*. (Focus on pgs. 403–405, 408–423)
2. Wolfinger, 1972, "Why Political Machines Have Not Withered Away and Other Revisionist Thoughts," *Journal of Politics*. (Entire)

26. Democratic backsliding (December 8)

Assigned reading:

1. Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2017, *How Democracies Die*, Crown Publishers. Chapter 1, Chapter 5.
2. Bermeo, 2016, "On Democratic Backsliding," *Journal of Democracy*. (Entire)

Note: Revised and extended version of final project due Wednesday, December 15 by 11:59pm

Course Policies

- *COVID-19 Policies:* As we transition back to in-person learning, there are several policies to note:
 - If you have COVID or are required to quarantine due to a close exposure, please let us know by email. All of your absences and missed quizzes will be excused during this period and we will make sure that lecture videos of the sessions you miss are available. We are also happy to work with you on deadline extensions for writing assignments affected by your absence.
 - If I have COVID or need to quarantine, I will transition the course to Zoom for the class sessions I miss (unless I am too unwell to teach). In addition, if my child's daycare has to close at some point this semester due to a COVID case and I am unable to arrange alternative childcare in time, I may also be forced to transition several classes to Zoom. I will notify you of either situation as far in advance as possible.
 - Per LSA rules, masks are required to be worn *at all times* in our classroom. If you do not wear your mask (this means over your mouth *and* nose), I will ask you to do so. If you do not comply, I will stop class, make you leave, and then have you unenrolled from the course.
- *Late assignments:* Extensions are typically only granted if cleared with me in advance. If you anticipate needing an extension, please contact me to discuss your options *in advance of the deadline*. I cannot commit to meeting all extension requests, but will try to be as accommodating as I can. I realize this is a tough time for everybody. Without arranging for an extension, late assignments will be docked 1/3rd of a grade for each 24 hours they are late (e.g., A becomes A–, B+ becomes B, etc.).
- *Academic integrity:* It is very easy to detect copy and pasted text from online sources using anti-plagiarism software. So that we're on the record in advance in the small chance that this does arise: *I have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism* and will immediately report anyone suspected of it to the administration for disciplinary action. (I'm serious about this. I've done it before.) You will also automatically fail the course. Don't be that person! Do your own work.
- *Accommodations for disabilities:* If you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. We will work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. Any information you provide to me is private and confidential.
- *Student wellbeing:* University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/>. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs>.
- *Grade grievances:* If you believe a grade you have received is unfair or in error, you will need to do the following: 1. Provide an explanation to me in writing about why you believe the grade was in error. 2. Schedule an appointment by email to meet with me to discuss your complaint; 3. If my response fails to address your claim of unfairness or error, you may petition the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies at the latest within the first five weeks of classes following the completion of the course. You must convey in writing the basis for the complaint, with specific evidence in support

of the argument that the grade either was given in error or was unfairly determined. This formal complaint also should summarize the outcome of the initial inquiry to the course instructor, indicating which aspects are in dispute. Within three weeks of the receipt of the petition, the DUS will determine whether to convene the Undergraduate Affairs Committee, the student, and me for a formal hearing.