Democracy, Dictatorship and Regime Change

Class code
POL-UA 9994

Instructor Details
Carmela Lutmar
Office Hours: by appointment
cl218@nyu.edu, clutmar@poli.haifa.ac.il, lutmarc@yahoo.com

Class Details
Democracy, Dictatorship and Regime Change
Tuesday, 10-1
Brandeis, Room 104

Class Description
The purpose of this course is to examine key topics, major contributions, and recent advances in the study of democracy, dictatorship, and regime change. We will cover the classic regime types (democracy, hybrid regimes, and dictatorship), transitions between them, and the strategies they (and their leaders) use to stay in power. We will cover such topics as the origins of these regimes, the role that leaders and institutions play in them, how they deal with civil unrest or other threats to their power, and more. We will first cover the theoretical foundations of each topic, and then delve into empirical examples focusing on the Middle East and North Africa.

Desired Outcomes
This course has the following learning goals:

1. To provide all students with a solid understanding of theories and empirical evidence regarding the origins, conduct, and institutional foundations of democracies, dictatorships and the various degrees that exist between them.

2. To provide a deeper understanding of the current systems of governance in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as their modern history.

3. High achieving students will also learn how to write a full research paper using primary and secondary sources, how to critique existing research, and how to build a convincing argument for their final paper.

Assessment Components
Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive on time. Students must complete all assigned readings before the class meeting and be prepared to participate actively in discussions of the readings and current events. Students are required to turn in all written assignments on the dates scheduled. Late work will be penalized.

Students will be evaluated on the following basis:

1. Class Attendance and Participation (10%)
2. Country Presentations (10%)

Each lesson will focus on a different country in the MENA region which will then be used as a case-study for the theories presented that day. Students will be required to choose a country and introduce it to the class during the relevant lesson. You are free to present their chosen countries however you see fit, using media, stories, statistics, etc.

3. Critical Review Papers (40%)

Students are required to submit two papers, 6-8 double-spaced pages at most, due via NYU Classes by the beginning of the 4th and 9th classes. The goal is to pick an article from the readings, summarize its main argument(s), and then criticize it on various grounds – methodological, flow of argument, etc.

4. Final Paper (40%)

Students are required to submit a final research paper on any of the topics covered in the syllabus, 15-20 double-spaced pages at most. Students will have to finalize the topic with the instructor before starting to work on the paper. The students are required to formulate a clear research question and answer it using both primary and secondary sources. Students will also be required to give a short presentation of their topic during the final class. We will learn what a good research question is, and how to conduct a comprehensive literature review.

Failure to submit or fulfill any one of the required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Full attendance, thoughtful participation, assignments turned in on time and meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade B:** Full attendance, thoughtful participation, assignments turned in on time but partially meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade C:** Partial attendance, little participation, assignments turned in late and/or partially meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade D:** Partial attendance, no participation, assignments turned in late and/or do not meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade F:** Poor attendance, no participation, assignments turned in late and/or do not meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade conversion**

A=94-100
A-=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B-=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C-=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65
Grading Policy

No-shows for in-class presentations and assignments submitted after the deadline without requesting an extension will receive zero grades.

If a student believes an inadvertent error was made in the grading of an individual assignment or in assessing an overall course grade, a request to have the grade re-evaluated may be submitted. To appeal an assigned final grade, the student should first email the course instructor requesting clarification about how the grade was determined. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion and wishes to appeal the grade further, a formal written appeal should be submitted to the site director. This appeal must be submitted within 30 days after the grade has been posted; appeals that are submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

All medical-based absence requests MUST be presented to the Manager of Student Life and Housing (MSLH). In the case of illness, contact the MSLH within seven (7) days of the absence or as soon as practicable and provide medical documentation. Non-medical requests should be made to the Assistant Director for Academics (AD/Academics) and in advance of the intended absence. Your instructors will be informed of any excused absence; they are not authorized to approve your absence, and they are required to report any absences to the AD/Academics.

NYU Policy on Religious Holidays

1. Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should, whenever possible, notify faculty and the AD/Academics in advance of such anticipated absence.

2. Whenever feasible, examinations and assignment deadlines should not be scheduled on religious holidays. Any student absent from class because of his/her religious beliefs shall not be penalized for any class, examination, or assignment deadline missed on that day or days. In the event that examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on a religious holiday, any student who is unable to attend class shall be permitted the opportunity to make up any examination or to extend any assignment deadline missed on that day or days.

3. That no adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student who avails him/herself of the provisions of the resolution.

4. A violation of these policies and principles shall permit any aggrieved student to bring forward a grievance, provided under the University Grievance Procedure.

Late Submission of Work

All works must be submitted on time, unless you have received an explicit extension. Any late submission may result in grade deduction at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html) for further information.
Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Plagiarism constitutes an academic offence for which you can be disciplined. Punishment may include a failing grade, suspension or expulsion. In all confirmed cases, a report will be sent to the student’s Dean at NYU or, in the case of a non-NYU student, to the home institution.

Internet Research Guidelines

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the internet to the build up of contemporary knowledge of the world around us. But it needs to be used wisely. This means that one must be selective and careful when relating to internet-based sources, identifying and distinguishing opinions from facts, and journalism from academics. One should make clear reference to internet sources, allowing the reader the opportunity to consult these resources as and if required. As with all sources of information, use the internet critically.

Please also note that the ‘world-wide web’ exists in many languages. Many sources about Israel in English, for instance, will be aimed at tourists or readers living primarily in English-speaking regions of the world. Sources might differ when reading them in other languages.

NYUTA’s Writing Center

Established in coordination with NYU’s Expository Writing Center, NYUTA’s Writing Center is available to help you with all genres of writing, from senior theses to smaller response papers; from personal statements to cover letters; from PowerPoint presentations to creative assignments. The Center can help you at any stage of the writing process, from figuring out the demands of an assignment, to working with or researching sources, to brainstorming a thesis and outline, to finalizing a project or reviewing a draft. However, please note that writing sessions are held as a joint session, an active exercise between the student and writing advisor – this is not a proofreading service!

Please view the Writing Center as an opportunity, not a punishment. It is meant equally for student-writers who are not confident in their skills as well as students who are quite talented and strong, but recognize the value of a second look. Moreover, rest assured that your instructors will value and appreciate your initiative to visit the writing center.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact NYUTA’s AD/Academics, Edan Raviv (room 201; edanr@nyu.edu).

Session 1

Leaders, Regimes and Systems: Israel

Students will learn to

1. Distinguish between various regime types
2. Learn what motivates leaders in different political systems


Session 2

Democracy, Dictatorship and Hybrid Regimes

Students will learn distinguish between degrees of democracy and dictatorship as well as what defines regimes as such.
Explanations and Transitions to Democracy: Post-Arab Spring Egypt and Tunisia

Students will learn the various ways of transitioning to democracy from dictatorship. We will give examples from past cases in Eastern Europe as well


*Gause, III, F Gregory. “Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring,” Foreign Affairs, July-August 2011

Correlates and Transitions to Democracy: The Palestinian Authority


Critical Paper One Due

**Session 5**

**Democratic Consolidation and Breakdown: Lebanon**

Students will learn the factors that help consolidate democracies, and what explains its survival. Students will also analyze the variables that makes democracies collapse.


Chatty, Dawn. “Statelessness and Tribal Identity on Lebanon’s Eastern Borders”, Mediterranean Politics, September 2013

**Session 6**

**Revolution and Endogenous Institutional Change: Yemen**

Students will learn when revolutions start, and what explains the variation in their occurrence.


Session 7

Monarchies: Jordan and Morocco

Monarchies “survived” the Arab Spring without much turmoil. We will discuss about this puzzle and try to analyze its causes.


Wintrobe, Ronald. “How to understand and deal with dictatorship: an economist’s view,” Economics of Governance 2001, No. 2, pp. 35-58


Session 8

Institutions in Dictatorships: Nasser’s Egypt and Khomeini’s Iran

Students will learn about the various institutions in dictatorships, and how those differ from institutions in democracies.


Power in Dictatorships: The Gulf

Power is an elusive term, and its components vary. Students will learn about the Gulf states, and how they use the relatively limited power they have to achieve their foreign policy goals.


Critical Paper Two Due

Popular Resistance and the Dictator’s Response: Syria

Students will learn –

1. When do masses decide to resist a dictatorship?

2. Will dictators respond in the same way in all instances of unrest?

3. What explains the variations in the dictators’ reactions?


**Session 11**

Dealing with Dictatorships: Libya

Students will learn about the various ways we can counter dictatorial regimes. What determines the variation in our responses?


Linz, Juan. “Democratization Theory and the Arab Spring,” Journal of Democracy, April 2013

**Session 12**

Islamic Authoritarianism: Saudi Arabia and Iran

Religion is a powerful force to mobilize the masses. Students will learn about the links between religion and dictatorships. Are Islamic dictatorships any different than other dictatorships?


Fish, M Stephen. Are Muslims Distinctive? A Look at the Evidence. 2011, Oxford University Press Chapters Two and Seven.


**Session 13**

Regime Change and the Resource Curse: Iraq
Session 13

Students will learn about the Resource Curse phenomenon – and its links to regime change


Regime Types, Foreign Policy and Military Intervention: The Middle East

Session 14

States intervene for various reasons. Students will learn those motives, and analyze their usefulness in the short and long run in achieving the goals of their initiators.

Kobi Michael and Yoel Guzansky (eds). 2017. The Arab World on the Road to State Failure. INSS


*Pattison, James. “The Ethics of Humanitarian Intervention in Libya”, Ethics and International Affairs, Fall 2011

Classroom Etiquette

Please raise your hand before speaking in class.

Computers are acceptable in class, but please do not abuse this privilege by using them for non-class related activities.

Place all mobile devices on silent.
Carmela Lutmar has a BA in Political Science and Philosophy (1993) from the University of Haifa, and MA in Peace Science from the University of Notre Dame (1995), and a PhD in International Relations (2004) from NYU. Research interests include leadership, mediation in civil wars, peace agreements design and implementation, compliance in international agreements, regime changes, and institutional design in the aftermath of military occupations. Publications include a book on regional peacemaking and conflict management, as well as a planned book on regional stability and leadership changes in the Middle East. Articles include mediation in civil wars, the impact of leadership changes in rebel groups on mediation in civil wars.