

PSOC002 Democracy

Term 1, 2006-2007

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Course Overview:

The course examines the establishment, the functioning, the consolidation and the crisis of democratic regimes. The focus is on readings that address the relationship between structures, incentives and outcomes in democratic governments. Texts include essays by R.S.Katz, J.J.Linz, A. Lijphart, S. Mainwaring, R. Pelizzo, A. Przeworski, G. Sartori, A. Stepan and others.

Course Requirements:

1. Mid-Term Test: After the sixth week of class all the students enrolled in the class will take 90 minute test. Students are expected to master the materials discussed in the first part of the semester (30% of the grade).

2. Final Exam: Students will take a 3-hour final exam. The final exam covers all the material discussed in the course of the semester (40% of the grade).

3. Participation: Students are expected to complete all of the readings before class and to actively participate in class discussion (30% of the grade).

Required Texts: Course Reading Pack—which includes all the readings for the course; R. Pelizzo, *Democracy*, McGraw, 2005 -- these are my lectures notes, they provide a summary of the readings of each week. All the readings for week 6 are taken from this publication.

Course Syllabus DEMOCRACY

Part One: Regime Types

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Democratic and Non-Democratic Regimes

- Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 38-66—it's in the reading pack.

The purpose of this week's readings is to introduce some basic concepts. After discussing why some political regimes are democratic and why some others are not, this class will focus on the various types of non-democratic regimes: totalitarian, post-totalitarian, authoritarian and sultanistic.

Week 3: Democracy. What is it anyway?

- Richard S. Katz, *Democracy and Elections*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 46-77.
- Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, London, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991 (1993 paperback edition), pp. 5-13- both readings can be found in the reading pack.

This week readings focus on the notion, the peculiarities and the varied meanings of democracy. The Huntington reading by providing a minimal, procedural definition of democracy, represents a good starting point for class discussion. Katz, in different ways, provides a more articulated discussion of complex and often conflicting meanings of democracy.

Part Two: Democratic Transition and Democratic Consolidation

Week 4: Political Transitions and Democratic Transitions

- G. O' Donnell and P. Schmitter (eds.), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, vol. IV, pp. 6-14.
- Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the market*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, chapter 2, pp. 50-95—both readings are in the reading pack.

The purpose of this week's readings is to introduce and clarify some of the most important concepts in the transitology literature. Students are expected to learn the

difference between liberalization, transition (with and without adjectives), democratization and so on. The Przeworski readings discusses some of the conditions that make (democratic) transitions possible.

Week 5: Democratic Consolidation and the Requisites of Democracy: Legitimacy, Performance, Institutions

- Seymour M. Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy”, *American Political Science Review*, vol. LIII, n.1, March 1959, pp. 69-105 ---on JSTOR.
- Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, London, The University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 59-71—see reading pack.

This week’s readings address one of the main themes of this class, namely the relationship between government performance and regime survival. Lipset’s article is the classic reading on the relationship between democracy and economic performance, and, as Przeworski and Limongi pointed out, it “has generated the largest body of research on any topic in comparative politics”. Building on the work of Lipset, the Huntington reading argues that the legitimacy and the stability of both democratic and non-democratic regimes is affected by the state of the economy, but that democratic regimes are more likely to survive periods of economic crisis because their legitimacy, in contrast to that of non-democratic regimes, is not entirely based on their performance.

Part Three: Electoral Systems and Party Systems

Week 6: The Political Consequences of the Electoral Laws

Pelizzo, Democracy, week 6.

The purpose of this week’s readings is twofold: on the one hand, they focus on the role of elections in democratic systems, while, on the other hand they shed some light on the mechanics of electoral systems. In doing so, they provide some evidence as to whether and how well electoral mechanisms perform their functions.

Week 7: Parties

- Peter Mair, “From Civil Society to the State” in Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair (eds.), *How Parties Organize*, London, Sage, 1994, pp. 1-22.
- Riccardo Pelizzo, “From Principle to Practice. Constitutional Principles and the Transformation of Party Finance”, *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 2, n. 2 (forthcoming).

The focus of this week is on political parties. The reading by Mair discusses how parties organize, how they relate to society and the voters that they intend to represent,

and how parties finance themselves. The issue of how parties' constitutional relevance justifies state contributions to party finance is addressed in the Pelizzo article—both readings are in the course pack.

Week 8: Recess

Week 9: Party Systems

- Peter Mair, *The West European Party System*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 91-134.
- Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems. A Framework for Analysis*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 119-119; pp. 131-141; 173-181; 185-188; 292-293.
- Riccardo Pelizzo and Salvatore Babones, "The Political Economy of Polarization: The Italian Case, 1963-1987", *Politics & Policy*, vol. 31, n. 1, (March) 2003, pp. 54-78—all the readings are in the course pack.

Bartolini once noted that the study of party systems has generally been addressed in the light of two analytical frameworks, namely the genetic approach and the functional approach. The emphasis of the first approach is on social conflicts and their translation into party systems, which are conceived as the political expression of salient social cleavages. The chapter by Lipset and Rokkan is the most important application of this approach. The Sartori's reading represents instead the single most important application of the functional approach, whose focus is on how parties interact with each other and on how these interactions shape the party system itself. Specifically, Sartori focused "on the relatedness of parties to each other, on how each party is a function (in the mathematical sense) of the other parties and reacts, competitively or otherwise, to the other parties".

Part Four: Governments, Stability and Performance

Week 10: Forms of Governments

- Giovanni Sartori, "Neither Presidentialism nor Parliamentarism", in Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela, *The Failure of Presidential Democracies*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994, pp.106-118.
- Alfred Stepan and Cindy Skach, "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation", *World Politics*, 46, October 1993, pp. 1-23—on JSTOR.

This week's focus is on the three main forms of democratic government: the parliamentary, the presidential and the semi-presidential government. This week's readings are intended to introduce students to the core of the constitutional engine. The Sartori reading provides a detailed analysis of the mechanisms of presidential, parliamentary and semi-presidential systems. After analyzing the mechanics of presidential, parliamentary and semi-presidential governments, this week's readings

focus on the performance of those constitutional mechanisms. From these readings two distinct notions of performance emerge: Stepan and Skach assess performance in terms of regime stability, while for Sartori government performance is not just a matter of stability but also of effectiveness—readings can be found in the course pack.

Part Five: Government Stability and Effectiveness

Week 11: The Determinants of Government Stability: System Attributes, Events and Portfolio Allocation

- Michael Laver and Kenneth Shepsle, *Making and Breaking Governments*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.60-119.
- Kaare Strom, “Institutions and Strategy in Parliamentary Democracy: A Review Article”. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* , vol. 23, 1998, 127-145, -on JSTOR.
- Riccardo Pelizzo and Joseph Cooper, “Stability in Parliamentary Regimes: The Italian Case”, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, vol. XXVII, n. 2, (May) 2002, pp. 163-190.

This week, we analyze the process by which governments are formed, maintained and dismissed by the parliaments. Particular attention will be paid to Laver’s and Shepsle’s model, which suggests that the stability of parliamentary governments is influenced by the strategic interaction of parliamentary parties and portfolio allocation. Some attention will also be paid to debate generated by the publication of Laver’s and Shepsle’s pioneering work—the readings by Laver/Shepsle and by Pelizzo/Cooper can be found in the course pack.

Week 12 Government Stability and Effectiveness

- John Huber, “How Does Cabinet Instability Affect Political Performance?”, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 92, n. 3, September 1998, pp. 577-591—on JSTOR.
- Riccardo Pelizzo and Salvatore J. Babones, “Determinants of Legislative Effectiveness”, *Quaderni di Scienza Politica*, anno VII, n. 2, Agosto 2001.

The scholarly literature has often assumed that the effectiveness of a government is a function of its stability, and several scholars, as the readings of Week 9 already suggested, treat government stability as an indicator of a government effectiveness. Yet, neither of these approaches is particularly satisfactory as they both assume what should instead be tested, i.e. that there is a relationship between government stability and effectiveness. The alleged relationship between stability and effectiveness is investigated by both Huber and by Pelizzo/Babones.

Week 13 Keeping Governments Accountable.

Rick Stapenhurst and Riccardo Pelizzo, “A Bigger Role for Legislatures in Poverty Reduction”, *Finance and Development. A Quarterly Publication of the International Monetary Fund*, vol. 39, n.2, (December) 2002—available online-- www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2002/12/stapenhu.htm

- Riccardo Pelizzo and Rick Stapenhurst, “Tools for Legislative Oversight: An Empirical Investigation”, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3388, September 2004—available online:
http://econ.worldbank.org/files/38161_wps3388.pdf

This week’s readings address one issue that has received increasing attention by the International Community, that is how parliaments can oversee the government and contribute to making democracy work.

Week 14: Review

Week 15: FINAL EXAM