

# PS 397: Authoritarian Regimes (3 credits)

Fall 2021

Monday & Wednesday, 3:30 -4:50 pm  
219 David Kinley Hall

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Office: 405 David Kinley Hall

## Please note that:

- Some information given on the syllabus is subject to change on an as-needed basis throughout the term. Students will be notified by email or by announcement in class when revisions are made.

## Office Hours:

- Mon/Wed 1:30 - 3 pm or by appointment
- Sign up: <https://calendly.com/yujeongyang/officehour>
- Students can sign up for more than one (15-minutes) slot if students need extended office hour (up to 4 slots). Please make sure that the appointment should be made at least 1 hour ahead of time. Students can choose between a virtual meeting and an in-person meeting.

## 1. Course Description

How are authoritarian regimes different from democracies? What are the main threats authoritarian leaders face and how do they handle the challenges differently? Why do authoritarian leaders sometime introduce democratic institutions? Will these institutions bring democracy to authoritarian regimes? (Under what conditions) do authoritarian governments perform better than democratic governments? Political science theories of authoritarian politics provide useful tools to answer these questions. In this class, students will discuss the variation in authoritarian regimes, the collapse of authoritarian regimes, and the underpinnings of their persistence by browsing various real-world examples (and the dynamics portrayed in films).

## 2. Prerequisites: PS 240 or PS 241 or Six hours of Political Sciences credit

## 3. Student Learning Outcomes

- List the differences between democracy and non-democracy while critically evaluate the institutional foundations of different types of non-democracies.
- Analyze political and social problems in non-democracies to better understand the day-to-day events happening in non-democratic societies.
- Identify political tools and institutions authoritarian leaders employ to sustain their power.

- Compare and contrast the main institutions and processes of different non-democracies and discuss their political consequences.

#### 4. Course Materials

- **Reading materials**

There is no textbook for the course. All readings will be made available on the course website. Please ensure that you have completed all readings before lecture. Most of reading materials are from advanced social science research. It is NOT required to understand every word of every reading or memorize every detail. Focus, instead, on the broader argument and understand the main findings of the article. Here’s some useful tips regarding [how to read an academic paper](#).

- **iClicker**

I am going to check students’ attendances and participation using I-clicker. Students can participate in class activities using either **the iClicker student mobile app**, or using a **handheld iClicker remote**. Remotes can be purchased from campus bookstores or online. Students who use the app can purchase an iClicker subscription by signing in to your account on the iClicker student web app (<https://student.iclicker.com>).

#### 5. Course Requirements and Assignments

Midterm ( <b>September 29, 2021</b> ) .....	50 points
Final ( <b>December 8, 2021</b> ) .....	70 points
Reading Assignments ( 8 × 10 points) .....	80 points
Weekly Quizzes ( 8 × 10 points) .....	80 points
Short Essay 1 ( <b>Nov 21, 2021</b> ) .....	50 points
Short Essay 2 ( <b>Dec 5, 2021</b> ) .....	50 points
Lecture Attendance and participation .....	20 points
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>400 points</b>

- **Midterm (50 points) and Final (70 points)**

The format of the midterm and final will consist of a combination of T/F questions, multiple choices, short answers. Examples of T/F questions and multiple choices will be shared during the lecture. The short answer questions will be drawn from the key terms identified at the beginning of each set of lecture notes. Students are expected to provide 4-5 sentences which define the concept and explain its relevance to the study of international politics). All exams are **cumulative**.

- **Reading Assignments (8 × 10 points)**

There are **11** reading assignments throughout the semester. Student may skip up to 3 reading assignments. For those who submit more than the required eight sets, only their most successful eight sets will be used when calculating their final grades. Students who completed more than eight sets of reading assignment successfully would receive extra-credit points.

- **Weekly Quizzes (8 × 10 points)**

- There will be online quizzes at the end of every week (Friday 11:59pm). Samples of the quiz questions will be shared during the lecture. Some of the quiz questions will be recycled and will show up in the Midterm and Final. In this regard, the weekly quizzes are great study guides for students. Students are encouraged to review the quiz questions when they prepare the midterm and final.

- Just like weekly homework assignments, I only count eight sets of quiz scores to calculate the final quiz grades. Students who miss or do not do well on the quizzes for whatever reasons are automatically excused up to three times.

- **Two Short Essays (50 points each)**

- Students are required to submit two short essays (word count between 800 and 1,000 each). The deadline of each essay is stated in this syllabus. In the essays, students are expected to critically analyze specific cases using the theories and concepts discussed in the class. Detailed instructions and rubrics will be available on the course website two weeks before the deadline.

- **Attendance and participation (20 points)**

20 points of course grade will be based on student's preparation for, attendance of, and participation in lecture and class discussion.

- Those who are uncomfortable speaking up in section can earn participation points by having discussion during the office hours.
- Students can opt to miss up to three lectures per semester without penalty. Every each subsequent absence will be penalized (- 1 percentage point for each subsequent absence). If students habitually miss lecture or section without excuse (8 or more times per semester), they will receive zero of 10 percentage points.
- Full attendance at all lectures without active participation in either will earn students no higher than a 18 (out of 20 percentage points).

- **(Optional) Movie Watching Session**

Every Wednesday night (starts at 8pm, until the movie ends), the instructor will host a movie-watching session where the students watch the film together (online). This session is not mandatory. However, I highly recommend attending this session to be able to write the first essay. Please do not engage in any behavior that violates the property rights protection rule during the session. See the course website to check the movie watching session schedule.

- **Assignment of Grades**

Letter grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

A+	(392-400)	B+	(348-359)	C+	(308-319)	D+	(268-279)
A	(372-391)	B	(332-347)	C	(292-307)	D	(252-267)
A-	(360-371)	B-	(320-331)	C-	(280-291)	D-	(240-254)

## 6. Classroom Policies

- **Late policy**

Any assignments (weekly quizzes and/or reading assignments) should be submitted by the deadline. There will be no make-up quizzes. Assignments turned in within an hour of the due date will lose 10 percent of total points. Assignments turned in within a day of the due date (i.e. 24 hours past the deadline) will lose 20 percent of total points. Any assignments turned in after that will receive zero (0) points. The student alone is responsible for uploading assignments on time and in a readable format (either PDF or word).

- **Email Policy**

If you have a question about the course or an assignment, **check the syllabus first** to see if the answer to your question is there. For email correspondence, I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours—but please allow me a reasonable response time. I may not respond on weekends and holidays. Also, please include “**PS 397**” in the subject line so I can see that it’s an email from my student in PS397 class.

- **Academic Honesty**

All work that a student submit and complete in the course must be the student’s own. It is students’ responsibility to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions. “I did not know” is not an excuse. Please refer to the Academic integrity policy and procedure. <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/>

- **Students with Disabilities**

The instructor will do their utmost to make appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. As explained in the University of Illinois Student Code, these accommodations can be coordination through the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, reachable at (217) 333-4603 or [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu)

## 7. Course Outline and Reading Schedule

### **Week 1. Part I : Conceptualizing Authoritarian Regimes**

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Monday, August 23 - Introduction

Wednesday, August 25 - Democracy vs. Non-Democracy

- Slater & Way. Washington Post. "Was the 2016 U.S. election democratic? Here are 7 serious shortfalls."

### **Week 2. Part I : Conceptualizing Authoritarian Regimes**

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**Sunday, August 29: Reading Assignment #1 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, August 30 - Measuring Democracy and Non-Democracy

- Clark, Golder, & Golder. "Three Measures of Democracy." (152-160).

Wednesday, September 1 - Variants of Non-democracies

- Clark, Golder, & Golder. "Toward a Typology of Authoritarian Regimes." (351-359).

### **Week 3. Part I : Conceptualizing Authoritarian Regimes**

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**No Weekly Reading Assignment**

Monday, September 6 - Labor Day (No class)

Wednesday, September 8 - Different Types of Civilian Dictatorships

- Clark, Golder, & Golder. "Subcategories of Civilian Dictatorships." (359-370).

Friday, September 10 - Online Weekly Quiz #1

### **Week 4. Part II : Threats to Authoritarian Rulers**

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**Sunday, September 12: Reading Assignment #2 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, September 13 - Selectorate Theory

- Andrea Jones-Rooy and Ilene Prusher, [Even Dictators Like Kim Jong Un Need To Keep Some People Happy](#) (2018).

Wednesday, September 15 - Criticizing Selectorate Theory

- Clark, Golder, & Golder. "Selectorate Theory." (384-400).

Friday, September 17 - Online Weekly Quiz #2

### **Week 5. Part II : Threats to Authoritarian Rulers**

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**Sunday, September 19: Reading Assignment #3 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, September 20 - Survival Rates of Different Types of Authoritarian Regimes

- Geddes, Barbara. "What do we know about democratization after twenty years?." *Annual review of political science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 121-138.

Wednesday, September 22 - Coup

- Geddes, Barbara, Erica Frantz, and Joseph G. Wright. "Military rule." *Annual Review of Political Science* 17 (2014): 147-162.

Friday, September 24 - Online Weekly Quiz #3

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**Week 6. Part II : Threats to Authoritarian Rulers**

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**Sunday, September 26: Reading Assignment #4 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, September 27 - Parties and Elite Cohesion

- Smith, Benjamin. "Life of the party: The origins of regime breakdown and persistence under single-party rule." *World politics* 57, no. 3 (2005): 421-451.
- Gallagher, Mary. "Does a stronger Xi Mean a Weaker Chinese Party?" *The New York Times*, March 2 2018.

Wednesday, September 29 - Succession Crisis

- Menaldo, Victor. 2012. "The Middle East and North Africa's Resilient Monarchs." *The Journal of Politics* 74(3): 707-722.

Friday, October 1 - Online Weekly Quiz #4

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**Week 7. Part II : Threats to Authoritarian Rulers**

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**Sunday, October 3: Reading Assignment #5 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, October 4 - Bottom-Up Mobilization

- Kuran, Timur. 1991. "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics*, 44 (1): 7-48.

Wednesday, October 6 - Elite Splits and Top-Down Transitions

- Clark, Golder, & Golder. "Top-down Transitions." (290-305).

Friday, October 8 - Online Weekly Quiz #5

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**Week 8. Part II : Threats to Authoritarian Rulers**

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**Sunday, Oct 10: Reading Assignment #6 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, October 11 - Economic Development

- Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi. 1997. Modernization: Theories and Facts, *World Politics*, 49 (2): 155-183.

Wednesday, October 13 - Economic Development from Resources Rents and Foreign Aid

- Ross, Michael. 2001. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?". *World Politics*. 53(3): 325-361.
- Julia Bader, Jörg Faust. 2014. "Foreign Aid, Democratization, and Autocratic Survival", *International Studies Review*, 16 (4): 575-595.

Friday, October 15 - Online Weekly Quiz #6

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**Week 9. Review**

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Monday, October 18 - Exam Review

Wednesday, October 20 - **Midterm**

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**Week 10. Part III : Authoritarian Ruler's Tool-Kit**

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**Sunday, Oct 24: Reading Assignment #7 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, October 25 - Repression

- Albertus, Michael and Victor Menaldo. 2012. "Coercive Capacity and the Prospects for Democratization." *Comparative Politics*. 44(2): 151-169.
- Escriba-Folch, Abel. 2013. "Repression, political threats, and survival under autocracy," *International Political Science Review*, 1-18.

Wednesday, October 27 - Repression (2)

- Xu, X., 2021. To Repress or to Co-opt? Authoritarian Control in the Age of Digital Surveillance. *American Journal of Political Science* 65(2): 309-325.

Friday, October 29 - Online Weekly Quiz #7

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**Week 11. Part III : Authoritarian Ruler's Tool-Kit**

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**Sunday, Oct 31: Reading Assignment #8 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, November 1 - Electoral Authoritarianism

- Carl Henrik Knutsen, Håvard Mokleiv Nygård and Tore Wig. [You'd think dictators would avoid elections. Here's why they don't.](#) *Washington Post*. March 14 2017.
- Miller, Michael. 2015. "Elections, Information, and Policy Responsiveness in Autocratic Regimes," *Comparative Political Studies*, 48:6, 691-727.

Wednesday, November 3 - Electoral Democracy and Opposition

- Blaydes, Lisa. 2008. "[Authoritarian Elections and Elite Management: Theory and Evidence from Egypt](#)" Working Paper.

Friday, November 5 - Online Weekly Quiz #8

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**Week 12. Part III : Authoritarian Ruler's Tool-Kit**

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**Sunday, November 7: Reading Assignment #9 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, November 8 - Patronage

- Arriola, L. R. (2009) "Patronage and Political Stability in Africa", *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(10): 1339–1362.

Wednesday, November 10 - Censorship and Information Control

- Rød, Espen Geelmuyden, and Nils B. Weidmann. 2015. "Empowering activists or autocrats? The Internet in authoritarian regimes." *Journal of Peace Research*, 52(3): 338-351.

Friday, November 12 - Online Weekly Quiz #9

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**Week 13. Part III : Authoritarian Leaders' Tool Kits**

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**Sunday, November 14: Reading Assignment #10 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, November 15 - Propaganda

- Huang, H. and Cruz, N., 2021. Propaganda, Presumed Influence, and Collective Protest. *Political Behavior*, Online first, 1-24.

Wednesday, November 17 - Personality Cults

- Xabier Marquez, 2011, [A Simple Model of Cults of Personality](#).

Friday, November 19 - Online Weekly Quiz #10

**Sunday, November 21: Essay #1 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

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**Week 14. Part IV : Consequences of Authoritarianism**

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**Sunday, November 21: Reading Assignment #11 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, November 29 - Authoritarianism and Economic Development

- Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 567-576.
- Baum, Matthew, and David A. Lake. 2003. The Political Economy of Growth: Democracy and Human Capital. *American Journal of Political Science* 4(2): 333-47.

Wednesday, December 1 - International Relations in Authoritarian Regimes

- Pickering, Jeffrey and Mark Peceny. 2006. Forging Democracy at Gunpoint," *International Studies Quarterly*, 50 (3) : 539-559.

Friday, December 3 - Online Weekly Quiz #11

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**Week 15. Review and Final**

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**Sunday, December 5: Essay #2 is due on Canvas by 11:59pm**

Monday, December 6 - Course Review

Wednesday, December 8 - **Final Exam**