

# **AUTHORITARIANISM, REPRESSION & CORRUPTION**

**GLOB1-GC2415.001**

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 12:00-13:00, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30

Classes: Wednesdays, 12:30-15:00

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**D**emocracy is not as natural a state as we might like to think. Many countries across the world are authoritarianisms, oligarchies or hybrid regimes in which the structures of democratic governance are distorted in the interests of a dominant elite. This often goes hand in hand with entrenched corruption. Together, these have serious implications for human rights, good governance, international relations, foreign investment and the progress of development. Many of these regimes are inefficient and brittle, but others manage to create relatively stable and even effective political and economic systems – in their own terms. When they fall, the consequences can lead to great steps forward for human rights, democratization and transparency, but they can also be unpredictable and even counter-productive. Drawing on examples around the world, this case-based course explores the causes, forms and implications of authoritarianism and corruption, as well as how and when change can be effected and its immediate and long-term results.

## **Required Texts**

There are three texts which are required:

- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita & Alastair Smith, *The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior is Almost Always Good Politics* (PublicAffairs, 2012; \$12; ISBN 978-1610391849)
- William Dobson, *The Dictator's Learning Curve: Inside the Global Battle for Democracy* (Doubleday, 2012; \$19.11; ISBN 978-0385533355)
- Steven Levitsky & Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (Cambridge UP, 2010; \$29.99; ISBN 978-0521709156)

All are available from the NYU Bookstore or online sources such as Amazon. All three are also available as Kindle e-books.

## **Early Reading Assignments**

For the first class, your required readings are:

- De Mesquita & Smith, chs 1-2
- Dobson, Intro
- Levitsky & Way, chs 1-2

## **Course Meeting Pattern**

This course is taught largely through seminars; one is still to be confirmed and one is actually an evening public event (students who are unable to attend this event will have access to a recording instead). The expectation is that all students will attend every regularly-timed seminar, have prepared adequately beforehand, and will engage in the debate and discussion within the class. Please note that you will be distributed a definitive syllabus closer to the date and there is scope for change, but a preliminary schedule of the course is:

1. **Introduction** (Jan 30)
2. **Monarchies and Autocracies** (Feb 6)
3. **Theocracies and Ideocracies** (Feb 13)
4. **Hybrid Regimes and Deep States** (Feb 20)  
(No class on February 27)
5. **Kleptocracies** (Mar 6)
6. **Failed States and Pseudo-States** (Mar 13)  
(Spring Break)
7. **Tools: Coercion** (Mar 27)
8. **Tools: Legitimation and Propaganda** (Apr 3)
9. **Bad Company:** Kimberly Marten, *Warlords: Strongmen, Weak States and the International Order* (6:30-8, April 9)
10. **Tools: Co-Optation and Corruption** (Apr 10)
11. **Tools: Divide and Rule** (Apr 17)
12. *TBC* (Apr 24)
13. **Change from Within** (May 1)
14. **Change from Without** (May 8)

## Assessment

The final grade is based on four components:

- **Participation** in class discussions is essential for a lively, engaging, and stimulating academic environment. It will be worth 20% of the final grade.
- A solo or joint class **presentation** on a case study will demonstrate students' ability to brief in a clear, concise and effective manner. It will be worth 20% of the final grade.
- Students will produce **supplementary written materials** for their presentation. These will be worth 20% of the final grade.
- Finally, students will write a **report** on a specific country. This will make up 40% of the final grade.

## Policies

Please note the following policies:

- **CGA Attendance and Lateness policy:** All students must attend class regularly. Your contribution to classroom learning is essential to the success of the course. Any more than two absences (other than for verifiable medical or similar reasons) will likely lead to a need to withdraw from the course or a failing grade.
- **CGA Incomplete policy:** Incompletes are only granted in extreme cases such as illness or other family emergency and only where almost all work for the semester has been successfully completed and the basis for the Incomplete can be verified. A student's procrastination in completing his/her paper is not a basis for an Incomplete.
- **SCPS Statement on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** *Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically, plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer; a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; creative images, artwork, or design; or facts or ideas gathered, organized, and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing and not providing proper attribution. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention, it is crucial that acknowledgement of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism. Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper or course to dismissal from the University.*