Course information 2019–20
PS3086 Democracy and democratisation

This course considers various aspects of the conditions of democracy, the processes of democratisation, and the breakdown of democratic regimes.

Prerequisite
If taken as part of a BSc degree, courses which must be passed before this course may be attempted:

PS1172 Introduction to political science or PS1114 Democratic politics and the State or PS1130 Introduction to modern political thought.

Aims and objectives
The study of democracy and democratisation has three main aims. These are to consider:

- how democracy is defined and understood, and how far actual systems conform to democratic principles
- the main explanations of why political systems have moved from non-democracy to democracy
- whether or not democracy is a stable political system, and whether democratic systems run any serious risk of breakdown.

Assessment
This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen written examination.

Learning outcomes
At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should be able to discuss critically a range of issues relating to democratisation. Students should be able to:

☑ explain how democracy actually works in real world conditions
☑ explain how democracy relates to the non-elective institutions of the state
☑ discuss different ways in which democracy can work badly
☑ outline the essential arguments of comparative historical sociologists of democratisation, such as Moore and Rueschemeyer
☑ explain how some forms of non-democracy can make the transition to democracy
☑ assess theories of democratic breakdown in relatively poor countries and arguments for developmental dictatorship
☑ discuss why democracy has survived in wealthy countries.

Essential reading
See overleaf

Students should consult the appropriate EMFSS Programme Regulations, which are reviewed on an annual basis. The Regulations provide information on the availability of a course, where it can be placed on your programme’s structure, and details of co-requisites and prerequisites.
Syllabus
This is a description of the material to be examined. On registration, students will receive a detailed subject guide which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading.

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Conceptualising democracy. General criteria for democracy, and particular forms of semi-democracy. Delegative democracy, illiberal democracy and biased states. Democratic consolidation.


Conditions of Democracy and its maintenance. The concept of democratic legitimacy and the functioning of liberal democracy in advanced capitalist societies.

Transitions to Democracy. Forms of non-democracy and transitional paths towards democratisation.


A range of countries will be examined in relation to these themes from Europe, Asia and Latin America.

Essential reading
For full details please refer to the reading list.

Books
Fukuyama, F. The End of History and the Last Man. (London: Penguin)
Galbraith, J.K. The Culture of Contentment. (London: Sinclair-Stevenson)
Held, D. Models of Democracy. (Cambridge: Polity)
Lipset, S.M. Political Man: the Social Bases of politics. (London: Heinemann)

Journals available online
Huntington, Samuel P. ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’, Foreign Affairs, 793, 72(3) 1993, pp.22–49.