Goals of and Reasons for this Course

During the last decade, the world has witnessed an extraordinary series of events. From Brasilia to Warsaw, democratic forces have challenged authoritarian regimes on the left and right of the political spectrum. In some cases this trend has opened the door to the establishment of democratic governments. In other cases the weakening of authoritarian regimes has promoted the growth and political fortunes of a host of ultra-nationalist or religious-fundamentalist movements seeking to impose their own brand of authoritarianism.

How do we account for such changes? Under what conditions is it more or less likely that authoritarian regimes will be challenged and displaced by democratic movements? Why do economic development, urbanization, and education promote political stability and a common sense of identity in some cases, while in other instances such force engender sectarianism, religious bigotry and even civil war? In short, how can we make sense of the world we live in? This course explores some of these daunting questions, particularly as they relate to the challenges of "political development" and "modernization" in the Third World.

We shall see that social scientists have been wrestling with these issues for more than 4 decades. In their efforts to make sense of the confusing maze of data regarding Third World development, and in their attempts to "order" this data in a way that will make it accessible to explanation, they have developed analytical frameworks, theories or "paradigms." These frameworks have served as crucial intellectual guides for entire generations of social scientists.

Our task is twofold: First, we shall critically assess the most important analytical schools of thought that have guided the study of Third World development. These paradigms have sometimes illuminated significant social and political trends, while on other occasions they have obscured such trends. Identifying the contributions and limitations of each analytical framework is a key challenge of this class. Second, we will consider how and why these paradigms emerge, persist and eventually give way to new approaches. This process by is not solely a matter of new discoveries and advances. Theoretical approaches are influenced as much by social and political considerations, as they are by scientific factors. The second central challenge of this course is to sharpen our understanding of the diverse theoretical, philosophical and political premises that shape paradigms, and in so doing, do -- or do not -- endow them with explanatory power.
Overview of the Course

Introductory Exercise: To open the course, in the Introduction we will read "blind" (i.e., without the aid of any particular analytical framework) a classic essay about political change in a Turkish village, written nearly fifty years ago. Today this essay may sound naive and unduly optimistic; but even those with little introduction to the study of Third World politics will sense that the conclusions derived by the author are driven by a certain set of assumptions about what “modernization” is, and what its consequences are.

Part One explores the "Liberal-Optimist" school of "modernization." This school set the research and even foreign policy agenda in the United States for more than a decade.

Part Two looks at the "Institution-Building" school of "political development." By the early seventies, proponents of this school had practically superseded their "liberal" counterparts. (In doing so, they promoted a trend in American policy towards support for authoritarian, non-communist military regimes).

Part Three considers the Marxist or "dependencia" response to the above intellectual and political trend. Students of dependency did not totally reject many of the observations made by their conservative counterparts--rather, they attributed the phenomenon of endemic political instability in the Third World to the constraints of the international capitalist order rather than to indigenous factors such as culture or political tradition.

We shall see in Part Four that several leading proponents of dependency theory changed their theoretical and even political tune by the early to mid-eighties. In fact, the "dependencias" were the first to predict the "transition from authoritarianism." Later these leftist scholars were joined by a more traditional group of liberal scholars. Together these seemingly strange ideological bed fellows--aided by the collapse of the Cold War and a new pragmatism in some quarters of American academia--helped forge the present day study of democratic change.

Part Five tackles some of the problems associated with the study of democratic change and the question of ethnicity and sectarian fundamentalism--not only in the Third World, but also in Eastern Europe.

Parts Six and Seven are in many ways a continuation of this same subject. Here, however, we will look at the question of democratic change, ethnicity and religious fundamentalism from the vantage point of the study of "historical legacies" and the "new institutionalism." These approaches emphasizes the different roles that ethnic identities and institutional legacies play in promoting or undermining democracy.
Required Readings: (The following are available at the book store: All other readings are on electronic reserve).


Class Assignments and Grading:

You will write *three* 8-page essays. Depending on the readings in question, I will ask you to focus on one or two essay(s), or I will ask you to discuss a conceptual theme raised in the readings. I will also ask you to prepare a 5 page research proposal based on the readings in class. Writing this proposal will give you an opportunity to relate the readings to a research project of particular interest to you. Such a proposal might be the basis for an MA thesis, or depending where you are in your studies, in might help you take the first steps towards assembling a Ph.D. proposal. In addition, each student will be asked to present an assessment of at least one reading. This will require giving 10 to 15 minute presentation. This should *not* be a summary, but rather a critical analysis of the assumptions, coherence and applicability of the central arguments which underline the reading(s) in question. In essence, you will be asked to teach the class. So...don’t look at me–look at your colleagues!

Grading: **Each Review, 30 points; Class Presentations, 10 points.**

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<td><strong>5 Page Proposal</strong></td>
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INTRODUCTION: Paradigms, Political Development and Modernization

Class 1: A Short Story September 12


PART I: The "Liberal-Optimistic" School of "Modernization"

Class 2: Behavioralism and the Birth of Comparative Politics September 19


Re-read "The Grocer and the Chief" (above).


PART II: The "Institution Building" School

Class 3: All Good Things Do not Go Together September 26

Assignment I due: October 6

Class 4: Neo-Patrimonialism, Corporatism and Patron-Client Politics          October 3


Class 5: Managing Primordial Identities & Ethnic Conflict: Contrasting Views          October 10


Iliya Harik: "'The Ethnic Revolution in the Middle East,' International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies


PART III: The Dependency Explanation of "Political Decay" and Underdevelopment

Class 6: Theorizing Dependency and Autocracy: O'Donnell I          October 17 and 24

Clapham, Third World Politics Chapter Five, "Managing the Economy" pp. 90-111.


*Class 8: Corporatist Systems and Ideologies as Structural Phenomena*  
*October 31*

**Assignment 2: Due November 21**


*PART IV: The Discovery and Study of Democratic Transitions, Or how Marxists and Liberals rediscovered "objective" logic.*

*Class 9: Rethinking The Dynamics of BA Regimes: O'Donnell (et. al.) 11  
November 7*


Class 10: Political Economy of Transitions: (Good & Bad Things Go Together?) November 14


PART V: Ethnicity, Fundamentalism, Power Sharing and Democracy: Rational Solutions to Irrational Politics?

Class 11: Consensus Politics in “Divided Societies” November 21


Donald Horowitz, "Democracy in Divided Societies" in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1994).


PART VI: Historical Legacies, Path Dependency and the “New Institutionalism”

Class 12: From Democratic Universalism to Multiple Rationalities? November 28

Assignment 3: Due December 22

Daniel H. Levine, “Paradigm Lost: Dependency to Democracy,” World Politics, April 1988, No. 2, 377-94,


Class 13: The “New Institutionalism” (The Problem of Preferences)  December 5


Class 14: Institutionalizing Legacies, Ideologies and Bounded Rationalities I  December 12


Class 15: Path Dependency Versus Path Creation  December 19


Daniel Brumberg, “Dissonant Politics in Iran and Indonesia,” (manuscript).