



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Course guide fall 2021

SK2211, The Performance of Democracies

*****Note slight changes may be made before the start of the course*****

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1. Introduction

This course explores factors that explain cross country variation in democratic performance and their implications. More specifically, it is concerned with how variation in factors such as institutions, norms and values are related to outcomes in general dimensions of performance, such as, human well-being, corruption and sound management of public finances, among others. It therefore focuses less on issues that have to do with what democracy is, democratic transitions or democratic survival but rather with why and how democracies 'succeed or fail' in the aforementioned areas. It also reviews the implications that follow for citizen attitudes and democratic support.

2. Learning outcomes

At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the dimensions in institutional variation among democracies and how these are related to performance.
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of implications of democracies' performance for individual-level attitudes and regime support.
- Identify the key strands in the relevant literature and organise its findings in a meaningful manner.
- Review and compare empirical findings from diverse sets of academic literature
- Critically appraise findings and identify contradictions or lacunae.
- Independently use existing theories to analyse cases.
- Independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citation technique and use of references.
- Independently plan and propose a minor research project that answers questions pertaining to the course content.
- Systematize and integrate, as well as critically assess, different theories about the determinants of performance in democracies.

3. Organisation of the course

The course consists of lectures, seminars, presentations, individual tutorials and two written assignments.

Lectures address explanations for the variation in the Performance of Democracies across countries. We focus on macro explanations, micro factors and the course as well as history and current developments.

Seminars take place in groups. Each seminar group will have one tutor for the duration of the course. Groups are formed after the course administration has the complete list of participants. There are five seminars in total. The first seminar is an introductory seminar where students are given information on how seminars are conducted, the course assignments (presentations, memo, and the final paper) the overall organization of the course and administrative issues. Further queries from students are settled during this seminar as well.

The following seminars are discussions based on the assigned readings for each lecture (listed below). The structure and format of the seminars will be discussed during the skills seminar. Students are required to read all readings as both seminar discussions and written assignments require in depth knowledge and critical assessment of the literature provided. The attendance of the seminars 1-4 are compulsory. Those who missed a seminar have to present a summary of the literature of the seminar they missed (1,500 words). Those who missed seminar 1 will be assigned with a topic for a compensatory memo at course coordinators' discretion.

The compensatory work is to be uploaded into CANVAS (folder "Seminars: compensatory work") and emailed to their seminar tutor. Seminar 5 is designed to help students to develop their final papers.

In each seminar groups of two to three students (depending on class numbers) will provide an overview of the literature that is discussed and set the tone for the seminar discussion to

follow. These presentations should focus on the story that comes out from the readings included in that seminar and present it coherently. Presenters should not provide small summaries of each paper but provide an overview in the form of a short literature review. The presentation should include questions that remain, issues that should be discussed and suggestions for further research. The groups will be put together by the course coordinators once participation is finalized. Some flexibility will be provided to accommodate schedules or availability but by and large students will be expected to follow the structure provided.

Before seminar 5, students should upload on CANVAS (folder “Synopsis”) a synopsis (abstract) of their final paper (200 words max), presenting an under-researched issue in the relevant literature, major limitation(s) of the existing literature and how they think of moving the literature forward. During the seminar, each student presents her/his idea for the final paper and receives feedback from other students and the seminar tutor.

Individual Tutorials

Students may address their seminar tutors during their designated office hours with specific short queries regarding the content of the three substantive seminars and/or the final paper.

Written Assignments

Student performance is assessed through two written assignments, one seminar presentation, and active participation in seminars. The written assignments are a) a memo focusing on a specific case(s); and b) a final paper in the form of a project proposal.

Please add this information in the header on the first page of your papers.

Last name:

Course:

First name:

Part of Course:

Personal Number:

Grading Teacher:

Written Assignment 1

Briefing Memo (max 2000 words, due 24th of September at 17.00)

You will be asked to write a short memo for a deliberative assembly debating the design of the country’s amended constitution. You will provide recommendations taking into account features of the country (such as the political culture, the party system, the governance record etc.) on a) executive vs legislature power relations (parliamentarism vs presidentialism, number of cameras, degree of separation of powers) OR b) the electoral system. You will provide recommendations on ONE of these. You can pick one of three countries (the country cases will be announced during the skills seminar).

The memo should include:

- The evidence from the literature regarding the choices and the pros and cons of

different designs (State of the Art)

- The specifics of the country that might justify one or the other arrangement.
- Your own argument based on the above regarding the system that the country should adopt.

Note:

- You do not need to necessarily propose changes to the existing constitution. You may also argue in favour of the status quo

More information and specific instructions regarding the memo will be provided during the skills seminar.

Written Assignment 2

Final Paper (max 4000 words, due 1st of November at 17.00)

The goal of this assignment is to provide a research proposal for an under researched issue in the performance of democracies literature.

A brief sketch below:

- Based on what you have read pick a subject from institutions, norms, political economy and prepare a research proposal for funding a new research project.
- Present the state of the art (where the research stands as of now) on this issue.
- Identify the missing element in the literature or what is called a ‘gap’
- Provide the main research question to be asked and a theory that supports testable hypotheses.
- Provide the methodological design that should be used for these hypotheses to be tested.

Detailed instructions for the final paper will be provided in writing during the skills seminar.

Grading

Each assignment is graded on a 0-7 scale: 0-2=Fail (U); 3-5=Pass (G); 6-7=High Pass (VG).

In order to pass the course students must reach a pass mark on each assignment and on compensatory work, in case they missed compulsory seminars.

To achieve a high pass (VG), the weighted sum of the assignments must be 5.5 or more.

The weights for each assignment is reflected in the table below:

Table 1. Weights of the individual assignments in the final grade

Class Presentation	Briefing Memo	Final Paper
10%	40%	50%

4. General information

Academic Writing

The three hallmarks of good academic writing are clarity, precision, and intellectual honesty. Unlike some other forms of writing, academic texts should be free from ambiguity, and they should offer the reader plainly stated arguments, not rhetorical tricks. This does not mean that they have to be boring, of course, but it does mean that, whenever there is a conflict between being linguistically elegant and clear, the latter should take precedence. For example, in academic writing, it might be preferable to consistently use the same terms for the same concepts instead of using synonyms, even though this would be dull in other types of writing (such as fiction). To organize the text, a good rule of thumb is to make one point per paragraph.

Good academic writing is cumulative; it proceeds from, communicates with, and seeks to contribute to previous work on the topic of choice. It is essential that the author (or authors) gives due credit to previous work. There should never be any doubt as to whether segments of text, ideas, claims or results are the author's own or drawn from other sources. To ensure this, academic writing requires a transparent system of citation. Never 'copy and paste' text from other sources without citing those sources and enclosing direct quotes in quotation marks. Copying text without indicating it is a quotation constitutes plagiarism. Use references consistently and accurately. These requirements hold for all academic texts, from short student assignments and course papers to master theses and academic books and journal articles.

On the course pages on canvas there are on line courses on academic integrity that you can take in order to get more information on the above.

5. Schedule

Information about the schedule:

The schedule and additional information are available at the course's CANVAS page. You will be informed about any changes, additions etc on CANVAS, as well as e-mailed to the participants' GU-addresses. In other words, please check your GU e-mail and the CANVAS page during the course. Note that the schedule below can be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Always consult the schedule available on line from CANVAS.

NOTE: Due to the current Covid-19 situation teaching will be combined in-house and digital distance teaching. Please see information and updates on CANVAS!

Day	Time	Teacher	Topic	Room: Consult on-line schedule
The Performance of Democracies				
2021-08-31	10:15 - 11:00	GX, AA	Introduction	
2021-09-01	10:15 - 12:00	AA	Seminar 1: Assignments and Skills. <i>Compulsory</i>	
2021-09-02	13:15 - 15:00	FB	Normative Expectations and Democratic Performance	
2021-09-03	13:15 - 15:00	GX	The Performance of Democracies – Introducing the Puzzle	
Political Institutions				
2021-09-06	13:15 - 15:00	GX	Constitutional Design, Electoral Rules and Performance	
2021-09-07	13:15 - 15:00	GX	Electoral Democracy and Corruption	
2021-09-10	10.15-12.00	GX	Seminar 2 – Group 1 <i>Compulsory</i>	
2021-09-10	13.15-15.00	GX	Seminar 2 – Group 2 <i>Compulsory</i>	
			Redistribution, Inequality – Vicious vs Virtuous Circles	
2021-09-13	13:15 - 15:00	FB	Public Goods Provision, Redistribution and Inequality	
2021-09-14	13:15 - 15:00	FB	Clientelism and vote buying	
2021-09-15	13:15 - 15:00	MN	State capacity and democracy	
2021-09-20	10:15 - 12:00	AA	Seminar 3 – Group 2 <i>Compulsory</i>	
2021-09-20	13:15 - 15:00	GX	Seminar 3 – Group 3 <i>Compulsory</i>	

Norms, values, Culture				
2021-09-24	17:00		Submission: memo	
2021-09-28	10:15 - 12:00	AA	Modernization, Value Change and the Quality of Democracies	
2021-09-29	13:15 - 15:00	AA	Values, Gender and the Quality of Democracies	
2021-10-06	10:15 - 12:00	AA	Seminar 4- Group 2 <i>Compulsory</i>	
2021-10-06	13:15 - 15:00	AA	Seminar 4 -Group 1 <i>Compulsory</i>	
2021-10-11	17:00		Submission: Synopsis	
2021-10-13	12:15 - 15:00	AA, GX	Seminar 5: Feedback on synopsis for final paper	
2021-10-18	13:15 - 15:00	GX	Wrap up	
2021-11-01	17:00		Submission: Final paper	

6. List of Literature

All readings are available online through the University library

Normative Expectations and Democratic Performance

Bratton, M., & Mattes, R. (2001). Support for democracy in Africa: Intrinsic or instrumental. *British Journal of Political Science*, 31, 447-474.

Canache, Damarys 2012. Citizens' Conceptualizations of Democracy: Structural Complexity, Substantive Content, and Political Significance. *Comparative Political Studies* 45(9) 1132–1158

Crow, D. 2010. The Party's Over: Citizen Conceptions of Democracy and Political Dissatisfaction in Mexico". *Comparative Politics*, 43(1) (October 2010).

Dahl, R., 1989. *Democracy and Its Critics*. Yale University Press. *Chapters 8 & 15. Available as e-book via the University Library*

Przeworski, A. 2009. Self-Enforcing Democracy. In Donald A. Wittman and Barry R. Weingast (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Recommended:

Boräng, F., Nistotskaya, M., & Xezonakis, G., 2017. The Quality of Government Determinants of Support for Democracy. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 2017;17:e1643. DOI 10.1002/pa.1643

Schmitter, Philippe and Terry Lynn Karl, 1991. What Democracy Is...And Is Not. *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 2, Number 3, Summer 1991, pp. 75-88

The Performance of Democracies – Introducing the Puzzle

Sen, A. (2011). Quality of Life: India vs. China. *New York Review of Books* LVIII (2011:25): 44-47.

Bäck H., & Hadenius, A. (2008). Democracy and state capacity: Exploring a J-Shaped relationship. *Governance* 21 (1): 1–24.

Doucouliafos, H., & Ulubasoglu, M.A. (2008). Democracy and economic growth: A metaanalysis. *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (1): 61-83.

Montinola, G.,R.,& Jackman, R.,W. (2002). Sources of corruption: A cross-country study. *British Journal of Political Science* 32: 147–170.

Holmberg, S. & Rothstein, B. (2011). Correlates of Democracy. Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute, University of Gothenburg, Working paper 2011:10

Recommended

Norris, P. (2012). *Democratic governance and human security: The impact of regimes on prosperity, welfare and peace*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Constitutional Design and Electoral Rules

Gerring, J. & Thacker, S. (2004). Political institutions and corruption. The role of unitarism and parliamentarism.

Gerring, J., Thacker, S. & Moreno, C. (2005). Centripetal democratic governance: A theory and global Inquiry. *American Political Science Review* 99(4) 567-581

Chang, Eric. & Golden, M. (2007). Electoral systems, district magnitude and corruption. *British Journal of Political Science* 37:115-137.

Persson, T., Roland, G. & Tabellini, G. (2003). The economic effects of constitutions. MIT Press (subsection, 2.4 in ch. 2 and whole chapter 4)

Kunicová, J. & Rose-Ackerman, S. (2005). Electoral rules and constitutional structures as constraints on corruption.” *British Journal of Political Science* 35 (4): 573-606.

Golden, M & Mahdavi, P. (2015). The institutional of components of political corruption, in: Ed. Ruben Ruiz Rufinio and Jennifer Gandhi (eds) *Handbook of Comparative Political Institutions*. New York: Routledge Press, 2015.

Xezonakis, G., & Dwason, S. 2021. Electoral Rules and Quality of Government: A Meta-

Analysis. Unpublished Manuscript (online)

Recommended

Oates, W. (1999). An essay on fiscal federalism” *Journal of Economic Literature* 37(3): 1120-1149.

Electoral Democracy and Corruption

Xezonakis, G., Kosmidis, S. & Dahlberg, S. (2016). Can electors combat corruption? Institutional Arrangements and Citizen Behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research*, 55(1):160-176.

De Vries, Catherine and Hector Solaz. Forthcoming. “The Electoral Consequences of Corruption”. *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Zechmeister, E., & Zizumbo-Colunga, D. (2013). The Varying Political Toll of Concerns about Corruption in Good versus Bad Economic Times. *Comparative Political Studies*. 46(10): 1190-1218

Ferraz, C. & Finan, F. (2008). Exposing Corrupt Politicians. The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123(2):703–745.

Anduiza, E., Gallego, A. & Munoz, J. (2013). Turning a Blind Eye: Experimental Evidence of Partisan Bias in Attitudes Toward Corruption. *Comparative Political Studies* 46(12): 1664-1692.

Konstantinidis, Iannis and Georgios Xezonakis. 2013. Sources of Tolerance towards Corrupted Politicians in Greece: The Role of Trade-Offs and Individual Benefits. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 60(5):549-563

Recommended

Agerberg, M. (2020). The lesser evil? Corruption voting and the importance of clean alternatives. *Comparative political studies*, 53(2), 253-287.

Public good provision, Redistribution and Inequality

De Kadt, Daniel and Evan S. Lieberman (2015) Do citizens reward good service? Voter responses to basic service provision in southern Africa. Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 161

Gerring, J, Thacker, S.C., Alfaro, R., 2012. Democracy and Human Development. *Journal of*

Politics, Vol 74, No. 1, January 2012, pp.1-17

Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner And Jeremy M. Weinstein (2007). Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision? *American Political Science Review*, pp 709-725. doi:10.1017/S0003055407070499.

Keefer, P. and Khemani, S. 2005. Democracy, public expenditures, and the poor: understanding political incentives for providing public services. *World Bank Research Observer*, 20 (1): 1–28.

TOUCHTON, M., SUGIYAMA, N., & WAMPLER, B. (2017). Democracy at Work: Moving Beyond Elections to Improve Well-Being. *American Political Science Review*, 111(1), 68-82. doi:10.1017/S000305541600068X

Recommended:

Meltzer, Allan H., and Scott. F. Richard. 1981. “A Rational Theory of the Size of Government.” *Journal of Political Economy* 89: 914–27.

Clientelism and vote buying

Hicken, Allen and Noah L. Nathan (2020). Clientelism's Red Herrings: Dead Ends and New Directions in the Study of Nonprogrammatic Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science* 2020 23:1, 277-294

Kitschelt, H. 2000. Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33 (6–7): 845–79.

Nichter, Simeon and Michael Peress 2016. Request Fulfilling: When Citizens Demand Clientelist Benefits. *Comparative Political Studies* 1-32.

Stokes, Susan C. 2009. “Political Clientelism.” In Carles Boix & Susan C. Stokes (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Recommended:

Konstantinidis, Iannis and Georgios Xezonakis. 2013. “Sources of Tolerance towards Corrupted Politicians in Greece: The Role of Trade-Offs and Individual Benefits.” *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 60(5):549-563

State capacity and democracy

D’Arcy Michelle and Marina Nistotskaya. 2017. State First, Then Democracy: Using Cadastral Records to Explain Governmental Performance, *Governance* 30(2): 193-209.

Knutsen, Carl-Henrik. 2013. Democracy, State Capacity, and Economic Growth. *World Development* 43: 1-18.

Grundholm, Alexander and Matilde Thorsen. 2021. Motivated and Able to Make a Difference? The Reinforcing Effects of Democracy and State Capacity on Human Development, *Studies in Comparative International Development* 54: 381-414.

Modernization, Value Change and the Quality of Democracies

Welzel, C., & Inglehart, R. (2010). Agency, values, and well-being: A human development model. *Social indicators research*, 97(1), 43-63.

Welzel, C. (2014). Evolution, empowerment and emancipation: How societies climb the freedom ladder. *World Development* 64:33-51

Brieger, S.A., Terjesen, S.A., Hechavarría, D.M. *et al.* Prosociality in Business: A Human Empowerment Framework. *J Bus Ethics* **159**, 361–380 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-4045-5>

Gender Equality and the Quality of Democracies

Alexander, A. C. Gender, Gender Equality, and Corruption. In *The Oxford Handbook of the Quality of Government*. Edited by Andreas Bågenholm, Monika Bauhr, Marcia Grimes, and Bo Rothstein. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, A. C. (2018). The Historic Roots of Quality of Government: The Role of Gender Equality. In *Gender and Corruption* (pp. 21-36). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Roseboom, T. J. (2020). Why achieving gender equality is of fundamental importance to improve the health and well-being of future generations: a DOHaD perspective. *Journal of developmental origins of health and disease*

Wrap up lecture - Taking a step back

Note: This is a summary lecture and will focus on various previous readings and an overview of the course.