

Professor Regina Smyth
Department of Political Science
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00 – 4:00
and Friday 11:00 -12:00 (please email to check
about travel schedule and conflicts)

Fall 2017
Office: 407 Woodburn Hall
Email: rsmyth@indiana.edu

Contemporary Autocracy

Recent research on contemporary autocracy engages a core puzzle: despite all expectations, these regimes have proven durable in the face of conflicting institutional logic, capitalist expansion, modernization and urbanization, communication technologies, and development. The literature evolved from the study of the role of formal institutions, to informal institutions and information control, and finally political behavior. Drawing from literature on disparate cases, approaches, and methods, this class will explore the conditions under which the regime and opposition compete to forge collective action in support of or opposition to the regime. We will engage the empirical implications of theory by drawing on students' expertise and interests across cases and regions, including but not limited to Africa, MENA States, Latin America, Post-communist States, and China. We will cover relevant topics such as the role of formal institutions, informal supports, patterns of elite coalitions, and the tools to maintain popular support. In each week, one class reading and discussion will focus on core debates and critical topics in the literature and issues of research methodology and analysis as they relate to studying closed societies.

Assignments: This class has two goals. The first is to develop a deep understanding of regime maintenance and transition by focusing on the mechanisms that authoritarian leaders use to solve the problems of elite commitment and mass quiescence. Through this study, you will develop a better understanding of regime types and regime change. The second goal is to help you develop skills related to our craft: deployment of methods, analytic thinking, grant writing, syllabus development, paper discussion, reviewing and most importantly, formulating researchable questions.

Reading: Students are expected to do the reading for each class and be prepared for critical discussion. Readings are either posted on the course website or available through the IU online access system. Reading will include two book length monographs—one related to your own research and one on the formation of Russia's hegemonic party, United Russia by Ora John Reuter, or Rory Truex' study of Chinese legislative development, both published by the Cambridge University Press. While we cover many debates, we do not cover all of them, notably absent are a detailed exploration of repression in these regimes which is well covered in Professor Loyale's seminar on contentious politics, constitutions and law, and the role of economic factors in stability that is covered in Professor Razo's seminar. This provides an opportunity for you to think about these issues and how you might contribute. If your interest is in one of these areas, then you may want to swap out a required and recommended reading when there is

something that suits your personal training goals. Just let me know before the meeting that you have made that decision.

In many weeks, I've included a reading that introduces a theoretic, methodological, or approaches debate will allow us to bring a component of our craft (how and what we do) directly into the class discussion.

Discussant (with participation 30 percent of your grade): Each student will take two weeks in the class in which they will serve as the discussant for one paper listed on the syllabus. A great option would be for you to pick weeks where you are reading beyond the required list so that you widen the material covered by the class. You will get the usual 10-12 minutes to present the argument in the paper and provide a critique (remember, that critique in our profession entails noting both strengths and weaknesses of the paper). Also, bear in mind that if you go over 12 minutes in your presentation, you will be cut off. One firm rule...NO READING FROM YOUR NOTES. You may prepare a PPT presentation if you find it useful for your comments.

Here are some good discussions of the role, effectiveness, and style of a panel discussant:

<http://duckofminerva.com/2007/01/role-of-panel-discussant.html>
<https://chrisblattman.com/2010/02/22/the-discussants-art/>
<http://www.cgu.edu/PDFFiles/Writing%20Center/Writing%20Center%20Resources/Tips%20for%20Conf.%20Discussants%20&%20Respondents.pdf>

Book Review (15 percent of your grade): In this class, you will read two full-length books related to your own capstone project. You will write a review of the book you choose in week 1, due before our class session in Week 2 so that other students can read the book review and have it as a resource. We will discuss these books and your reviews in class and I would like to share the reviews with all students as a resource. A model review and review instructions are included on the course website. There are also some useful guides available on the web:

<http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/bookrev.html>
http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/book_reviews.shtml
<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/CriNonfiction.html>

To get the most out of this assignment, please do not read the published reviews of the work until *after* you have completed your own review.

Choosing a book: Part of the assignment is for you to do some research to choose a book. In pursuing your own research focus, you can either search for books on a topic that interests you or on a country or region. Be flexible in your search by employing both strategies. The Comparative Politics Series at Cambridge University Press has been a leader in this field. Cornell Press has also published many strong books. You can scan the reviews in recent journals, especially *Perspectives on Politics*, for new work. Another good work around is to go to Amazon and search a book you admire in the field and look

at the “customers who bought this book also...” Please choose a book that is not assigned for this class and has been published within the past four years. Avoid edited volumes as they are very difficult to review.

Annotated Bibliography, Syllabus Development (15 percent of your grade): As a tool for building your research project and the translation of your intellectual agenda into teaching skills, I have the penultimate week of class identify four or five papers that constitute a graduate seminar session. The sources should emerge from your annotated bibliography that serves as the foundation of your paper/proposal for this class. To be effective, you will identify a key concept related to the broad topic of contemporary autocratic regimes. You should cast your nets broadly to consider topics that are interesting to you and relevant to your ongoing research as you think about dissertation proposals, grant proposals or second year papers. You might write on: parties, international influences, ethnic conflict, vote choice, corruption, monuments and holidays, religion and so on. You may also adopt different strategies for choosing a set of articles: organize your session around a debate, a region or country, cross-regional analysis, or even competing approaches or methods. To complete the assignment, you should choose four to five key readings that speak to your theme. If it is appropriate to your research strategy you might also add a key reading on methodological issues: variable measurement, estimation techniques, approaches, or case selection issues. There are many online resources available as models of the annotated bibliography:

<http://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography>
http://www1.crk.umn.edu/library/researchresources/CRK_CONTENT_119694.html
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/annotated-bibliographies/>

The annotated bibliography/set of citations should serve as a stepping-stone to a *short essay* (three to five pages) due the same day that identifies the central strategy of your final project. We will organize the class around your work, discussing both the process of curricular development and the substance of your project. We will also discuss strategies for writing lit reviews and grant proposals.

Literature Review and Final Project Options: (40 percent of your grade): In order to address the needs of different students you may choose the most appropriate final project for your year of study, focus, and program. Your choices include: a final exam that simulates the comparative field exam but relies on the literature exclusive to this class. The development of the core components of a paper or grant proposal: an introduction, literature review (with hypotheses and implications), research design, and identified data that can be used to test the implications. Or, for MA students, the opportunity write two policy memos that synthesizes the literature from this class and applies it to a country or region of interest to you. Each project is described below:

Paper or Model Grant Proposal: You will develop the core components of a paper or grant proposal a grant proposal: introduction that defines the problem, a literature review that ends with hypotheses and testable implications, a research design that outlines the existing data that you will use to test hypotheses and/or your data collection strategy

(case selection, methodological tools (survey, focus groups, interviews), the details essential to the type of data that you collect (sample size, sampling strategy), as well as your analytic strategy.

For the grant proposal: The project must conform to the requirements of a funding agency that you are likely to apply to in the future—minus the budget. To be successful, your project must identify a compelling question, review the literature, articulate a research design that provides the basis for a rigorous hypothesis test. For example, you might think of looking at the National Science Foundation dissertation grants (http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13453), the Social Science Research Council (<http://www.ssrc.org/>), or the USIP (<http://www.usip.org/>). We will discuss the process of grant writing and other funding agencies in class.

Policy Memos/Short Papers: If you are an MA candidate, you might want to opt to write a three-page policy memo (single spaced) that applies this literature to a country or region in order to 1) illuminate a problem or puzzle and 2) to suggest concrete policy solutions to address that problem. The goal of these memos is combine academic insight with important new empirical evidence. You should write in a voice that speaks to the informed policy community in your area so that you should not rely on the political science jargon or even extensive citations but rather use the theoretic literature to frame a problem (information asymmetries, credible commitment, the role of economic elites, institutional engineering, etc.) and identify solutions. For good models of policy memos of this kind see the archive at: <http://ponarseurasia.org/blog/policy-memos/>

August 23 – No Formal Class – We will convene at a convenient time for a course introduction

Book Review Assignment Due by noon on Tuesday, August 29 to be uploaded to the class website.

August 30: Contemporary Authoritarianism – Definitions and Measurement

The literature on hybrid regimes, competitive authoritarian, or electoral authoritarian regimes exploded in the past decade. The reading this week takes aims at definitional questions and key issues raised in the literature and places these new studies in the context of the general literature on regimes and regime change. This week, we will consider the nature of contemporary autocracy relative to other types of autocracy. In the second half of the class meeting, we discuss the book review assignment and place your cases in the set of autocratic regimes, highlighting differences and similarities. Discussion of the book you choose will include an active discussion of approach and method, so please come prepared.

Methodological Reading: Wilson, M. C. (2014). "A Discreet Critique of Discrete Regime type Data," *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(5), 689-714.

Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan. Chapter 3, "Modern Authoritarian Regimes," *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. On CANVAS.

Wahman, M., Teorell, J., & Hadenius, A. (2013). "Authoritarian Regime Types Revisited: Updated Data in Comparative Perspective," *Contemporary Politics*, 19(1), 19-34.

Geddes, B., Wright, J., & Frantz, E. (2014). "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics*, 12(2), 313-331.

September 6. Theoretic Failures? Predicting Transitions and Discounting Authoritarian Durability

This class will explore the origins of contemporary autocratic regimes and the broader regime and regime change literature. If you have not yet read this literature, we will discuss it in class and give you the outline of the evolution of the debates and the key references.

Methodological Reading: Ahram, Ariel I., and J. Paul Goode. "Researching Authoritarianism in the Discipline of Democracy." *Social Science Quarterly* 97.4 (2016): 834-849.

Carothers, Thomas. "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 13, Number 1(2002): pp. 5-21.

Gehlbach, S., Sonin, K., & Svobik, M. W. (2016). "Formal Models of Nondemocratic Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19, 565-584.

Morse, Y. L. (2015). From Single-Party to Electoral Authoritarian Regimes: The Institutional Origins of Competitiveness in Post-Cold War Africa, *Comparative Politics*, 48(1), 126-151.

Shin, D. C. (1994). On the third wave of democratization: A synthesis and evaluation of recent theory and research. *World Politics*, 47(1), 135-170.

Stepan, A., & Linz, J. J. (2013). Democratization Theory and the " Arab Spring, *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2), 15-30.

September 13: Authoritarian Dilemmas

Authoritarian rule in contemporary societies presents a number of challenges including reliable information, economic crisis and missteps that can promote elite defection and mass protest. This week defines these challenges in broad terms to create a foundation for understanding how institutional innovation, information control, and informality solve them to support regime durability.

Information: Chapters 1 and 2, Wintrobe, Ronald. *The Political Economy of Dictatorship*. "The Authoritarian's Dilemma," Vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Available on CANVAS.

Leadership Succession: Hale, Henry E. "Regime cycles: democracy, autocracy, and revolution in post-Soviet Eurasia." *World Politics* 58.01 (2005): 133-165. Also review Nathan.

Elite Defection: Chapters 1 and 2, Svobik, M. W. (2012). *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. Cambridge University Press.

Mass Unrest: Howard, Marc Morjé, and Meir R. Walters. "Explaining the Unexpected: Political Science and the Surprises of 1989 and 2011." *Perspectives on Politics* 12.2 (2014): 394-408.

September 20: Authoritarian Resilience

The early literature on contemporary autocracy predicted that these regimes would be short lived. The resilience of the regimes raised the critical question of why the regimes were so durable. In this week, we read some of the general literature on resilience and some papers the focus on variables that are not often considered but provide the opportunity for new research – the common theme across the reading is components of modernization theory.

Methodological Reading: Barros, Robert. "On the Outside Looking In: Secrecy and the Study of Authoritarian Regimes." *Social Science Quarterly* 97.4 (2016): 953-973.

Whitehead, Laurence. "The 'puzzle' of autocratic resilience/regime collapse: the case of Cuba." *Third World Quarterly* 37.9 (2016): 1666-1682.

Nathan, Andrew. 2003. "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy* 14(1):6–17

Wallace, Jeremy. (2013). "Cities, redistribution, and authoritarian regime survival," *The Journal of Politics*, 75(3), 632-645.

Knutsen, C. H., & Nygård, H. M. (2015). Institutional Characteristics and Regime Survival: Why Are Semi-Democracies Less Durable Than Autocracies and Democracies?. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59 (3), 656-670.

Institutions and Regime Durability

This section of the class explores why do autocrats tolerate democratic institutions in authoritarian states. The readings present several theories of how institutions solve problems critical for regime maintenance, including: legitimation, institution, increased information, enable credible commitments, allow for power-sharing arrangements, provide tools for coalition building. As such, institutions influence regime stability. And, how do those institutions shape regime stability. Finally, the literature considers how autocrats evade responsibility, accountability, and responsiveness, through informal institutions, strategies, and information.

September 27: The Institutional Approach to Authoritarian Rule – Elections

This week we will reconsider institutional approaches to studying autocratic politics. The substantive focus will be on elections as constraining institutions, legitimizing forces, or arena's for cooptation.

Methodological Reading: Institutional Approaches: Review Svobik, Gelbach et. al. and also read, Razo, A. "Autocrats and Democrats," in Michael Reksulak, et. al. eds (March 2013), *Companion to Public Choice*, Second Edition (Edward Elgar Publishing, Northampton, MA): 83-108. Available on Canvas.

Koehler, Kevin. Authoritarian Elections in Egypt: Formal Institutions and Informal Mechanisms of Rule. *Democratization*, 15, 5(2008): 974-990.

Gandhi, Jennifer, & Lust-Okar, Ellen. (2009). Elections under authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 403-22.

Knutsen, C. H., Nygård, H. M., & Wig, T. (2017). Autocratic Elections: Stabilizing Tool or Force for Change?. *World Politics*, 69 (1), 98-143.

Donno, D. (2013). Elections and democratization in authoritarian regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(3), 703-716.

October 4: Legislatures, Power-sharing, and Redistribution

The literature on authoritarian legislatures focuses on two issues: power-sharing and credible commitment.

Review Article: Schuler, P., & Malesky, E. J. (2014). Authoritarian Legislatures. *Oxford Handbook*. Available on Canvas.

Jennifer Gandhi and Adam Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats," *Comparative Political Studies*, 40, 11, (2007): 1279-1301.

Bonvecchi, A., & Simison, E. (2017). Legislative Institutions and Performance in Authoritarian Regimes. *Comparative Politics*, 49(4), 521-544.

Loidolt, B., & Mecham, Q. (2016). Parliamentary Opposition Under Hybrid Regimes: Evidence from Egypt. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 41(4), 997-1022.

Smyth, R., Chan K.N. and Bianco, W. (2017) "Legislative Rules in Electoral Authoritarian Regimes" Paper in revise and resubmit status.

October 11: Political Parties as Institutional Constraints

Review Paper: Magaloni, Beatriz and Ruth Kricheli. 2010. "Political Order and One-Party Rule." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13:123–143.

Reuter, O. J. (2017). *The Origins of Dominant Parties: Building Authoritarian Institutions in Post-Soviet Russia*. Cambridge University Press. Available from the instructor.

October 18: Responsiveness and Accountability

Methodological Paper: Acemoglu, Daron, and Simon Johnson. 2005. Unbundling Institutions. *Journal of Political Economy* 113 (5):949–95.

Malesky, Edmund and Paul Schuler. 2010. "Nodding or Needling: Analyzing Delegate Responsiveness in an Authoritarian Parliament." *American Political Science Review* 104(3):482–502.

Tsai, Lily. 2007. "Solidary groups, informal accountability, and local Public Goods provision in rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101(2):355–372.

Chen, Jidong, Jennifer Pan, and Yiqing Xu. "Sources of authoritarian responsiveness: A field experiment in China." *American Journal of Political Science* 60.2 (2016): 383-400.

Miller, M. K. (2015). Elections, information, and Policy Responsiveness in autocratic Regimes. *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(6), 691-727.

October 18: Information and Agenda Setting

A tip for reading this week: This reading includes a couple of papers with formal models. A great way to engage these papers is to explore the assumptions that underlie the model and then consider the hypotheses that are generated by the theory.

Methodology Reading: Review Gelbach et. al.

Schatz, Edward. "The Soft Authoritarian Tool Kit: Agenda-setting Power in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan." *Comparative Politics* (2009): 203-222.

Lorentzen, P. (2014). "China's Strategic Censorship." *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(2), 402-414.

Baekkeskov, E., & Rubin, O. (2017). Information Dilemmas and Blame-Avoidance Strategies: From Secrecy to Lightning Rods in Chinese Health Crises. *Governance*, 30(3), 425-443.

Barbara Geddes and John Zaller, "Sources of Popular Support for Authoritarian Regimes," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No. 2, May 1989, pp. 319-347.

Authoritarian Participation

October 25: Voting and The Determinants of Choice

Methodological Paper: List experiments

Magaloni, Beatriz. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, Chapters 1, 2 and 7. Available on Canvas.

Golosov, G. V. (2016). Voter Volatility in Electoral Authoritarian Regimes: Testing the "Tragic Brilliance" Thesis. *Comparative Sociology*, 15(5), 535-559.

Hale, H. E., & Colton, T. J. (2017). "Who Defects? Unpacking a Defection Cascade from Russia's Dominant Party 2008–12," *American Political Science Review*, 111(2), 322-337.

Truex, R. (2017). Consultative Authoritarianism and its Limits. *Comparative Political Studies*, 50(3), 329-361.

Croke, K., Grossman, G., Larreguy, H. A., & Marshall, J. (2016). Deliberate disengagement: How education can decrease political participation in electoral authoritarian regimes. *American Political Science Review*, 110 (3), 579-600.

October 31: Mass Protest

In lieu of a methods paper, this week compare Professor Mark Beissinger's take on the same event in two different papers. As you read these two papers in the context of other work, consider how explanations of protest participation differ according to the authors' assumptions, approaches, and level of analysis.

Beissinger, M. R. (2013). The semblance of democratic revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine's orange revolution. *American Political Science Review*, 107(3), 574-592.

And

Beissinger, M. (2011). Mechanisms of Maidan: The structure of contingency in the making of the Orange revolution. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 16(1), 25-43.

Meirowitz, A., & Tucker, J. A. (2013). People Power or a One-Shot Deal? A Dynamic Model of Protest. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(2), 478-490.

Onuch, O., & Sasse, G. (2016). The Maidan in Movement: Diversity and the Cycles of Protest. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 68(4), 556-587.

Smyth, Regina. (2017) "Protest Legacies and Political Participation in Ukraine," work under review.

November 7: Constrained Mobilization: State Resources and Response

An important element of the literature of contemporary authoritarian resilience is state response to different challenges. In this week, we consider how regime's respond to different types and levels of protest challenges and the ways in which these protest events can be coopted to increase support.

Reuter, O. J., & Robertson, G. B. (2014). Legislatures, cooptation, and social protest in contemporary authoritarian regimes. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(1), 235-248.

Lorentzen, P. L. (2013). Regularizing rioting: Permitting public protest in an authoritarian regime. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 8(2), 127-158.

Weiss, J. C. (2013). Authoritarian signaling, mass audiences, and nationalist protest in China. *International Organization*, 67(1), 1-35.

Rød, E. G., & Weidmann, N. B. (2015). Empowering activists or autocrats? The Internet in authoritarian regimes. *Journal of Peace Research*, 52(3), 338-351.

Heydemann, S., & Leenders, R. (2011). Authoritarian learning and authoritarian resilience: regime responses to the 'Arab Awakening'. *Globalizations*, 8(5), 647-653.

November 14: Political Protest and Authoritarian Resilience **Reading TBD**

*****November 22 Thanksgiving Holiday*****

November 29: Class Assignment Review and Writing Session

Assignment Due: Annotated Bibliography and Seminar Session Assignment Due

Reading: Gustafsson, K., & Hagström, L. what is the point? teaching graduate students how to construct political science research puzzles. *European Political Science*, 1-15.

December 6: Class Assignment Review and Writing Session

Assignment Due: Literature Review for your final project or Literature Sections from Memos Due for this class.