
course time: We will meet on Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00am-12:20pm.

e-mail: michael.strausz@tcu.edu

office hours (on Zoom): Mondays from 2:00-3:00, Wednesdays from 10:00am-11:50am, or by appointment.

Response Time: I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, and within 48 hours during weekends and holidays.

Final Research Paper Due Date

For non-degree candidates (i.e., everyone except graduating seniors), final research papers are due on Thursday, **May 6 at 1:30pm**. For degree candidates (graduating seniors), final research papers are due on Monday, **May 3 at 1:30pm**.

Course Description

On January 20, 2021—the day after this class is scheduled to begin—the United States of America will inaugurate a new president. The ability to transfer executive authority from one person to another—particularly when those individuals represent different political parties—is a key defining feature of democracy. And yet, for the first time in American history, an armed mob of supporters of the outgoing president forcibly occupied the capital building on the day that Congress was scheduled to certify Joe Biden’s victory in the Electoral College.

Given these recent dramatic and troubling events, our Capstone on the “Dilemmas of Democracy” could not be timelier. What is democracy, and why does it matter? How does democratic practice differ around the world? How can democracies address challenges from forces including populism, climate change, and the rise of conspiratorial thinking? What sorts of institutions are best for democratic durability, and what sorts of institutions are most just? We will think about these and related question over the course of five units. First, we will address debates about how to define democracy. Second, we will examine contemporary challenges to democracy, focusing in particular on challenges from the new populism and from the “democratic recession.” Third, we will look at the role of institutions in constituting and protecting democracies. Fourth, we will consider the relationship between individual identities, social and cultural practices, and democracy. And in the final unit, we will develop a set of readings together which address some issue or set of issues broadly related to the course’s theme.

Required Texts / Materials

You should have access to a computer or tablet on which they can write papers and participate in text-based discussions.

You should also have access to a device with a reasonably fast internet connection on which they can participate in or watch videos of zoom lectures and discussions.

Course Policies and Requirements

Assignments

Discussion questions and other homework assignments: You must submit one discussion question to the Discussion Board on D2L by 9:00am the day of class. A satisfactory submission earns you a 100, and an unsatisfactory submission earns a 0. Questions are unsatisfactory when they are late or when they suggest that you did not do the reading or think very hard about the reading. Successful questions might be about the overall theme of the piece, about a specific example or quote from the piece, about the implications of the findings and/or methods, etc. Anything is on the table, as long as it is thoughtful, based on the reading, and demonstrates you are thinking critically about the issues raised by the reading and the course. In addition to discussion questions, there may be a few other short assignments that will be factored into this grade. Unless otherwise noted, those other assignments will count the same as one discussion question. I will drop the lowest grade here (which means that you can skip a discussion question, provided you do all of the other discussion questions and the short homework assignments, and still earn a 100% here).

Solo discussion leading: Each student will be required to lead discussion on the assigned readings on one day. A more specific assignment, grading rubric, and discussion-leading schedule will be distributed early in the semester.

Group discussion leading: Each student will be required to lead discussion on the assigned readings with a few other students on one day. A more specific assignment, grading rubric, and discussion-leading schedule will be distributed early in the semester.

Group reading selection and discussion leading: For the final unit of the class I will put students into groups and have each group select two or three readings to lead discussion on. Groupings will be based on your senior thesis topic and/or your main areas of interest within political science (since some of you are not planning to write a senior thesis).

A note on discussion leading
If you are not able to present as an individual and/or as a part of a group--because of technological limitations, because you would rather not be recorded, or for some other reason—please contact me as soon as possible so that we can work out another assignment.

Reactions papers on readings: Each student will write two reaction papers over the course of the semester that respond to assigned readings. Your two reaction papers cannot be on the same day/topic that you serve as discussion leader. A specific assignment will be distributed early in the semester.

Capstone project: This will function as a final project for this course. The (approximately 3000 word) paper that you write will build from this course's materials, but it will also incorporate and reflect on your experiences as a political science major. A specific

assignment for the paper (including a grading rubric) will be distributed early in the semester. It is due Thursday, **May 6 at 1:30pm**, or Monday, **May 3 at 1:30pm** for graduating seniors.

Attendance: I invite everyone to virtually attend the synchronous Zoom sessions. I will also record them, and if you cannot attend for any reason, I expect you to watch the recording and email me four questions and/or insights that occurred to you as you watched the video before the next synchronous Zoom session. You will get a 100 for each session that you either attend or watch on video and send me four questions/insights about, and you will get a 0 if you do not attend a session or email me about the video before the next session.

Grading

Grades are determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

A: 93.45 and above B: 82.45-86.44 C: 72.45-76.44 D: 62.45-66.44
 A-: 89.45-93.44 B-: 79.45-82.44 C-: 69.45-72.44 D-: 59.45-62.44
 B+: 86.45-89.44 C+: 76.45-79.44 D+: 66.45-69.44 F: 59.44 and below

Grade Breakdown

Assignments, Exams/Quizzes, Presentations, etc.	Percentage of final grade
Discussion questions and other homework assignments	5%
Solo discussion leading	10%
Group Discussion leading	10%
Group reading selection and discussion leading	10%
Reactions papers on readings (15% each)	30%
Capstone paper	30%
Attendance	5%

If you feel that you have been graded unfairly on any course assignment, please wait 24 hours after the assignment is returned and then contact me with a typed statement about why you believe you were graded unfairly. This statement must provide substantive reasons why you believe that you were graded unfairly. The appeal process must be started one week after the material was returned.

Late Work

In general, late assignments lose 10 points (out of 100) per 24 hours late. So, if a paper is due at 2:00pm on Tuesday and you turn it in at 3:00, you will lose 10 points. And if you turn it in after 2:00pm on Wednesday, you will lose 20 points, (and after 2:00 on Thursday, you will lose 30 points... etc.). However, if you miss or are late in submitting any assignment because of an Official University Absence, an illness, or a personal or family emergency, please communicate with me as soon as you can we can discuss rescheduling your work. You don't have to tell me the nature of the illness or emergency; just let me know that you are dealing with an illness or an emergency and we can discuss an alternate deadline for your work.

Participation / Engagement

I expect students to regularly attend Zoom sessions, pay attention, and participate (or, if you are not able to attend, I expect you to watch the video of the Zoom session and email me four questions or insights before the next Zoom session). If I call on a student during a Zoom session and he or she does not answer, I will email that student to check in and see what was going on. If that happens again, I may count that student as absent for that day.

Class Norms & Netiquette

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, discussions, and chats. If I deem any of them to be inappropriate or offensive, I will forward the message to the Chair of the department and appropriate action will be taken, not excluding expulsion from the course. The same rules apply online as they do in person. Be respectful of other students. Foul discourse will not be tolerated. Please take a moment and read the [basic norms about netiquette](#).

Participating in the virtual realm, including social media sites and shared-access sites sometimes used for educational collaborations, should be done with honor and integrity. Please review [TCU's guidelines on electronic communications](#) (email, text messages, social networks, etc.) from the Student Handbook.

Email

Only the official TCU student email address will be used for all course notification. It is your responsibility to check your TCU email on a regular basis.

Course Materials

TCU students are prohibited from sharing any portion of course materials (including videos, PowerPoint slides, assignments, or notes) with others, including on social media, without written permission by the course instructor. Accessing, copying, transporting (to another person or location), modifying, or destroying programs, records, or data belonging to TCU or another user without authorization, whether such data is in transit or storage, is prohibited. The full policy can be found at: <https://security.tcu.edu/polproc/usage-policy/>.

Violating this policy is considered a violation of Section 3.2.15 of the Student Code of Conduct (this policy may be found in the Student Handbook at <https://tcu.codes/code/index/>), **and may also constitute Academic Misconduct or Disruptive Classroom Behavior** (these policies may be found in the undergraduate catalog at <https://tcu.smartcatalogiq.com/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Student-Policies/Academic-Conduct-Policy-Details>). TCU encourages student debate and discourse; accordingly, TCU generally interprets and applies its policies, including the policies referenced above, consistent with the values of free expression and First Amendment principles.

Further, if a student anticipates that they will not consent to instructor's video and/or audio participation being recorded, they need to contact the instructor immediately so

the instructor may work with the student to determine how to assess their class participation and assignments that may require collaboration during the class session.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the [TCU Code of Student Conduct](#)): Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are also listed in detail in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Recording of Class Sessions

Our class sessions will all be recorded for use by enrolled students, including those who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are consenting to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are consenting to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the “chat” feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.

Support for TCU Students

Statement on Title IX at TCU

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under TCU policy and federal law and I am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with TCU’s Title IX Coordinator. Students can receive confidential support and academic advocacy by contacting [TCU’s Confidential Advocate in the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office](#) at <https://care.tcu.edu/> or by calling (817) 257-5225 or the [Counseling & Mental Health Center](#) at <https://counseling.tcu.edu/> or by calling (817) 257-7863. [Alleged violations can be reported to the Title IX Office](#) at <https://titleix.tcu.edu/student-toolkit/> or by calling (817) 257-8228. Should you wish to make a confidential report, the Title IX Office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the Fort Worth Police Department at 911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777.

Student Access and Accommodation

Texas Christian University affords students with disabilities reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To be eligible for disability-related academic accommodations, students are required to register with the TCU Office of Student

Access and Accommodation and have their requested accommodations evaluated. Students are required to provide instructors an official TCU notification of accommodation approved through Student Access and Accommodation. More information on how to apply for accommodations can be found at <https://www.tcu.edu/access-accommodation/> or by calling Student Access and Accommodation at (817) 257-6567. Accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

TCU Policy for Religious Observations & Holidays

Students who are unable to participate in a class, in any related assignment or in a university required activity because of the religious observance of a holy day shall be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up the examination or assignment, without penalty, provided that it does not create an unreasonable burden on the University.” For more information, please visit the [TCU Policy for Religious Observations & Holidays](#) webpage.

Other information to support TCU students

There is a document available on the course’s D2L site called “20093 syllabus appendix” with sections called “Campus Life and the Student Experience will Be Different This Year,” “Health and Wellness,” “Face Coverings and Physical Distancing,” “Statement on TCU’s Discrimination Policy,” “Obligations to Report Conduct Raising Title IX or VAWA Issues,” and “Emergency Response Information,” as well as a more extensive statement about academic misconduct. Please let me know if you have any trouble finding this document or any questions about its contents.

Course Schedule

This calendar represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunities. Such changes will be clearly communicated.

Date	Assigned reading
19-Jan	<i>Introduction</i> No assigned reading
21-Jan	<i>Contested democracy in contemporary America</i> Snyder, Timothy. 2021. “The American Abyss: A historian of fascism and political atrocity on Trump, the mob and what comes next.” <i>New York Times Magazine</i> , January 9.

Unit 1: What Is Democracy?

Date	Assigned reading
26-Jan	<i>A classical definition</i> Dahl, Robert Alan. 1971. <i>Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 1-32.

Date	Assigned reading
28-Jan	<p><i>Two reactions to Dahl</i></p> <p>Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is... and Is Not." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 2 (3):75-88.</p> <p>Przeworski, Adam. 2003. "Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense." In <i>The Democracy Sourcebook</i>, edited by Robert Alan Dahl, Ian Shapiro and José Antônio Cheibub. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.</p>
2-Feb	<p><i>Inclusion, exclusion, and democracy</i></p> <p>Taylor, Astra. 2019. "Reinventing the People: Inclusion/Exclusion" <i>Democracy May Not Exist, but We'll Miss It When It's Gone</i>. New York: Metropolitan Books.</p>

Unit 2: Contemporary Challenges to Democracy

Date	Assigned reading
4-Feb	<p><i>Are we in a democratic recession?</i></p> <p>Waldner, David, and Ellen Lust. 2018. "Unwelcome Change: Coming to Terms with Democratic Backsliding." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 21:93-113.</p>
9-Feb	<p><i>Democracy in an era of epistemic closure</i></p> <p>Barker, David C., Morgan Marietta and Ryan M. DeTamble. 2021 (forthcoming). "American Hubris: The Politics of Unwarranted Epistemic Certitude in the United States" in Barker, D.C. and E. Suhay (eds.) <i>The Politics of Truth in Polarized America</i> (forthcoming 2021). New York: Oxford University Press.</p> <p><u>Guest discussion leader: Ryan M. DeTamble</u></p>
11-Feb	<p><i>The rise of populism</i></p> <p>Berman, Sheri. 2019. "Populism is a Symptom Rather than a Cause: Democratic Disconnect, the Decline of the Center-Left, and the Rise of Populism in Western Europe." <i>Polity</i> 51 (4):654-667.</p>
16-Feb	<p><i>Immigration and public opinion</i></p> <p>Valentino, Nicholas A., Stuart N. Soroka, Shanto Iyengar, Toril Aalberg, Raymond Duch, Marta Fraile, Kyu S. Hahn, Kasper M. Hansen, Allison Harell, Marc Helbling, Simon D. Jackman, and Tetsuro Kobayashi. 2019. "Economic and Cultural Drivers of Immigrant Support Worldwide." <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 49 (4):1201-1226.</p> <p>Matti, Joshua, and Yang Zhou. 2017. "The Political Economy of Brexit: Explaining the Vote." <i>Applied Economic Letters</i> 24 (6):1131-1134.</p>

Date	Assigned reading
18-Feb	<i>Trumpism, inequality, and identity</i> Green, Jon, and Sean McElwee. 2019. "The Differential Effects of Economic Conditions and Racial Attitudes in the Election of Donald Trump." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 17 (2):358-379.
23-Feb	<i>The "paranoid style" and democracy</i> Hofstadter, Richard. 1964. "The Paranoid Style in American Politics." <i>Harpers</i> , November, 77-86.

Unit 3: Institutions and Democracy

Date	Assigned reading
25-Feb	<i>Do elections matter if they are not free and fair?</i> Lindberg, Staffan. 2006. "The Surprising Significance of African Elections." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 17 (1):139-151.
2-Mar	<i>The perils of presidentialism</i> Stepan, Alfred, and Cindy Skach. 1994. "Presidentialism and Parliamentarism in Comparative Perspective." In <i>The Failure of Presidential Democracy</i> , edited by Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 119-136.
4-Mar	<i>Do elections reveal the will of the majority?</i> Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. <i>Democracy For Realists: Why Elections do not Produce Responsive Government</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 21-51.
9-Mar— 11-Mar	<u>"Spring Refresh" (No Zoom Classes)</u>
16-Mar	<i>Should voting be compulsory?</i> Lijphart, Arend. 1997. "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 91 (1):1-14. Freire, Alessandro, and Mathieu Turgeon. 2020. "Random votes under compulsory voting: Evidence from Brazil." <i>Electoral Studies</i> 66:1-13.
18-Mar	<i>Democratic institutions and foreign policy</i> Bättig, Michèle B, and Thomas Bernauer. 2009. "National institutions and global public goods: are democracies more cooperative in climate change policy?" <i>International Organization</i> :281-308.
23-Mar	<i>Explaining the stability of democratic institutions</i> Carugati, Federica. 2020. "Democratic Stability: A Long View." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 23.

Unit 4: Identities, Societies, Cultures, and Democracy

Date	Assigned reading
25-Mar	<i>Social media and democracy</i> Sunstein, Cass R. 2017. # <i>Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 157-175 and 213-233.
30-Mar	<i>Democracy and contesting stories of peoplehood</i> Smith, Rogers M. 2020. "Toward Progressive Narratives of American Identity." <i>Polity</i> 52 (3): 370-383.
1-Apr	<i>How civil society can help "make democracy work"</i> Putnam, Robert D., Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti. 1993. <i>Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy</i> . Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, pp. 83-120. Putnam, Robert D. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 6 (1):65-78.
6-Apr	Does democracy require separation of church and state? Menchik, Jeremy. 2018. "Soft Separation Democracy." <i>Politics and Religion</i> 11 (4):863-883.
8-Apr	Democracies in the Muslim world Rowley, Charles K., and Nathaneal Smith. 2009. "Islam's Democracy Paradox: Muslims Claim to like Democracy, so Why Do They Have so Little?" <i>Public Choice</i> 139 (3/4):273-299. Bellin, Eva. 2004. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 36 (2):139-157.

Unit 5: Teaching Each Other About Democracy

Date	Assigned reading
13-Apr	<i>Student-selected topic</i> Assigned reading to be announced
15-Apr	<i>Student-selected topic</i> Assigned reading to be announced
20-Apr	<i>Student-selected topic</i> Assigned reading to be announced
22-Apr	<i>Student-selected topic</i> Assigned reading to be announced

Date	Assigned reading
27-Apr	<i>Student-selected topic</i> Assigned reading to be announced
29-Apr	<i>Final paper workshop</i> No assigned reading