

# Syllabus for Political Science 219: The Theory and Measurement of Democracy

Winter 2019

<b>Instructors:</b>	Sean Ingham and David Wiens	<b>Course location:</b>	tbd
<b>Office hours:</b>	by appointment	<b>Course time:</b>	Tuesday 3-5:50pm
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## Course description

How can democratic theory contribute to the scientific study of politics? And why should political scientists care about theorists' potential contributions? In this seminar, we consider how democratic theory can inform political scientists' decisions about how to conceptualize and measure democracy. We start by examining in detail popular quantitative measures of democracy, paying special attention to the choices that arise in measurement construction. We then consider how these choices matter for our efforts to learn about the causes and consequences of democracy. Having seen that measurement involves choices and that these choices matter for empirical research, we turn our attention to the relationship between concepts and empirical measurement and to the methodology of concept formation. After thinking about these questions of method, we use literature in democratic theory—on the role of elections; on individual rights and the status of minorities in democracy; and on deliberation—as “case studies” to illustrate the potential for conceptual arguments about democracy to inform how practicing political scientists measure their objects of study. We conclude with a session on the possibilities—in general and not just in the context of measuring democracy—for more meaningful integration of normative political theory with empirical political science.

## Grading

**Writing assignments.** There are two options.

*Option A.* The student submits a short memo on each week's reading (no more than 500 words). The main purpose of the memo is to identify a question that merits further discussion in seminar, and that might eventually generate a research question that could be investigated in a future paper. The memo should indicate some reasons for and against different answers to the question, so that the memo reads like an adumbrated preview of a high-level seminar discussion of the question. The memo should be emailed to [singham@ucsd.edu](mailto:singham@ucsd.edu) by 8pm on the Monday before seminar.

*Option B.* The student submits a seminar paper at the end of the quarter, due March 20. The student should submit a short, one-page memo, identifying the question the paper will answer and explaining its importance and the reasons its answer is not obvious, by February 20.

**In-class presentations.** Depending on enrollment, students will do several presentations, individually or in groups depending on enrollment, on the assigned readings. *Presentations should not try to summarize the reading.* The purpose of the presentation is to set up and provide some structure to further discussion. The presenters should identify a question or puzzle that they would like the entire group to discuss, put forward some potential answers to the question, and sketch the reasons for and against them. A presentation should be limited to 15 minutes.

## Reading schedule

*Provisional draft — subject to change*

### 1. Jan. 8. Measuring democracy

- Polity IV Users' Manual
- Varieties of Democracy Manual
- Coppedge et al. 2015. "Measuring high level democratic principles using the V-Dem data." *International Political Science Review* 37(5): 580–593.
- Pzeworski et al, *Democracy and Development*, chapter 1

### 2. Jan. 15. Why measurement matters

- Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods*, chaps. 2 & 4
- Munck, *Measuring Democracy*, chaps. 1, 2, 6
- Collier and Adcock, "Democracy and Dichotomies", *Annual Review of Political Science* (1999)
- Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited"
- Optional: Jackman and Treier, "Democracy as a Latent Variable", *AJPS* (2008)

### 3. Jan. 22. Measurement and concept formation

- Goertz, *Social Science Concepts*, chaps. 2–4
- Collier and Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives", *World Politics* (2011)
- Margolis and Laurence, "Concepts", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (plato.stanford.edu), secs. 2 and 5
- Trochim and Donnelly, *Research Methods Knowledge Base*, chaps. on measurement
- Optional: Sartori, "Concept misinformation in comparative politics"

### 4. Jan. 29. Conceptual problems and conceptual solutions

- Cappelen, *Fixing Language*, chaps. 1–3
- Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts"
- Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems*, chap. 2
- Optional: McPherson and Plunkett, "Conceptual Ethics and the Methodology of Normative Inquiry"
- Optional: Collier, Hidalgo, and Maciuceanu, "Essentially Contested Concepts: Debates and Applications", *Journal of Political Ideologies* (2006)

### 5. Feb. 5. Minimalist conceptions of democracy

- Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, chs. 21, 22
- Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels, *Democracy for Realists*, chs. 1, 2
- Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, ch. 1
- Adam Przeworski, "Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense," in *Democracy's Value*, eds. Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordon (CUP, 1999).

### 6. Feb. 12. The place of elections in democracy, continued

- Bernard Manin, *Principles of Representative Government*, introduction, chs. 1, 2.
  - John McCormick, “Contain the Wealthy and Patrol the Magistrates: Restoring Elite Accountability to Popular Government,” *APSR* (2006)
  - Helene Landemore, “Deliberative Democracy as Open, Not (Just) Representative Democracy” (2017)
7. Feb. 20. Individual rights and judicial review in democracy
- Corey Brettschneider, *Democratic Rights: The Substance of Self-Government*, chs. 1, 2, 7
  - Jeremy Waldron, “The Core of the Case Against Judicial Review,” *Yale Law Journal* 115 (2006): 1346–1406.
8. Feb. 26. Place of rights in democracy, continued
- Ronald Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue*, ch. 4.
  - Josiah Ober, *Demopolis: Democracy before Liberalism in Theory and Practice*, chapters 1, 2, 3, 8.
  - Optional: remainder of Ober, *Demopolis*
9. Mar. 5. Popular control and preferences
- Chris Tausanovitch, “Measuring the Intensity of Policy Preferences,” working paper
  - Sean Ingham, *Rule by Multiple Majorities: A New Theory of Popular Control*, pp. 1–37, 57–65, 86–115, 149–152
  - Pettit, Philip, *On the People’s Terms*, sections 1 and 2 of ch. 5
10. Mar. 12. Directions for future research