

PSC 343: Authoritarianism

Spring 2024, TR 11-12:15

109 ten Hoor Hall

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Office hours: TR 1-2pm

& by appointment

Today, the world faces a resurgence of authoritarianism. Over half of all countries are currently ruled by dictatorships, and one-third of humanity lives in a country where authoritarianism is rising. Leaders like Russia's President Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping not only suppress the rights of their citizens but also promote authoritarianism worldwide. The "new Cold War," should it take root, will pit the forces of democracy against authoritarianism. Will you be ready?

Authoritarian regimes have existed since the very beginning of human history. Indeed, we might consider dictatorship the "default" way of governing until the mid-20th century. While democracies are more common today, most of the world still lives under authoritarian rule. What exactly is authoritarianism? How is it different from democracy? And what is a wave of autocratization?

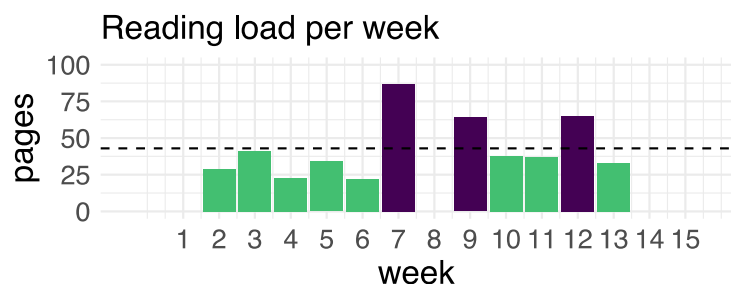
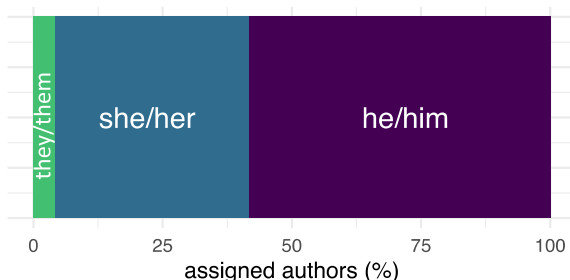
This class is designed to help you answer these questions. You will learn how to define authoritarianism and its various subtypes. Then we will discuss how authoritarian regimes gain power, survive, and fail. By the end of the semester, I hope that you will have a better understanding of authoritarianism and use the knowledge you have gained to make informed assessments of global events.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

1. Define authoritarianism and distinguish between its various subtypes.
2. Explain how authoritarian regimes gain power, survive, and fail.
3. Apply academic knowledge of authoritarianism to real-world cases.

Pre-requisites: None required. PSC 203 (Comparative Politics) is recommended.

Required Textbook: *Authoritarianism: What Everyone Needs to Know®* by Erica Frantz. Oxford University Press, 2018. Available through Access Granted on Blackboard. You must opt out of Access Granted by 18 January 2024 if you prefer to purchase the book elsewhere.



Content Warning

At times this semester, we will discuss historical and current events that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. It is impossible to discuss modern-day authoritarianism without touching on sensitive topics. This course will include content depicting the following situations:

- Violence, abuse, and repression (including blood and torture).
- Executions, including mass executions.
- Kidnapping and abduction.
- Sexual assault and sexual violence.
- Warfare, including irregular warfare and chemical weapons.
- Crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, and ethnic cleansing.
- Mental illness.
- Substance abuse, including drugs and alcohol.
- Child abuse, including child soldiers.
- Xenophobia and racism.
- Sexism and misogyny.
- Antisemitism and Islamophobia.

All class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the student learning outcomes for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. There will be **two** mental health breaks during the semester for students to recharge and avoid burnout. If you are aware of particular course material that may be triggering to you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have with it before it comes up in class.

Wellness Resources

College can be a stressful time. If you or someone you know is facing a challenging time or dealing with academic or personal stress, anxiety, depression, or other concerns, we strongly encourage and support you to seek assistance or to help friends find the care that they may need by reviewing the Campus Resource List for Students (<https://alabama.app.box.com/s/nz3gs827kx538255typ9hm5owd7x0yj8>).

If you are experiencing a personal crisis and need urgent assistance, you can also contact the following resources:

<u>UA Counseling Center</u> MWRF, 8am-5pm T, 9am-5pm 205-348-3863 Text BAMA to 741-741 www.counseling.sa.ua.edu	<u>Women & Gender RC</u> M-F, 8am-5pm 205-348-5040 www.wgrc.sa.ua.edu	<u>Crisis Line (UAPD)</u> Outside normal hours 205-348-5454 Ask for on-call counselor or advocate
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Attendance Policy

We will track attendance using Microsoft Forms. Please bring a smartphone, tablet, or computer to class so that you can complete the attendance poll.

You do not need to notify me of every absence, as doing so will not result in points for missed classes. However, if you are absent **for any reason** from more than **five** class meetings, you will automatically fail the course unless you withdraw before the final grading period. Students with documented disabilities from ODS that require flexible attendance may request reasonable accommodations to this policy, provided that their absences are related to their disability.

Exams and Assignments

Case Studies (25%): We will learn about six of the world's most notorious dictators through the *Dictator's Playbook* series and additional readings. There will be an open-note essay on the assigned materials on case study days. You should come to class prepared to complete this assignment and discuss what you learned with other students in the course. Your lowest case study grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Exams (75%): We will have a midterm (25%) and a final exam (50%) based on the assigned readings, other materials, and in-class discussion. Exams are closed-book and include multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, true/false, and short answer questions. The final exam is cumulative, covering all the material in the course. Students may attempt the final exam twice (see course schedule). If your final exam grade is higher than your midterm exam grade, it will replace your midterm exam grade.

Grading Scale

A+	A	A–	B+	B	B–	C+	C	C–	D+	D	D–	F
97–	90–	88–	85–	80–	78–	75–	70–	68–	65–	60–	50–	0–
100%	96%	89%	87%	84%	79%	77%	74%	69%	67%	64%	59%	49%
4.33	4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0.00

Missed Exams and Assignments

If you need to miss an exam or assignment for a good cause, you must provide written documentation within 48 hours or as soon as physically possible. If excused, all late work must be completed within one week of the original due date, regardless of the reason for missing the exam or assignment.

Grade Disputes

If you think I have made an error, contact me during office hours or schedule an appointment within one week of receiving the grade. Out of respect for your right to privacy under the University's Confidentiality of Student Records policy and the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, I do not discuss grades via email.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete “I” grades will be recorded only in exceptional cases when the student (1) has completed a substantial portion of the course and is otherwise passing, (2) is unable to complete a well-defined portion of a course for reasons beyond the student’s control, and (3) in the instructor’s judgment can complete the required work without repeating the course. Requests for “I” grades must be submitted in writing using this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/1wFD67LTPn>

Plagiarism and AI Technology

In line with UA’s Academic Misconduct policy, I expect you to generate your own work in this course. By submitting an assignment, you claim this work is entirely your own. Any work that you have paraphrased should be correctly cited. If you use more than three words in a row from someone else’s work, use quotation marks and cite the source, including the page number. If you submit work generated by someone else or created by a computer application such as ChatGPT, this will be considered a violation of the Academic Misconduct policy and may be reported to the Department Chair or Dean’s office for review.

Controversial topics

Some of the topics in this course may be considered controversial. One of the core purposes of a university is to discuss important topics through a scholarly lens. When members of a class find themselves feeling strongly about a topic, that is a signal that the topic is important enough to be discussed rather than avoided. Differences of opinion are expected and will result in rich discussions. In these discussions students will be expected to demonstrate a thorough understanding of concepts presented in the course materials and to ground their positions in concepts and evidence relevant to the course. This in turn will entail coming to class prepared, asking relevant questions, sharing perspectives, having a willingness to listen, and practicing open-mindedness when encountering the perspectives of others. In this course we will assume the positive intentions of all class members when discussing important topics, and we will give them the benefit of the doubt when considering their perspectives and sharing our own.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Names and pronouns: UA provides instructors with a roster listing each student's legal name. However, I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me accordingly early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. You can also designate your pronouns in Banner.

Students with disabilities: The University of Alabama is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and need reasonable accommodation(s) to participate in this class, contact the Office of Disability Services (or ODS; 205-348-4285, ods@ua.edu, Houser Hall 1000, www.ods.ua.edu) as soon as possible. If you have been approved to receive accommodations through ODS, please meet with your instructor or College designee during office hours or by appointment to review your accommodation letter and discuss how accommodations can be implemented in this course.

Pregnancy accommodations: Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website (<https://uact.ua.edu/information/pregnancy>).

Parents and caregivers: If you have caregiver duties (such as for a child, an older relative, or a family member with disabilities) that limit your ability to pursue your education at UA in the same capacity as your peers, please reach out as soon as possible so that we can make reasonable accommodations. Children are always welcome in the classroom; however, I ask that you sit near the door so that you can step out without disturbing others should that be necessary.

Religious observances: Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines (<https://provost.ua.edu/oaa-guidelines-for-religious-holidays-observance>).

UAct: Ethical community: The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (<http://www.ua.edu/uact>) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

Mandatory Reporting: As a faculty member at the University of Alabama, I am a mandatory reporter for known or suspected child abuse or neglect. This means that if I become aware of harm or threatened harm, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or negligent treatment of any person under the age of 18 or under the age of 19 in need of protective services, I must immediately report the suspected abuse to the University of Alabama Police Department. For more information: <https://uact.ua.edu/information/child-protection>

Responsible Reporting: As a faculty member at the University of Alabama, I am considered a responsible reporting individual for sexual misconduct under Title IX regulations. This means that I am required to immediately report known incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking to the Title IX Coordinator and the Designated Harassment Resource Person under the UAct program. For more information: <https://uact.ua.edu/information/titleix>

Academic misconduct: Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://provost.ua.edu/academic-misconduct/>).

Turnitin® policy: Students agree that their enrollment in this course allows the instructor the right to use electronic devices to help prevent plagiarism. All course materials are subject to submission to Turnitin.com for the purpose of detecting textual similarities and plagiarism.

Audio-video recordings: As a general rule, no one is allowed to make audio or video recordings of our class sessions. This will facilitate an active, honest, open discussion during our meetings. Any student violating this rule may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. Students with documented disabilities requiring access to audio recordings of missed classes should notify me formally through the ODS portal so that we can make alternative accommodations that are more reasonable for the course format.

Sharing course materials: All course materials, presentations, and class discussions are only for viewing by members of this class section. They may not be posted in any public forum or shared with anyone not enrolled. Any student violating these rules may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

Severe weather protocol: Please refer to the Severe Weather Guidelines located on the Office of Emergency Management website: <https://ready.ua.edu/severe-weather-guidelines/>.

Notification of changes: The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Last Updated: 27 December 2023.

Detailed Course Schedule

Below is a required reading schedule and other materials for each class session. You are expected to review the assigned materials before class and come prepared to discuss them. All material aside from the textbook will have links on Blackboard.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1 Prelude	09 January <u>No Class.</u>	11 January <u>No Class.</u> Review the Syllabus and Course Website
2 Introduction	16 January Frantz, “Introduction”, 1-20 Herre, “In Most Countries”	18 January Frantz, “Understanding Authoritarian Politics”, 21–30.
3 Classifying authoritarian regimes	23 January Frantz, “Authoritarian Regime Types”, 64–82 Longley, “Totalitarianism, Authoritarianism, and Fascism”	25 January <u>Case Study: Benito Mussolini</u> Mussolini, <i>Dictator’s Playbook</i> Dikötter, “Mussolini” in <i>How to Be a Dictator</i> .
4 Origins	30 January Frantz, “The Authoritarian Landscape”, 31-38. Herre, “The World Has Recently Become Less Democratic”	01 February Frantz, “How Authoritarian Regimes Gain Power”, 86-102
5 Strategies for survival	06 February Frantz, “Strategies for Survival”, 112-120 Schedler, “Elections Without Democracy”	08 February <u>Case Study: Kim Il-sung</u> Kim Il-sung, <i>Dictator’s Playbook</i> Read: Dikötter, “Kim Il-sung” in <i>How to be a Dictator</i> .
6 Cult of personality	13 February Frantz, “Authoritarian Leadership”, 44-61 Wong, “The Making of the Xi Jinping Personality Cult”	15 February <u>No Class. Mental health break.</u>
7 Repression	20 February Frantz, “Strategies for Survival”, 104-111 Lachapelle, “Repression Reconsidered”	22 February <u>Case Study: Idi Amin</u> Idi Amin, <i>Dictator’s Playbook</i> Szablowski, “Roasted Goat” in <i>How to Feed a Dictator</i> .

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
8 Midterm	27 February Review session	29 February Midterm exam
9 Cooptation	05 March Costik, “Come work for me instead!” Bjarnegård and Zetterberg, “How Autocrats Weaponize Women’s Rights”	07 March <u>Case Study: Saddam Hussein</u> Saddam Hussein, <i>The Dictator’s Playbook</i> Szablowski, “Thieves’ Fish Soup” in <i>How to Feed a Dictator</i>
<i>Enjoy Spring Break (08-17 March)</i>		
10 Narrative and reputation	19 March Kelley, “Scorecard Diplomacy” Gjerløw & Knutsen, “Leaders, Private Interests, and Socially Wasteful Projects”	21 March Bush, Donno, & Zetterberg, “International Rewards for Gender Equality”
11 How authoritarian regimes fall	26 March Frantz, “How Authoritarian Regimes Fall”, 122-147	28 March <u>Case Study: Francisco Franco</u> Francisco Franco, <i>Dictator’s Playbook</i> Kendall-Taylor & Frantz, “When Dictators Die”
12 Foreign interventions	02 April Downes & Montem, “Forced to Be Free?” Nieto-Matiz & Schenoni, “Backing Despots?”	04 April <u>Case Study: Manuel Noriega</u> Manuel Noriega, <i>Dictator’s Playbook</i> Myre, “How the US Military Used Guns N’ Roses to Make a Dictator Give Up”
13 Non-violent revolution	09 April Chenoweth & Stephan, “Drop Your Weapons.” Chenoweth & Marks, “Revenge of the Patriarchs.”	11 April <u>Mental health break.</u>
14 Final Exam	16 April Review session	18 April Final exam.
15 Study Week	23 April No class. Study day.	25 April No class. Study day.

Final Exam (bonus attempt): 29 April, 10:30am-12:30pm