College of Charleston

POLITICAL SCIENCE 405.03
Capstone Seminar: The Politics of Transitional States

Dr. Guoli Liu
Spring 2012
Maybank Hall 207
Tuesday and Thursday, 12:15-1:30 pm
Office: 114 Wentworth Street, Room 103
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9-11 am
Tuesday 2-3 pm, and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This capstone seminar examines states in transition and the way that domestic political change influences a country’s foreign policy and role in the global system. A comparative analysis of China, Russia, and several others will help explore multiple theoretical perspectives on states, social revolution, democratization, and power transition. We will also examine the implications of domestic transition on foreign relations with a focus on U.S.-China relations. In this seminar, we emphasize intensive reading and writing, independent research, and application of theories and key concepts to new problems and cases. You will have the opportunity to go beyond comprehending the views of others to articulate and defend your own positions on key issues in the politics of transitional states.

The capstone seminar is designed as a culminating experience for political science majors. It should enable you to put into practice the knowledge, values and skills you have developed as political science majors. The capstone experience include: intensive reading and writing, independent research, an integrative experience, opportunity to apply theories and concepts to new problems and cases, and the opportunity to go beyond comprehending the views of others to articulate and defend one’s own views. This seminar will enhance your understanding of the multiple challenges confronting the states in transition, improve your skills of scientific political analysis, and enrich your theoretical insights on the changing reality of national and global life with a focus on democratization, modernization, and globalization.

COURSE REQUIREMENT AND GRADING POLICY

You are expected to (1) complete and study carefully all required reading; (2) address significant questions and articulate well-informed positions on key issues, (3) write an analysis paper and present your paper to the class, (4) complete a critical review, and (5) conduct independent research for a paper and present the paper to the class. You must attend all the seminars, come to every class well prepared, and participate actively and constructively in the discussion. Because of the substantial amount of reading for this seminar, I strongly encourage
everyone to start reading the required texts immediately and move ahead as quickly as possible. Please make notes of your comments and questions about the reading. We will refer to the required reading frequently in our seminar.

You will be evaluated on the basis of your performance of one analysis paper (10%) and presentation (10%), class participation including two written participation reports (20%), a critical analysis paper (10%), a research proposal with annotated bibliography (10%), the final research paper (30%) and a research presentation (10%). Careful preparation and active class participation are essential for the success of this seminar.

The most significant assignment will be your independent research project. It is designed to give you the opportunity to apply the research and writing skills you have developed as political science majors. You must go beyond what other researchers have done and conduct an original analysis. The research paper should be a serious, substantial piece of independent research (16-20 pages, double-spaced). The topic is to be chosen by you, and you are encouraged to use this opportunity to investigate an issue in which you have substantial interest. You can come see me, or email me, as often as necessary to formulate a topic and discuss the progress of your research. The proposal should indicate what question you intend to address, why the question is significant or interesting, and how you intend to answer it. The preliminary list of sources should be a fairly comprehensive bibliography. The paper is expected to be a scholarly paper, with all that the phrase entails: footnotes, bibliography, a coherent structure, and familiarity with relevant literature. It is important to cite all of your sources accurately. For all of your paper references and citations, please carefully study and follow the “Department of Political Science Guide to Referencing” (http://polisci.cofc.edu/pv_obj_cache/pv_obj_id_97D91B0FACF28A19155AD7243E3E86B2380100/filename/polscitation.pdf). Although this paper is due at the end of the semester, you will need to begin working on it immediately. Thus, there are a series of benchmarks throughout the semester to insure that you make adequate progress. A one-page research paper proposal is due by Tuesday, February 7. A research proposal with annotated bibliography is due by Tuesday, February 21. By that point in the semester you should have located most of the materials you will be using. You will present and defend your proposal in class. The draft paper is due on Tuesday, March 27. Research presentation will begin on Tuesday, April 3. The final version of the paper is due in class on Thursday, April 19. Please plan well in advance, work hard, and complete your paper on time. Late paper will be graded down one full letter grade for each day that it is late.

Due to the intensive nature of this seminar, regular attendance and participation in class is required. A class sign-up sheet will be distributed at the beginning of each class. You must come to every class on time and remain active until the end of the class. You are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences during the semester; additional absences, unless you can clearly prove personal emergencies or illnesses, will result in the loss of 2 points each additional time. This course will only work successfully if everyone attends class regularly, comes prepared, and participates in discussion. I reserve the right to call on students who do not take the initiative to involve themselves in the discussion. The readings are designed to provoke, and discussion will focus on the readings and the issues they raise. Contributions to seminar discussion should be informed by the assigned material, although you are of course encouraged to bring to discussion
knowledge, ideas, and opinions you have acquired outside the class. It is also essential that students tolerate competing views and treat each other with respect.

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Any student with a diagnosed learning or psychological disability which impedes your carrying out required course work, or which requires special accommodations, should advise me during the first two weeks of the course so we can review possible arrangements for reasonable accommodations.

Academic honesty is very important! When you enrolled in the College of Charleston, you signed the Honor Code. I expect you to abide to the code and it is the only way to maintain the integrity and value of your degree. You will fail this course if you have found to have cheated on an exam or plagiarized any portion of your paper. I will turn the case of Honor Code violation to the Honor Board and vigorously pursue further disciplinary action. Everyone must highly value academic integrity and abide to the Honor Code.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required textbooks are available from the College Bookstore. For each important topic especially for the topics that you are conducting independent research, you must go beyond our required reading to search for additional library sources. Please visit www.un.org to study basic information and key documents of the United Nations. You should spend some time navigating this site. You will find a rich set of links on many topics and issues that will help you to better understand political change and socioeconomic development in the contemporary world.


**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**


11. M. Steven Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics*. New


Additional reading especially journal articles will be assigned in class.

The following scholarly journals may provide useful resources for your independent work:

- American Political Science Review
- China Quarterly
- Comparative Politics
- Foreign Affairs
- International Organization
- International Studies Quarterly
- Journal of Contemporary China
- Journal of Politics
- Political Science Quarterly
- Asian Survey
- China Journal
- Europe-Asia Studies
- Foreign Policy
- International Security
- International Political Science Review
- Journal of Peace Research
- Perspectives on Politics
- World Politics
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Introduction
   - *Democratization*, Chapter 1.
   - Dahl, Introduction.
   - Skocpol, Chapter 1.
   - Vogel, Preface and Introduction.
   - Womack, Introduction.
   (Deadline for completing the reading, January 12)

2. Causes of Social Revolutions
   - Skocpol, Chapters 2-3.
   - Womack, Chapter 1.
   - Kissinger, Chapters 1-3.
   - Vogel, Chapter 1.
   (January 19)

3. Outcomes of Social Revolutions
   - Skocpol, Chapters 4-7, and Conclusion.
   - Womack, Chapters 2-4.
   - Kissinger, Chapters 5-7.
   - Vogel, Chapters 2-6.
   (January 24)

4. Theoretical and Historical Perspectives on Democratization
   - *Democratization*, Chapters 2-6.
   - Dahl, Chapters 1-14.
   (January 31)
   The analysis paper is due in class on January 31.

5. Causes and Dimensions of Democratization
   - *Democratization*, Chapters 7-11.
   - Dahl, Chapters 15-21.
   - *The Third Wave*, the entire book.
   (February 7)

6. Actors, Institutions, and Transformation
   - *Democratization*, Chapters 12-17.
   - Dahl, Chapters 22-23.
   (February 14)
   A research proposal with annotated bibliography is due by February 21.
7. Domestic Transition and International Relations  
Kissinger, Chapters 8-11.  
Womack, Chapters 1-4.  
Vogel, Chapters 7-12.  
(February 28)

8. Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China  
Vogel, Chapters 13-23.  
Kissinger, Chapters 12-16.  
(March 1)

**Spring break, March 3-11.**

9. Democratization in Comparative Perspectives  
*Democratization*, Chapters 19-23.  
Andrew Jack, the entire book.  
(March 13)

10. Politics, State and Society  
Kissinger, Chapters 17-18.  
Womack, Chapters 9-10.  
(March 20)

11. Inequality, Economic Growth, and Social Policy  
Womack, Chapters 5-6.  
Alfred Stepan and Juan J. Linz, “Comparative Perspectives on Inequality and the Quality of Democracy in the United States,” *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 9, no. 4 (December 2011): 841-856.  
(March 27)

**The draft research paper is due on March 27.**

12. Social, Economic, and Political Transformation  
Vogel, Chapter 24.  
Fewsmith, Chapters 1-11.  
(April 3)

**Research presentation will begin on April 3.**

**The critical review paper is due on April 5.**
13. Ecological and Resource Interaction, and Environmental Challenges
   Womack, Chapters 7-8.
   Fewsmith, Chapters 12-13.
   (April 10)

14. The Future of Transitional States
   *Democratization*, Conclusion.
   Womack, Chapter 11.
   Kissinger, Epilogue.
   (April 17)

The final research paper is due on April 19.