Course Subject, Number and Title: 
Political Science 948, Democratic Imperfections

Canvas Course URL: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/166083

Meeting Time and Location: Fall 2019, Tuesdays, 3:30-5:25pm in 422 North Hall.

Instructor Title and Name: Yoshiko M. Herrera, Professor, Department of Political Science 
https://polisci.wisc.edu/staff/yoshiko-m-herrera/

Instructor Availability: Office hours: Monday. 3:30-5:00, 316 North Hall, or by appointment.

Instructor Email/Preferred Contact: yherrera@wisc.edu

Course overview: Democracies frequently depart from their ideal type. We focus on select problems with democracy, and examine their causes and effects, and remedies for them. Topics vary from year-to-year, and include inequalities in political representation and participation, a lack of accountability and ethnic voting. This year’s class will focus on inequalities in political participation and representation.

Political equality is a normative ideal, and is thought to have positive consequences on citizens’ socio-economic outcomes such as income, health and education. As a result, many societies have sought to correct political inequality through various remedies, including electoral quotas. In this years class, we will review what political inequality is, and examine how scholars have measured it, and studied its causes, effects and remedies. Our selective examination of the literature will focus on the cutting edge of the empirical literature on inequalities in political participation and representation, and will pay close attention to issues of measurement and causal inference.
Week 1 (Sept 11) Course Introduction

Week 2 (Sept 17): What is political inequality? Do we need it? Why?

Week 3 (Sept 24): Measures

Week 4 (Oct 1): Causes—Economic inequality
**Week 5 (Oct 8): Causes—Dynasties**

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**Paper Proposal due Friday Oct 11th, 10 am on Canvas**

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**Week 6 (Oct 15): Causes—Voter Discrimination**

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**Week 7 (Oct 22): Effects—Democratization**
**Week 8 (Oct 29): Effects—The Value of a Vote**

**Week 9 (Nov 5): Effects—Descriptive representation**

**Week 10 (Nov 12): Remedies—Altering participation**
**Week 11 (Nov 19): Remedies—Information**

Dunning, Thad, Guy Grossman, Macartan Humphreys, Susan D. Hyde, Craig McIntosh, Gareth Nellis, Claire L. Adida et al. 2019. "Voter information campaigns and political accountability: Cumulative findings from a preregistered meta-analysis of coordinated trials." *Science advances* 5:7, [https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/7/eaaw2612](https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/7/eaaw2612).


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**No class on Nov 26 – Thanksgiving holiday**

**Week 12 (Dec 3): Remedies—Electoral quotas**


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**Week 13 (Dec 10): Class presentations**

**Final papers due Dec 12th at 10:00 am, on Canvas**

5 of 13
MAJOR GRADED WORK

In addition to reading, attending class, and participating in discussion, each week students will submit discussion questions. Students will also sign up for group presentations for three of the meetings, and will submit written memos for five of the meetings. The schedule for presentations and memo assignments will be set up on the first day of class. There is also a final paper proposal, final paper, and final paper presentation.

1) Reading, Discussion Questions, and Participation: (3% x 11 = 33% of final grade)

- This is a discussion-based class and active participation is essential. Mere attendance is not full participation. Active participation means being prepared by doing all of the readings for each class and thinking about the material, discussing it with other students before class, and coming to class prepared to ask and answer questions related to the course material. Students bring the readings to class in order to aid in discussion.
- I will call on a few students during each class meeting; you should be prepared to answer questions about each of the assigned readings.
- Students are expected to attend for the full class period; arriving late or leaving the room during class will result in a lowered participation grade.
- It is fine to use a tablet/laptop to take notes and access readings, but doing other computer activity unrelated to the course during class will result in a lowered participation grade.
- Each student should post one question for discussion to the course website, by 10:00 am on Tuesday. Discussion questions must be based on the course readings, be of broad interest for class discussion, and be no longer than 50 words. Students should also be able to discuss or explain the question during class.

Grading rubric for reading, discussion questions, and participation in class discussions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was attentive (did not engage in non-course-related activity, arrived late or leave during class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted a &lt;50 word question by 10:00 am which was related to readings and of broad interest for discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoke at least one time and could answer questions correctly, and could share insight into one's own discussion question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seemed in command of readings and material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively participated in discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) **Memos** (5% x 5 = 25% of final grade)
Each student will prepare a short memo based on the readings for five of the weeks. The goals are to figure out what the contribution of each reading is, to make connections between readings, and to consider what the readings might have left out or got wrong.

All memos should include the following **three paragraphs**:

1. **Highlight key contributions of each work**; this should not be merely a restatement of the abstract. Consider why the work was published, and why it was assigned.
2. **Make connections among the readings**; do not just discuss each text individually; explain how readings are related to each other, what they share or how they differ theoretically, empirically, or methodologically.
3. **Highlight a limitation or criticism in one or more works**, or the readings as a group (e.g. something left out, wrong, or that you disagree with).

Other requirements:
- All memos should discuss **all readings for the week**; be written in prose (not bullet points);
- Have a name, date, and **title**; be no longer than 1 single-spaced page (12-point font, 1-inch margins);
- **Be posted on Canvas as a PDF by 10 am on Tuesday**. Late memos marked down 1 point for every 30 minutes late; memos will not be accepted after 3:00 pm.

Memo grading rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turned in on time, meets 2-page limit, and contains a title and clearly marked subheadings; no typos or errors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key contributions were accurately identified</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism is reasonable and accurate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of most readings was integrated</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contained original or innovative analysis of readings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3) Group Presentations: (3% x 3 = 9% of final grade)
Presentations should be modeled on the role of a discussant at a professional conference. Through this activity, students will improve their presentation skills and the ability to concisely analyze, categorize, and orally discuss work in comparative politics.

- Students should work together to develop an integrated presentation; do not just divide up the reading. The structure of the presentation should be based on substantive themes or theories, rather than just dividing works arbitrarily.
- Presentation should highlight key contributions and some criticisms, and should make connections between readings.
- Slides should include a curated list of approximately 5-6 short, edited discussion questions based on questions submitted by students and the presenters own questions.
- Presentations must include all assigned readings; should not be longer than 10 minutes; and should include slides (but no more than 5 maximum).
- Presenters should engage with the class and not simply read notes.
- Group presentation dates will be set at the first class meeting. Each student will participate in three (with 2-3 other students).
- **Slides should be uploaded to Canvas by 3:00 pm on Tuesdays.**

Presentation grading rubric

| Slides looked professional: not too much text, consistent and correct fonts, sizes, etc. and no errors. Images were appropriate and not distracting. | 3 |
| Discussion questions were well-curated: clear, not too long, not redundant | 1 |
| Content: Reasonable thematic organization of readings, innovative analysis, including highlighting key contributions and criticisms | 3 |
| Delivery: Stayed within 10 minutes and presentation was engaging; made eye contact, did not read from notes or written text, clear and loud enough voice, etc. and all students spoke included all readings | 3 |

**TOTAL:** 10
4) **Final Paper:** (30% of final grade)
The goal of this assignment is nuanced engagement with the course readings, and an integrated link between your research interests and topics and readings in the course. Students will turn in a paper proposal and a final paper, and do a class presentation.

**Paper Proposal:** Causal research question and hypotheses
(2 pages), **due October 11th, 10 am** (3% of final grade)
Students should develop a causal research question related to the causes or effects of political inequality. The two-page proposal should explicitly include
1. A paper title;
2. A causal research question (what explains X, or what are the effects of X on Y);
3. A paragraph on the theoretical motivation for the question
4. Two to four numbered hypotheses, i.e. some possible answers to your question
5. A paragraph on what you expect to be your data sources
6. Bibliography for any sources cited (does not count as part of page limit).

The final paper is due on **December 12th at 10:00 am** (27% of final grade)
- The final paper should be approximately 25 double-spaced pages, excluding citations and figures. Use 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- Include a title page with your name, date, and a title.
- Use APA parenthetical citations, which include the author + year, and page # if a quotation.
- Paper sections should be labeled with sub-headings
- All parts of paper should be posted as a PDF on the course website.
- Late papers marked down 2 points for up to 24 hours late; papers not accepted after December 14th.

Final paper rubric (27% of final grade):

| Turned in on time, proper citation of sources; within the word limit, includes title and subheadings | 5 |
| Good word choice & tone; no typos or errors; | 1 |
| Clear and well-motivated research question | 1 |
| Good discussion of relevant existing literature, which motivates hypotheses | 1 |
| Good use of evidence to examine hypotheses | 1 |
| Innovation in theory, hypotheses or research design | 1 |

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Final Paper Presentations (3% of final grade):
This is an opportunity for you to share your work from the semester with your fellow students, and to develop presentation skills.

- Presentations will be in class on December 10th; slides are due by 2:30 on December 10th.
- Presentations should consist of no more than 5 slides: for example,
  1. Title slide
  2. Research question and motivation
  3. Existing literature and hypotheses
  4. Your findings and evidence
  5. Conclusions

Final Paper Presentation grading rubric

<table>
<thead>
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<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content: Research question, hypotheses, motivating literature, and findings were clear and reasonable</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery: Stayed within time limit and presentation was engaging; made eye contact, did not read too much from notes or written text, clear and loud enough voice, etc.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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GRADING

Summary of course requirements and grading (see details below)

1. Reading, preparation, and participation in class (3% x 11) 33%
2. Memos (5% x 5) 25%
3. Group presentations (3% x 3) 9%
4. Final Paper including proposal (3% + 27%) 30%
5. Final Paper presentation 3%

Absence and Make-up Policy

Absences will be excused due to religious conflicts, medical issues, or university-related business. Make-up policy for excused absences:

1. Absence must be excused: Contact me by email as soon as possible if you anticipate missing a class or assignment. I will confirm in writing that the absence is excused. If you do not contact me, and I do not confirm, the absence is considered "not-excused", the missed class will be counted as F (0 points), and no late work will be accepted.

2. With excused absence, missed class participation will be excluded from final grade total (no grade for that day, e.g. there will be only 12 rather than 13 grades for class participation).

3. Online discussion questions and memos must be submitted online by normal due date, unless the reason for the excused absence precludes doing the online work by the normal deadline (e.g. medical emergency). In this case, memos and discussion questions will be accepted up to a week beyond the deadline, but they are due at 10 am on the following Monday.

4. If you anticipate missing a class where you are signed up for a presentation, you should switch beforehand if possible.

5. Policy for missing more than 3 classes: Missing more than 3 classes, even if excused, will result in a 5% reduction in points for the final grade. This reflects the fact that this is a discussion seminar and class participation is important to learning outcomes.

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OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Description from the Guide: [http://guide.wisc.edu/courses/poli_sci/](http://guide.wisc.edu/courses/poli_sci/):
Research seminar on specific topics in comparative politics.

**Requisites:** Graduate or professional standing

**Course Designations and Attributes:** Seminar
Grad 50% - Counts toward 50% graduate coursework requirement

**Instructional Mode:** Classroom instruction, all face-to-face

**Credits:** 3

**How Credit Hours are met by the Course:**
Traditional Carnegie Definition – This class meets for one 115-minute class period each week over the spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, studying, etc.) for about 8 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes more information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Course Learning Outcomes:**
Learning outcomes for this course correspond to the five Political Science B.A. Learning Outcomes [http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/political-science/political-science-ba/#learningoutcomestext]:

1. Develop an understanding of and appreciation for the methods and approaches of diverse subfields in Political Science—American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory—and their relevance to important theoretical and pragmatic questions.
2. Analyze different forms and practices of governance both democratic and non-democratic.
3. Argue effectively and defend propositions with intellectual integrity, while considering a range of alternative points of view and evidence.
4. Analyze relations among individuals, civil society, political institutions, and states.
5. Analyze the motivations and consequences of political decision-making and activities.

Also: Develop theoretically grounded and testable hypotheses about the causes and effects of, and remedies for, inequalities in political representation and participation. Formulate and implement clear research designs to evaluate hypotheses.

**HOMEWORK & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS**

See above under "EXAMS, QUIZZES, PAPERS & OTHER MAJOR GRADED WORK "

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK, SOFTWARE & OTHER COURSE MATERIALS**

Most readings are available online via the library or will be on the course website

**RULES, RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

See the Guide’s to Rules, Rights, and Responsibilities:
[http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#rulesrightsandresponsibilitiestext]
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.”
http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Institutional statement on diversity: “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” https://diversity.wisc.edu/