

Political Economy of Democratic Backsliding

Felix Dwinger

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E-mail: Felix.Dwinger@iast.fr

Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4pm

Office: T.475

Web: felixdwinger.com

Time: tba

Venue: tba

Course Description

Why do democracies backslide? What are contexts conducive to democratic backsliding? How do democratically elected incumbents undermine democratic institutions from within? How to counter democratic backsliding? In this graduate seminar, we review the current literature on democratic backsliding. Our focus is upon contemporary political economy research, both theoretically and empirically. The general idea is to assess where the literature currently stands. At the same time, we identify gaps in the literature and directions for future work.

The course has three main goals. Its *substantive goal* is to familiarize students with frontier theoretical arguments and empirical evidence pertaining to central questions about democratic backsliding. Its *methodological goal* is to expose students to a variety of methodological approaches used in cutting-edge research. This exposure is to encourage and empower students to implement sound and modern research designs for their own projects. Its *professionalization goal* is to expose students to the academic processes of writing reviews, developing research designs, and writing papers.

Prerequisites

Students are expected to have solid foundations in *Comparative Politics* or *Political Economy* and *Quantitative Methods*. First exposure to *Game Theory* is advantageous but not

required.

The following book is recommended but not required as a methodological background reading in preparation for this course:

Ashworth, Scott, Christopher R. Berry, & Ethan Bueno de Mesquita. 2021. *Theory and Credibility: Integrating Theoretical and Empirical Social Science*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

This is a gentle introduction to game theory:

Gehlbach, Scott. 2022. *Formal Models of Domestic Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Course Requirements

1. **Class Discussion & Participation (20%).** You will be expected to have completed all required readings before class to the point where you can be called on to critique or defend any reading. You are also expected to be engaged in class discussions.
2. **Response Notes ($2 \times 10\% = 20\%$).** You are required to write two reading response notes (max. 2 pages) over the course of the term. Response papers should be uploaded to a shared dropbox folder two days before our class meetings. Response notes should engage the debates presented in one of the readings for the week. They are considered thought pieces and will be used to help structure class discussions. Responses notes should summarize in an opening paragraph the core arguments and findings of the discussed paper(s); highlight 1-2 major contributions of the piece; critique key aspects of the theoretical argument or empirical results. Ideally, a good response note also identifies possible extensions for future work and how the week's papers complement and relate to each other. Response notes mimic journal reviews and are thus important for professionalization.
3. **Research Proposal (20%).** Towards the end of the course, you are expected to write a research proposal for an empirical or theoretical paper (about 2-3 pages). Research proposals are due before week 14, and will be circulated and discussed in class in the last two sessions. Ideally, this research proposal builds the foundation of your research paper (see below). You are expected to propose a research question and situate it in the existing literature. Your project can be either empirical or theoretical (or both). For an empirical project, you should describe the data and research design to be used. You should discuss main challenges to identification and the substantive meaning of the estimands of interest. For theoretical work, i.e. a formal model, you should discuss the basic features of the environment and the model parameters. You are also expected to formulate expectations about your theory's main results.

4. **Research Paper (40%).** You are to write an original research paper (max. 9000 words incl. references). Research papers typically contain
- (a) a clear and concise research question;
 - (b) a theoretical argument;
 - (c) an empirical test of that argument; and
 - (d) a brief discussion of the findings.

The theoretical argument can be developed in a formal model. Please approach your instructor early on if you intend doing so. In that case, the paper's empirical scope is expected to be narrower than in a genuine empirical paper. In general, the empirical part does not have to be "quantitative". But it must constitute a genuine test of your argument.

Logistics

Office Hours

Please sign up to office hours. Office hours are the time I have set aside to focus on you. Even if you don't have specific questions, a good office hour discussion could help clear up any confusion you might have on a topic.

Communication

To ensure my ability to respond to all student emails in a timely fashion, please be sure to check the course syllabus and platform thoroughly for answers to any questions. Students can typically expect a response to an email inquiry within two workdays. I do not typically respond to emails in the evenings, on weekends, or on holidays. I do not respond to unprofessional or rude emails.

Etiquette

Our class is based on mutual respect. Please be considerate of your fellow students and instructor. Any communications and interactions with your instructor and classmates should be courteous and professional.

Children

If you are breastfeeding or simply can't find childcare, feel free to bring your baby or toddler to class. We'll make it work.

Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs are encouraged to discuss special accommodations that may be needed for successful participation in this course. Moreover, the [Bureau UT Handicap](#) accommodates students with special needs and supports them throughout student life.

Religious Accommodation

Please notify me at our first session or one month in advance of a given date if you require any accommodation regarding conflicts of religious obligations with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations.

Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. “Cheating” and “plagiarism” will result in severe disciplinary action on the part of the instructor. Either offense will be grounds for receiving a failing grade on the assignment and possibly the entire course, depending on the severity of the offense.

Use of Generative AI Tools

Academic integrity is our core principle. It is critical that all students uphold it—whether using AI-based tools or otherwise. A responsible use of AI-based tools in completing coursework or assessments must thus be done in accordance with these conditions:

1. You must clearly identify the use of AI-based tools in your work. Any work that uses AI-based tools must be clearly marked as such, including the specific tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT-5, you must cite: ChatGPT-5. [YYYY, Month DD of query]. “Text of your query.” Generated using OpenAI: chat.openai.com.
2. You must be transparent in how you use any AI-based tool, including what work is your original contribution. An AI detector, such as [GPTZero](#), may be used to detect AI-driven work.
3. You must ensure your use of AI-based tools does not violate any copyright or intellectual property laws.
4. You must not use AI-based tools to cheat on assessments.
5. You must not use AI-based tools to plagiarize without citation.

Violations of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our academic integrity policy. If you are found in violation of this policy, you may face penalties such as a reduction in grade, failure of the assignment or assessment, or even failure of the entire

course. Finally, it's your responsibility to be aware of the academic integrity policy and take the necessary steps to ensure that your use of AI-based tools is in compliance with this policy. If you have questions, please speak with me first, as we navigate together how to best use these tools in a responsible manner.

Course Schedule

I. Democratic Backsliding Across the Globe

Week 01, 04/08 - 04/12: Bird Eye's View

Learning objectives:

- You are familiar with different approaches to measure democratic backsliding.
- You can critically discuss and compare the individual advantages & weaknesses of these approaches.

Required reading materials:

- Baron, Hannah et al. 2024. "An Events-Based Approach to Understanding Democratic Erosion." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 208-215.
- Knutsen, Carl Henrik et al. 2024. "Conceptual and Measurement Issues in Assessing Democratic Backsliding." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 162-177.
- Little, Andrew T. & Anne Meng. 2024. "Measuring Democratic Backsliding." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 149-161.
- Little, Andrew T. & Anne Meng. 2024. "What We Do and Do Not Know about Democratic Backsliding." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 224-229.

Recommended reading materials:

- Bergeron-Boutin, Olivier et al. 2024. "Expert Bias and Democratic Erosion: Assessing Expert Perceptions of Contemporary American Democracy." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 184-193.
- Miller, Michael K. 2024. "How Little and Meng's Objective Approach Fails in Democracies." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 202-207.
- Treisman, Daniel. 2024. "Psychological Biases and Democratic Anxiety: A Comment on Little and Meng (2023 [2024])." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 194-197.
- Weitzel, Daniel et al. 2024. "Measuring Backsliding with Observables: Observable-to-Subjective Score Mapping." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 57(2): 216-223.

Week 02, 04/15 - 04/19: Illustrative Cases of Democratic Backsliding

Learning objectives:

- You are familiar with the contexts and sequences of prominent cases of democratic backsliding.
- You can identify the most important players, their strategies, and key interactions per each case.

Required reading materials:

- Grillo, Edoardo et al. 2024. "Theories of Democratic Backsliding." *Annual Review of Political Science* 27(1): 381-400.
- Roberts, Kenneth M. et al. 2025. "Global Challenges to Democracy: Backsliding, Resiliency, and Democratic Theory." In: Bunce, Valerie J. et al. Eds. *Global Challenges to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives on Backsliding, Autocracy, and Resilience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 7-32.
- Svobik, Milan W. 2014. "Which Democracies Will Last? Coups, Incumbent Takeovers, and the Dynamic of Democratic Consolidation." *British Journal of Political Science* 45(4): 715-738.

Recommended reading materials:

- Arat, Yesim & Şevket Pamuk. 2019. *Turkey: Between Democracy and Authoritarianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - Bill, Stanley & Ben Stanley. 2025. *Good Change: The Rise and Fall of Poland's Illiberal Revolution*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.
 - Corrales, Javier & Michael Penfold-Becerra. 2015. *Dragon in the Tropics: The Legacy of Hugo Chávez*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
 - Lendvai, Paul. 2017. *Orbán: Europe's New Strongman*. London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd.
 - Levitsky, Steven & Daniel Ziblatt. 2017. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown.
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II. Contexts Conducive to Democratic Backsliding

Week 03, 04/22 - 04/26: Electoral Competitiveness

Learning objectives:

- You are familiar with the concept of electoral competitiveness.
- You can identify potential tensions between electoral competitiveness and democratic rules & norms, and their importance for democratic stability.

Required reading materials:

- Helmke, Gretchen, Mary Kroeger, & Jack Paine. 2022. "Democracy by Deterrence: Norms, Constitutions, and Electoral Tilting." *American Journal of Political Science* 66(2): 434-450.
- Miller, Michael K. 2021. "A Republic, If You Can Keep It: Breakdown and Erosion in Modern Democracies." *The Journal of Politics* 83(1): 198-213.

Recommended reading materials:

- Cronert, Alex & Pär Nyman. 2021. "A General Approach to Measuring Electoral Competitiveness for Parties and Governments." *Political Analysis* 29(3): 337-355.
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Week 04, 04/29 - 05/03: Polarization

Learning objectives:

- You understand the policy-vs-democracy dilemma in polarized societies.
- You are familiar with the concept of affective polarization.

Required reading materials:

- Broockman, David E., Joshua L. Kalla, & Sean J. Westwood. 2023. "Does Affective Polarization Undermine Democratic Norms or Accountability? Maybe Not." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(3): 808-828.
- Graham, Mathew & Milan W. Svobik. 2020. "Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 114(2): 392-409.
- Iyengar, Shanto et al. 2019. "The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22(1): 129-146.

- Laebens, Melis G. & Aykut Öztürk. 2021. "Partisanship and Autocratization: Polarization, Power Asymmetry, and Partisan Social Identities in Turkey." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(2): 245-279.

Recommended reading materials:

- Chiopris, Caterina, Monika Nalepa, & Georg Vanberg. "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Citizen Uncertainty and Democratic Backsliding." *The Journal of Politics* 87(4): 1272–1287.
- Svobik, Milan W. 2020. "When Polarization Trumps Civic Virtue: Partisan Conflicts and the Subversion of Democracy by Incumbents." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 15(1): 3-31.
- Grossman, Guy et al. 2022. "The Majoritarian Threat to Liberal Democracy." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 9: 36-45.

Week 05, 05/06 - 05/10: Democratic Values

Learning objectives:

- You are familiar with the benefits & pitfalls of democratic values for democracy.
- You can explain how & when firm democratic values erode.

Required reading materials:

- Chiopris, Caterina, Monika Nalepa, & Georg Vanberg. 2025. "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Citizen Uncertainty and Democratic Backsliding." *The Journal of Politics* 87(4): 1272–1287.
- Clayton, Katherine et al. 2021. "Elite Rhetoric Can Undermine Democratic Norms." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118(23), DOI: [10.1073/pnas.2024125118](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2024125118).
- Valentim, Vicente. 2024. *The Normalization of the Radical Right: A Norms Theory of Political Supply and Demand*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-77.
- Wunsch, Natasha, Marc S. Jacob, & Laurenz Derksen. 2025. "The Demand Side of Democratic Backsliding: How Divergent Understandings of Democracy Shape Political Choice." *British Journal of Political Science* 55, DOI: [10.1017/S0007123424000711](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123424000711).

Recommended reading materials:

- Broockman, David E. & Daniel M. Butler. 2017. "The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(1): 208-221.

- Helmke, Gretchen & Josiah Rath. 2025. "Defining and Measuring Democratic Norms." *Annual Review of Political Science* 28: 233-251.
 - Miller, Michael K. 2021. "A Republic, If You Can Keep It: Breakdown and Erosion in Modern Democracies." *The Journal of Politics* 83(1): 198-213.
 - Valentim, Vicente. 2021. "Parliamentary Representation and the Normalization of Radical Right Support." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(14): 2475-2511.
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III. Democratic Backsliding as Strategic Choice

Week 06, 05/13 - 05/17: Stealth

Learning objectives:

- You can identify typical sequences of democratic backsliding.
- You can critically assess the importance of stealth for democratic backsliding.

Required reading materials:

- Chiopris, Caterina, Monika Nalepa, & Georg Vanberg. "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Citizen Uncertainty and Democratic Backsliding." *The Journal of Politics* 87(4): 1272-1287.
- Luo, Zhaotian & Adam Przeworski. 2023. "Democracy and Its Vulnerabilities: Dynamics of Democratic Backsliding." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 18(1): 105-130.
- Svobik, Milan W. 2013. "Learning to Love Democracy: Electoral Accountability and the Success of Democracy." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 685-702.
- Yeung, Eddy S. F. 2025. "Dynamic Democratic Backsliding." *British Journal of Political Science* 55, DOI: [10.1017/S0007123425100847](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123425100847).

Recommended reading materials:

- Grillo, Edoardo & Carlo Prato. 2023. "Reference Points and Democratic Backsliding." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(1): 71-88.
 - Grillo, Edoardo et al. 2024. "Theories of Democratic Backsliding." *Annual Review of Political Science* 27(1): 381-400.
 - Przeworski, Adam. 2019. *Crises of Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 172-191.
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Week 07, 05/20 - 05/24: Exploiting Fears

Learning objectives:

- You can explain how & when politicians can exploit the liberty-security tradeoff for political gains.
- You are familiar with other mechanisms through which politicians can exploit fears, notably norm violations and the concerns with economic prosperity.

Required reading materials:

- Dinas, Elias et al. 2019. "Waking Up the Golden Dawn: Does Exposure to the Refugee Crisis Increase Support for Extreme-Right Parties?" *Political Analysis* 27(2): 244-254.
- Gratton, Gabriele & Barton E. Lee. 2024. "Liberty, Security, and Accountability: The Rise and Fall of Illiberal Democracies." *The Review of Economic Studies* 91(1): 340-371.
- Grillo, Edoardo & Carlo Prato. 2023. "Reference Points and Democratic Backsliding." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(1): 71-88.
- Neundorf, Anja et al. 2026. "Elections Without Constraints? The Appeal of Electoral Autocracy Across the World." *British Journal of Political Science* 56, DOI: [0.1017/S0007123425101129](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123425101129).

Recommended reading materials:

- Gessler, Theresa & Lea Kaftan. 2025. "Communicating Democratic Subversions to Citizens." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 35(1): 89-101.
- Gessler, Theresa & Sophia Hunger. 2022. "How Refugee Crisis and Radical Right Parties Shape Party Competition on Immigration." *Political Science Research and Methods* 10(3): 524-544.
- Gessler, Theresa, Gergő Tóth, & Johannes Wachs. 2022. "No Country for Asylum Seekers? How Short-Term Exposure to Refugees Influences Attitudes and Voting Behavior in Hungary." *Political Behavior* 44: 1813-1841.

Week 08, 05/27 - 05/31: Identity Propaganda

Learning objectives:

- You can critically assess the relevance of social identities for democracy.

- You can explain how & when politicians can activate social identities to undermine democracy.

Required reading materials:

- Braley, Alia et al. 2023. "Why Voters Who Value Democracy Participate in Democratic Backsliding." *Nature Human Behavior* 7: 1282-1293.
- Gennaioli, Nicola & Guido Tabellini. 2025. "Presidential Address: Identity Politics." *Econometrica* 93(6): 1937-1967.
- Horz, Carlo M. 2024. "Identity Propaganda." *British Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 313-338.
- Mason, Lilliana, Julie Wronski, & John V. Kane. 2021. "Activating Animus: The Uniquely Social Roots of Trump Support." *American Political Science Review* 115(4): 1508-1516.

Recommended reading materials:

- Cirone, Alexandra. 2025. "Is Democracy Broken? Disinformation Wants You to Think That It Is." In: Bunce, Valerie J. et al. Eds. *Global Challenges to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives on Backsliding, Autocracy, and Resilience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 215-232.
- Haas, Violeta I. et al. 2025. "The Electoral Effects of State-Sponsored Anti-LGBTQ Measures." *The Journal of Politics* DOI: [10.1086/739782](https://doi.org/10.1086/739782).
- Noury, Abdul & Gerard Roland. 2020. "Identity Politics and Populism in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23: 421-439.
- Ziblatt, Daniel, Hanno Hilbig, & Daniel Bischof. 2024. "Wealth of Tongues: Why Peripheral Regions Vote for the Radical Right in Germany." *American Political Science Review* 118(3): 1480-1496.

IV. Countering Democratic Backsliding

Week 09, 06/03 - 06/07: Voters

Learning objectives:

- You know the potential & constraints of voters to constitute a democratic check.
- You can critically assess the extent to which acceptance of undemocratic actions is deliberate as opposed to a consequence of motivated reasoning or heterogeneity in democratic ideals.

Required reading materials:

- Gessler, Theresa & Natasha Wunsch. 2025. "A New Regime Divide? Democratic Backsliding, Attitudes towards Democracy and Affective Polarization." *European Journal of Political Research* 64(4): 1593-1617.
- Jacob, Marc S. 2025. "Citizens as a Democratic Safeguard? The Sequence of Sanctioning Elite Attacks on Democracy." *American Journal of Political Science* 69(2): 455-470.
- Krishnarajan, Suthan. 2023. "Rationalizing Democracy: The Perceptual Bias and (Un)Democratic Behavior" *American Political Science Review* 117(2): 474-496.
- Werner, Hannah, Eri Bertsou, & Sofie Marien. 2025. "From Losers' Consent to Winners' Restraint: Citizens Reactions to Accumulating Democratic Violations." *Political Behavior* 47: 1527-1550.

Recommended reading materials:

- Bisgaard, Martin. 2019. "How Getting the Facts Right Can Fuel Partisan-Motivated Reasoning." *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4): 824-839.
- Frederiksen, Kristian Vreede Skaaning. 2022. "Does Competence Make Citizens Tolerate Undemocratic Behavior?" *American Political Science Review* 116(3): 1147-1153.
- Hsieh, Chang-Tai et al. 2011. "The Price of Political Opposition: Evidence from Venezuela's 'Maisanta'." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 3(2): 196-214.
- Peterson, Erik & Shanto Iyengar. 2021. "Partisan Gaps in Political Information and Information-Seeking Behavior: Motivated Reasoning or Cheerleading?" *American Journal of Political Science* 65(1): 133-147.
- Svobik, Milan W. 2023. "Voting Against Autocracy." *World Politics* 75(4): 647-691.

Week 10, 06/10 - 06/14: Spring Break

Week 11, 06/17 - 06/21: Checks & BalancesLearning objectives:

- You can critically assess the concept of horizontal accountability.
- You can explain how the relationship between institutional checks & balances and public opinion affects democratic stability.

Required reading materials:

- Bartels, Brandon L., Jeremy Horowitz, & Eric Kramon. 2023. "Can Democratic Principles Protect High Courts from Partisan Backlash? Public Reactions to the Kenyan Supreme Court's Role in the 2017 Election Crisis." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(3): 790-807.
- Cella, Lautaro et al. 2025. "Building Tolerance for Backsliding by Trash-Talking Democracy: Theory and Evidence From Mexico." *Comparative Political Studies*, DOI: [10.1177/00104140251328024](https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140251328024).
- Laebens, Melis G. & Anna Lührmann. 2021. "What Halts Democratic Erosion? The Changing Role of Accountability." *Democratization* 28(5): 908-928.
- Staton, Jeffrey, Christopher Reenock, & Jordan Holsinger. 2022. *Can Courts Be Bulwarks of Democracy?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended reading materials:

- Bischof, Daniel & Markus Wagner. 2019. "Do Voters Polarize When Radical Parties Enter Parliament?" *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4): 888-904.
- Graham, Benjamin A.T., Michael K. Miller, & Kaare W. Strøm. 2017. "Safeguarding Democracy: Powersharing and Democratic Survival." *American Political Science Review* 111(4): 686-704.
- Howell, William G., Kenneth Shepsle, & Stephane Wolton. 2023. "Executive Absolutism: The Dynamics of Authority Acquisition in a System of Separated Powers." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 18(2): 243-275.
- Sadurski, Wojciech. 2020. "Constitutional Design: Lessons from Poland's Democratic Backsliding." *Constitutional Studies* 6(1): 59-80.
- Şaşmaz, Aytuğ, Alper H. Yağci, & Daniel Ziblatt. 2022. "How Voters Respond to Presidential Assaults on Checks and Balances: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Turkey." *Comparative Political Studies* 55(11): 1947-1980.

Week 12, 06/24 - 06/28: Civil SocietyLearning objectives:

- You can critically assess the role of civil society for democratic stability.
- You can explain how & when civic education maintains democratic norms.

Required reading materials:

- Beissinger, Mark R. 2025. "Civil Society Resistance to Democratic Backsliding." In: Bunce, Valerie J. et al. Eds. *Global Challenges to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives on Backsliding, Autocracy, and Resilience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 196-214.
- Dahlum, Sirianne et al. *Forthcoming*. "Is Support for Authoritarian Rule Contagious? Evidence from Field and Survey Experiments." *American Journal of Political Science*, DOI: [CESifo Working Paper No. 11490].
- Eroğlu, Melek Hilal et al. 2025. "Choosing Democracy Over Party? How Civic Education Can Mitigate the Anti-Democratic Effects of Partisan Polarization." *British Journal of Political Science* 55, DOI: [10.1017/S000712342500016X](https://doi.org/10.1017/S000712342500016X).
- Jakli, Laura, Béla Greskovits, & Jason Wittenberg. 2025. "Asymmetric Mass Mobilization and the Vincibility of Democracy in Hungary." *Comparative Political Studies*, DOI: [10.1177/00104140241312093](https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140241312093).

Recommended reading materials:

- Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World Politics* 49(3): 401-429.
 - Chyzh, Olga V. & Elena Labzina. 2018. "Bankrolling Repression? Modeling Third-Party Influence on Protests and Repression." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(2): 312-324.
 - Finkel, Steven E., Anja Neundorf, & Ericka Rascón-Ramirez. 2024. "Can Online Civic Education Induce Democratic Citizenship? Experimental Evidence from a New Democracy." *American Journal of Political Science* 68(2): 613-630.
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Week 13, 07/01 - 07/05: Opposition & Incumbent PartiesLearning objectives:

- You can critically assess the role of political parties for democratic stability.

- You are familiar with party strategies that facilitate, promote, or counter democratic backsliding.

Required reading materials:

- Auerbach, Kiran Rose & Jennifer Kartner. 2023. "How Do Political Parties Capture New Democracies? Hungary and North Macedonia in Comparison" *East European Politics and Societies* 37(2): 538-562.
- Gamboa, Laura. 2022. *Resisting Backsliding: Opposition Strategies against the Erosion of Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-97.
- Grumbach, Jacob M. 2023. "Laboratories of Democratic Backsliding." *American Political Science Review* 117(3): 967-984.
- Valentim, Vicente, Elias Dinas, & Daniel Ziblatt. 2025. "How Mainstream Politicians Erode Norms." *British Journal of Political Science* 55, DOI: [10.1017/S0007123425100586](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123425100586).

Recommended reading materials:

- Arriola, Leonardo R., Jed DeVardo, & Anne Meng. 2021. "Democratic Subversion: Elite Cooptation and Opposition Fragmentation." *American Political Science Review* 115(4): 1358-1372.
- Auerbach, Kiran Rose. 2022. "Accountable to Whom? How Strong Parties Subvert Local Democratic Institutions." *Party Politics* 28(5): 865-878.
- Frey, Anderson, Gabriel López-Moctezuma, & Sergio Montero. 2023. "Sleeping with the Enemy: Effective Representation under Dynamic Electoral Competition." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(4): 915-931.
- Valentim, Vicente. 2024. *The Normalization of the Radical Right: A Norms Theory of Political Supply and Demand*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

V. Discussion

Week 14, 07/08 - 07/12: Discussion of Research Proposals I

Week 15, 07/15 - 07/19: Discussion of Research Proposals II
