

POLS-P 303

CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY

Prof. Bielasiak

First eight weeks only

more time for end of semester exams and job applications!

MW 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM GA 1134



Can any country become a democracy, or are certain preconditions necessary? Why do some democracies succeed, while others break down and return to dictatorial politics? Is democracy in crisis around the world today? The course examines the principles, institutions and challenges of democracies around the world. We start with: what is democracy? We turn to preconditions -- are economic growth, or civic culture, or foreign influence necessary for democracy? Or can democracy be crafted in inhospitable situations? Next, we consider different institutional mechanisms: pluralism and consensus democracy, presidential and parliamentary governments, multi or two-party systems. We conclude by examining contemporary challenges to democracy, such as populism, illiberalism, and personalism. Requirements include participation in class discussion, in-class and homework written assignments, and two exams.

COLL (CASE) S&H Breadth of Inquiry credit