

PS401: Political Inequality—Measures, Causes, Effects and Remedies
Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Fall 2015

Class time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2:15pm in Humanities 1217
Professor: Rikhil R. Bhavnani
Office hours: Thursdays, 2:30-4:30pm in 312 North Hall. To ensure that I can see everyone, please sign up in advance at <https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/DxXsyyez.html>.
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Course overview: Political equality is a normative ideal, and is thought to have positive consequences on people's 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 course, we will review what political inequality is, and examine how scholars have measured it, and studied its causes, effects and remedies. The course will focus on inequalities in political participation and representation.

Assignments and grading: The final class grade will be based on:

- Class attendance and participation, for 15% of the class grade. Questions and discussion are encouraged. Exams will draw heavily on materials covered in lecture.
- A presentation of a "political inequality audit" of a randomly assigned country, for 15% of the grade. Audits will be conducted by groups of 3-5 students, and must reflect the concerted effort of all group members. Presentations should, in 20 minutes, provide an overview of glaring political inequalities in the assigned country, and an assessment of the causes and effects, and remedies for, one particularly acute inequality.
- An in-class midterm, for 35 % of the class grade.
- A final exam, for 35% of the class grade.

Disabilities: Students needing special accommodations to enable full participation in this course should contact me during the first week of class. All information will remain confidential. You may, in addition to contacting me, contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (www.mcburney.wisc.edu) at 1305 Linden Drive and 608.263.2741 regarding questions about campus policies and services.

Class plan (subject to modification):

Class 1 (9/8): Introductions, course logistics, what is political inequality?, 1

- Verba, Sidney. 2001. "Thoughts About Political Equality: What Is It? Why Do We Want It?" Harvard University.

Class 2 (9/10): What is political inequality?, 2

- Dovi, Suzanne. 2011. "Political Representation." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. N. Zalta.

Class 3 (9/15): Measures of political inequality

- Miller, Warren E., and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *The American Political Science Review* 57 (1):45-56.

The Causes of Political Inequality

Class 4 (9/17): Regime type

- Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.

Class 5 (9/22): Movie—Suffragettes

- Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. 1848. "Declaration of Sentiments."

Class 6 (9/24): Disenfranchisement

- Uggen, Christopher, Mischelle Van Brakle, and Heather McLaughlin. 2009. "Punishment and Social Exclusion: National Differences in Prisoner Disenfranchisement." In *Criminal Disenfranchisement in an International Perspective*, ed. A. Ewald and B. Rottinghaus. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Class 7 (9/29): The electoral system

- Norris, Pippa. 1997. "Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems." *International Political Science Review* 18 (3):297-312.

Class 8 (10/1): Malapportionment

- Ansolabehere, Stephen, and James M. Snyder. 2008. *The End of Inequality*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapter 3.

Class 9 (10/6): Differential participation

- G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 1986. "American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." *The American Political Science Review* 80 (1):17-43.

Class 10 (10/8): Prejudice

- Highton, Benjamin. 2011. "Prejudice Rivals Partisanship and Ideology When Explaining the 2008 Presidential Vote across the States." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44 (03):530-5.
- Also watch www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders.html

Class 11 (10/13): Economic inequality

- Bartels, Larry M. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chapter 9.

Class 12 (10/15): Review

Class 13 (10/20): Part 1 Exam

The Effects of Political Inequality

Class 14 (10/22): Of regime type

- Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5.

Class 15 (10/27): Of gender inequality

- Miller, Grant. 2008. "Women's Suffrage, Political Responsiveness, and Child Survival in American History." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123 (3):1287-327.

Class 16 (10/29): Case study—Taxation

- Bartels, Larry M. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chapter 7.

Class 17 (11/3): Case study—The welfare state

- Alesina, Alberto, Edward Glaeser, and Bruce Sacerdote. 2001. "Why Doesn't the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State?" *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 2001 (2):187-254.

Class 18 (11/5): Case study—The financial crisis

- Rajan, Raghuram. 2010. *Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Introduction.

Class 19 (11/10): Political inequality audits, 1

Class 20 (11/12): Political inequality audits, 2

Class 21 (11/17): Political inequality audits, 3

Class 22 (11/19): Political inequality audits, 4

Remedies for Political Inequality

Class 23 (11/24): Foreign aid

- Finkel, Steven E., Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Mitchell A. Seligson. 2007. "The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003." *World Politics* 59:404-39.

Class 24 (12/1): Non-partisan redistricting

- Ansolabehere, Stephen, and James M. Snyder. 2008. *The End of Inequality*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapter 11.
- Stephanopoulos, Nicholas. 2011. "How to Halt Gerrymandering." In *The New Republic*.

Class 25 (12/3): Movie—Gerrymandering

- Play the game at <http://www.redistrictinggame.org/index.php?pg=game>

Class 26 (12/8): Quotas

- Duflo, Esther. 2004. "Why Political Reservations?": MIT.
- Bhavnani, Rikhil R. 2009. "Do Electoral Quotas Work After They Are Withdrawn? Evidence from a Natural Experiment in India." *The American Political Science Review* 103 (1):23-35.

Class 27 (12/10): Conclusions and review

Class 28 (12/15): Part 2 Exam