Purpose of the Course

This is an advanced undergraduate class on a special topic: Human rights and democracy. If you have taken a special topics class previously, you can still get credit for taking another one. This one is about the process of developing a democracy in the aftermath of gross human rights violations. It is about the relationship between the development of democracy and a recent past that was cruel, inhumane, authoritarian and extreme. How is it possible for democracy to develop under such circumstances? What kinds of questions must citizens and leaders face in constructing their new society? What choices do they have and what constraints inhibit their choices? What tradeoffs do they see between different alternatives. Is democracy possible after such a past and what will it look like? These are the questions of this course.

While the course covers more Latin American countries than it does countries from any other region, the course is not only about Latin America. The problem of developing democracy in the aftermath of human rights violations is a problem Latin America shares with Europe and Africa. In addition to studying Chile, El Salvador and Argentina we will also study Germany, Spain and South Africa. All of these countries have tried to construct a democracy in the aftermath of gross human rights violations and all have had different levels of success in that effort. All of these countries faced the questions listed above when they moved toward democracy.

Requirements

We will have two essay exams in this course, during the course of the semester and one final think paper. Each of the two exams is worth 25% of your grade; the final think paper is worth 40% of your grade. Class attendance and participation will count for 10% of your grade.

Required books and Coursepack

The first readings for this course are from the Coursepack: The Morality of Truth Commissions, Two section, pp 3-67 and 189-210, about 87 pages.

You can buy a hard copy coursepack or an epack (your preference). The hard copy allows you to make notes on the pages. The epack: can be ordered online from Target Copy. Go to the Target Copy website. Go to the Coursepacks feature on Target website, write in the course number and the pack will come up.. You pay by a credit card. The cost is $24 plus tax.

Books: Purchase on line or use Reserve list at Smathers West.
2010

Class date Reading
January 5 first class: pass out syllabus
January 7 coursepack materials from Target Copy about 87 pages, see instructions above

Part I: Germany
Europe: The first human rights trials
January 14 Frei, entire book
January 19-21 finish Frei
January 26 review for first essay exam; Essay exam # 1 here

Part II: Latin America
Latin America: Three examples of varying degrees of success
January 12 no class, Southern Political Science Association meeting
January 28 – February 4 Argentina: Read Anderson, 2010, Chap 3 and Anderson, unpublished ms, Democracy by Institutions, Chap 3 (on reserve)
February 9- 18 Chile: Read Collins, entire book
March 1- 3 Spring Break
March 8 review Latin American cases and Second Essay exam on Latin American cases

Part III: South Africa
A Leading African Example
March 10 -22 South Africa: Read Wood, 2000 and Wilson, entire book

Part IV: A Return to Europe: The Case of Spain
March 24 - April 9 Encarnacion, entire book
April 14-16 Overview of cases, Summary, Prepare for Final Think Paper
April 19 Final Think Paper due