Course Overview: There has been a resurgence of interest in civil society in recent decades, and references to civil society have become commonplace in daily discourse. This renewed interest in a concept that languished for decades stems from several sources, but by far the most important is the annus mirabilis—1989, when the countries of Central and Eastern Europe emerged from half a century of Soviet occupation. Although civil society was more the beneficiary than the engine of change in 1989, it was widely believed that civil society had played a major role in hastening the demise of Soviet rule.

As a working definition, we define civil society as the mélange of autonomous groups and associations that serve as a buffer between citizen and state, which practice civility and accept the state as the appropriate domain for political contestation. Less important in the popular view, though more fully theorized, is the growth of civil society in transitions from authoritarianism to democratization. In a number of cases from Latin America and southern Europe, elements from civil society have lent impetus to democratic reform by articulating demands for increased political space and further liberalization. Thus, reforms intended by authoritarian rulers to broaden the base of authoritarian rule have sometimes cascaded into liberal democracy.
The relationship between civil society and democracy is a subject of major debate however, and many scholars contest the notion that the existence of civil society is a sufficient condition for democracy. At best, there seems to be a necessary relationship between civil society and democracy, but even this claim is challenged, especially when it is applied to the developing world. Civil society has also been challenged for its middle class bias and its blindness to gender disparities. Representative critiques will be thoroughly examined in the course.

The scholarly debate has not deterred major powers and international institutions, such as the United States and the World Bank, respectively, from promoting civil society for its presumed causative relationship to democracy. Among other benefits, this seminar should enable seminar participants, especially those interested in policy questions, to weigh the merits of such projects.

The seminar addresses cases in the United States, Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia, as well as the Middle East.

The seminar participants are expected to do the follow: (1) Carefully read for discussion in class a core of common readings listed below; (2) lead and moderate a discussion session on a seminar reading; (3) write a seminar paper on a topic of their choice (subject to approval); and, (4) present a synopsis of their seminar paper for discussion and critique at the end of the semester.

**Academic integrity**: Please read the Boston University Academic Conduct Code. Handing in someone else's work or ideas as your own (even if you worked on it together as a group) constitutes plagiarism, as does using someone's ideas without attribution. You must give a citation when you use an author's ideas in your paper, even if you do not quote the text word-for-word. The correct procedures for quoting and referencing the work of other authors will be discussed in class. If you miss that class or if you have any questions, please ask for guidance. Any infraction MUST be reported to the Dean for resolution by the Academic Conduct Committee. Be informed and be careful. Since plagiarized work is the work of another, any paper determined by the Academic Conduct panel to be plagiarized will normally receive a grade of zero.

**Grades and evaluation:**

Presentation I (including concise one page brief for distribution at time of presentation)--20% (brief 5%)
Research Paper--50% (topic, 5%, and bibliography, 5%)=10%; finished paper=40%)
Presentation II--15%
Participation--15%

**REQUIRED READING OR REFERENCE:**


**RECOMMENDED:**


*The BU bookstore has been asked to stock these books and copies are also available on reserve.

**READING ASSIGNMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

January 23: **Introduction**


Peruse: Doyle, “Liberalism…”.

January 30: **Social capital, trust and associability: Italy**

Read: Putnam, Shils, “The Virtue of Civility”

February 6: **Critiques of Toquevillian Civil Society**


February 13: **The American Right**

Read: Hochschild, Jonathan Rauch, “How American Politics Went Insane,” The Atlantic, July/August 2016. [https://www.evernote.com/l/ADCiuaiFP1VIXKwYr8bxY_Xcg__MaIZ9coA](https://www.evernote.com/l/ADCiuaiFP1VIXKwYr8bxY_Xcg__MaIZ9coA)

February 21: (Tuesday): **Associational Life in Authoritarian States (part 1)**

Read: Cavatorta, chaps. 1 and 2; Gole in Norton, vol. 2 (reserve).

February 27: **Associational Life in Authoritarian States (part 2)**

Read: Cavatorta, chaps. 3, 4 and 11; and Taylor, “Modes of Civil Society” (both ordered for reserve).
March 13: **Associational Life in Authoritarian States (part 3)**

Read: Cavatorta, chaps. 3 and 9, Norton, “The Puzzle of Political Reform” (will be provided); Norton, Introduction, in CSME I; Entelis in CSME II (reserve); Sadowski, “The New Orientalism”; Bellin and Brand in Norton, ed., CSME I (reserve); Wiktorowicz, “Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan.”

March 20: **Associational Life in Authoritarian States (part 4)**

Read: Cavatorta, chaps. 6 and 7.

March 27: **Open discussion on course paper progress** (first hour), followed by guest speaker.

Guest speaker: awaiting confirmation

Read: to be announced.

April 3: **Associational Life in Authoritarian States (part 5)**

Read: Cavatorta, chaps. 8, 10 and 12.

April 10: **Drawing Conclusions**

Read: Bratton, Mouzelis and Mardin in John Hall, ed.; and Gordon White, “Democratization...”, part I

April 19: (Wednesday) **Paper presentations**

April 24: **Paper presentations**

May 1: **Seminar Dinner**
BACKGROUND READINGS THAT YOU MAY FIND USEFUL


Doyle, Michael W., "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80 (December 1986).


Ekiert and Jan Kubik, "Totalitarian Legacies, Civil Society, and Democracy in Post-Communist Poland," paper delivered at the 1996 APSA meeting.


Harbeson, John W., Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan, eds. Civil Society and the State in Africa (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).

Hefner, Robert W., "Islam, State and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class," *Indonesia* 56 (October 1993).


Huntington, Samuel P., “Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22-49.


________, “Crisis, Elites, and Democratization in the Arab World,” *Middle East Journal* 47, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 292-305.


Oxhorn, Philip, Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1995).


Schwedler, Jillian, ed. Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).


