

Democratic Resilience | POP88354

Year	1
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	10 hours of lectures
Pre-requisite	Nil
Semester	2
Module Leader & Lecturer	Dr Matthias Dilling
Contact Email	dillingm@tcd.ie

Module Outline

Module Learning Aims:

This graduate seminar aims to introduce students to the social scientific study of democratic resilience and democratic backsliding. It seeks to empower students to explain, examine, and appraise concepts, arguments, and empirical approaches and findings in relation to the survival and death of democratic regimes by drawing on the comparative literature in political science.

Module Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Describe and outline issues, concepts, and empirical findings relating to the development of democratic regimes and the challenges they have faced
- Compare and contrast academic arguments that seek to explain different regime trajectories
- Critically examine and appraise empirical evidence to investigate the effects of various potential causes on regime trajectories and the role of different actors within these processes
- Formulate and defend answers to analytical problems around the nature, development, and prospects of democratic governance

Module Content:

Democracies around the globe face manifold challenges. While some democratic regimes have succumbed to these challenges and backslid into non-democratic rule, others have been more successful in coping under pressure. This module examines the drivers of these different regime trajectories. It begins by critically reviewing concepts like democracy, democratisation, and democratic backsliding to highlight the multi-faceted and dynamic nature of democratic rule. It then examines the various challenges – both at a macro and micro level – as well as how (well) democracies have engaged in with these challenges and why.

Assessment

- Participation 20%
- Essay plan 20%
- Final essay 60%

Recommended Reading List

- Ahmed, Amel. 2025. *The Regime Question. Foundations of Democratic Governance in Europe and the United States*. Princeton University Press
- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die. What History Reveals About Our Future*. Viking.
- Przeworski, Adam. 2019. *Crises of Democracy*. Cambridge University Press