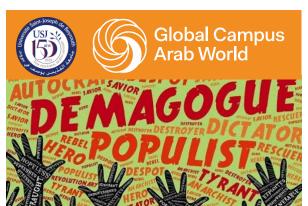


Online Course on

Political Regimes and the Dynamics of Democratic Backsliding

16 April - 16 May





The course explores political systems and their classifications across history, from antiquity, to classical Arab, passing by modern European classifications up to contemporary ones. A political regime refers to the set of institutions, rules and practices that determine how a government operates and exercises its authority. A regime can be broadly categorised based on who holds power, how they are selected and the extent and type of political participation granted to the population over which it rules.

Three decades ago, with the fall of communism and the triumph of liberal democracies, some expected the world to be entering in a final stage of ideological evolution in which all countries would inevitably transition to democratic governance. For many years, this hypothesis seemed corroborated by different indices that measured and compared the quality and extent of democracy in different countries.

The course blends political theory, historical analysis, and comparative case studies in order to examine the evolving classifications of governance while addressing today's global democratic crisis. Participants will critically analyse drivers of democratic erosion through cases from the Arab World, Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa: executive overreach, neo-feudalism, populism, etc. They will study example of how democracies falter, but also how they might endure.

It draws on both historical patterns and current manifestations of democratic regression across the world, equipping participants with frameworks to understand democratic erosion, autocratic resurgence, illiberal practices and resilience strategies.

Programme

	Wednesday 16	Introduction to Political Regimes, Dr Wissam Lahham	17:00-19:00
MAY APRIL	Wednesday 23	Introduction to Political Regimes, Dr Wissam Lahham	17:00-19:00
	Friday 25	Introduction to Political Regimes, Dr Wissam Lahham	17:00-19:00
	Wednesday 30	Introduction to Political Regimes, Dr Wissam Lahham	17:00-19:00
	Friday 2	Measuring Democracy	17:00-19:00
	Wednesday 7	Case Study from the Arab World	17:00-19:00
	Friday 9	Case Study from Central Asia	13:00-15:00
	Wednesday 14	Case Studies from SE Asia: Philippines and Thailand	13:00-15:00
	Friday 16	Case Study from Europe: Hungary	17:00-19:00
	Wednesday 21	Case Study from South America	17:00-19:00
	Friday 23	Case Study from the Balkans	17:00-19:00
	Wednesday 28	Discussion of Papers	17:00-19:00

This online course is accessible through Microsoft Teams. Its schedule follows EEST (Beirut/Gaza time).

Introduction to Political Regimes



Dr Wissam LAHHAM

Political scientist with a focus on constitutional law and political order, author of a number of research studies addressing the role of religion and constitutionalism, civic values, political reform and monetary history of Lebanon. He holds a PhD in political science and writes frequently on issues related to Lebanese constitutional practices. Lahham is a senior researcher for the "Legal Agenda" specialized in constitutional and parliamentary affairs. He teaches "political thought" and "Lebanese political regime" at the Institute of Political Science at Saint Joseph University of Beirut. He is also a specialist in numismatics.

This introduction offers a comprehensive exploration of political regimes, tracing their conceptual evolution from ancient and classical philosophical foundations—rooted in Greek thinkers like Aristotle and Arab scholars such as Al Farabi—to modern frameworks shaped by theorists like Hobbes, Montesquieu and Rousseau, as well as contemporary debates on populism and institutional design.

Case Studies from across the World

Participants will critically analyse how thinkers across history have categorized systems of governance, dissecting the principles, virtues, and flaws underpinning each model.

It will be followed by case studies from across the world: Europe, the Arab region, Africa, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and Latin America.

By combining theoretical study with multiple case studies, the course fosters a nuanced understanding of how political regimes both shape societies and adapt to evolving socio-economic conditions, human needs, ideologies and crises.

Application Details

Apply here: <u>application form</u>

Deadline: 13 April

Response Date: Applicants with completed files will receive a response by 14 April

Course Starts: 16 April

This workshop is tailored for MA students, third-year BA students and recent graduates in social sciences. It is also open to young professionals and activists involved in human rights, social engagement, or political participation, regardless of formal academic status.

In the selection process, priority will be given to fostering diversity, ensuring broad representation across cultural backgrounds, professional experiences and ideological perspectives to enrich group discussions and collaborative learning.

Enrolment & Certification

Students enroled in the Arab mater's programme in Democracy and Human Rights receive credits for this course. Exterior students are awarded a certificate from the Institute of Political Science:

A Certificate of Attendance for students who have attended at least 9 out of 12 sessions. It is granted on attendance only, without the requirement of passing an assessment.

A Certificate of Completion for students who have attended at least 9 out of the 12 sessions and who have engaged with lecturers, participated in class activities and successfully completed the required assessment. Success is measured against predetermined standards for knowledge, skills or competencies.



This online course is offered by the Arab master's programme in Democracy and Human Rights, with the support of the European Union.

To learn more about the programme, visit our website.

For updates on our activities, follow our social media pages.