

POP88354 — Democratic Resilience

Module Information	
Module Code	POP88354
Module Title	Democratic Resilience
Department	Political Science
Module Personnel	Dr Matthias Dilling
Academic Year	2026–27
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 2
Contact Hours	10 hours of seminars

Module Content	
Module Description	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 with these challenges and why.
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.
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,

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	• 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, and • Formulate and defend answers to analytical problems around the nature, development, and prospects of democratic governance.
Indicative Reading / Resources	• 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.

Assessment

Assessment Components	Recorded presentation (20%), Response memo (10%), Research essay (70%)
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Additional Information

Prerequisites	None
Co-requisites	None