Understanding Political Developments in India, W145A, 2018*

Four (4) semester credits

Course Description

Much has been written and said about the link between democracy and development, religious, and ethnic fragmentation. When India gained independence from British Rule in 1947, observers noted that the likelihood of the new country remaining democratic was limited. Yet, India proved such observers wrong and remained one of the world’s most thriving democracies for over 60 years, and, in doing so offered a puzzle for many political scientists.

How did a country with hundreds of social, economic, ethnic, and linguistic cleavages manage to remain democratic when other countries with lesser amounts of such diversity were collapsing? How did a country with the world’s largest poor population and slow rates of development consolidate a democracy? How did India with a history of social discrimination against former untouchables (now called Dalits) and women implement corrective mechanisms to improve the conditions of marginalized groups and give them political representation and voice.

Yet, with every political tension that arose, the Indian state responded in different ways. Sometimes it repressed its people, and sometimes it created new mechanisms and institutions to channel dissent. But the "system" has endured for six and a half decades.

In this course, you will engage in a deep, historical institutional analysis about the conditions that have allowed the Indian state to remain democratic. To explain Indian democracy, we will look at various institutional mechanisms, elite bargaining, and the deployment of force, accommodation of regional leaders and their political aspirations, economic development and the constant reconfiguration of caste, party and religious alliances.

Prerequisites

There are no prior course requirements.
Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to

• Describe and explain how institutions are set up to govern deeply diverse societies

• Analyze the transformation of caste and assess the impact of democratic institutions on caste

• Explore the interaction between democratic institutions and India's varied religious interests

• Analyze the role of tribes in insurgencies and armed conflicts

• Analyze the impact of centralization of power in the separatist and secessionist movements

• Recognize political parties and evaluate how party politics and elections create and impact India's democratic institutions

Instructor Information, Contact, Office Hours, & Communication

Course Instructor

Dr. Pradeep Chhibber

Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs)

Dr. Chhibber will interact with the whole class and will oversee all activities and grading. He will also be available to resolve any issues that may arise, but the GSIs will be your immediate contact and direct instructors for this course.

• Tanu Kumar
• Nirvikar Jassal

Office Hours

Office hours will be regularly offered both in-person and via Zoom video conferencing, to be announced at least 24 hours in advance.
Course Mail

Make sure to check the Course Mail for messages from the instructor. You can access course email within the Learning Management System by clicking on the Inbox link on the Corner Help toolbar (see also Canvas Overview Video) or choose to have your course mail forwarded to your personal email account or your cell phone.

Question & Answer Forum

Please use this forum to post questions about the course material, assignments, the learning management system or online homework. The instructor/GSIs will monitor this forum, but you should also feel free to post answers to help other students. This helps to create a general FAQ so that all students in the course may benefit from the exchange.

Course Materials and Technical Requirements

Required Materials


- Video lectures and PowerPoint slides in each module
- Readings are provided in each module (PDF files)
- Additional videos and other materials as provided by the instructor

You are free to purchase your textbooks from any vendor. Please be sure to thoroughly review the return policies before making a purchasing decision as UC Berkeley does not reimburse students for course materials in the event of a textbook change or an unexpected cancellation or rescheduled course section.

Technical Requirements

This course is built on a Learning Management system (LMS) called Canvas and you will need to meet these computer specifications to participate within this online platform.
Optional

Canvas allows you to record audio or video files of yourself and upload them in the course. Although doing so is not required for any of the activities, using these features will enhance your engagement in the course. If you would like to use these features, you will need to have a webcam and a microphone installed on your computer.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties please alert one of the GSIs immediately. However, understand that neither the GSIs, nor the professor can assist you with technical problems. You must call or email tech support and make sure you resolve any issues immediately.

In your course, click on the "Help" button on the bottom left of the global navigation menu. Be sure to document (save emails and transaction numbers) for all interactions with tech support.

Extensions and late submissions will not be accepted due to “technical difficulties.”

Learning Activities

VERY IMPORTANT

You won't be able to access your course material until you read and make your pledge to Academic Integrity.

You are expected to fully participate in all the course activities described here.

1. Read the assigned textbook pages
2. Watch and listen to the lecture presentations
3. Read web-based announcements and postings assign during the course
4. Compose and post assigned responses to lectures and readings
5. Complete the exam
6. Complete writing assignments
Modules

A module is a grouping of topics related to one area of study, typically with readings, lectures, and various kinds of assignments. Each module contains a list of Learning Outcomes for the module. Your assignments reflect the learning activities to perform to reach those outcomes. For an at-a-glance view of due dates and projects, refer to the course Calendar.

Reading Assignments

Each module includes assigned readings relevant to each topic covered in that module. You will find links to PDFs on the Learning Activities page for each module.

Multimedia Lectures

Each module includes multiple video lectures/conversations by Dr. Chhibber and other experts on the various topics of the course, as well as PowerPoint slides which you can open as PDFs. In order to make the most of the material, start by doing the readings, then watch the video lectures and use the slides as highlights.

Take notes as needed while viewing the lectures and write down any questions that these conversations raise for you. You can use the Questions & Answers forum in the course to post your questions and discuss them with your classmates.

Quizzes

Most modules include a quiz that must be completed and submitted within 48 hours of the completion of the module. Refer to the calendar for all due dates. You may take the quiz only once and have a set period of time to complete each quiz. (See each quiz for details.) Late submission and inability to complete a quiz will lead to one-third of a grade being docked and/or the quiz score and grade being dropped from the final grade assessment.
Op-Ed Response Project

We are providing you with two op-eds written by academics/commentators. The authors of the op-eds are come down on two different sides vis-a-vis the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Prevention of Atrocities Act, which the Indian Supreme Court made less stringent in 2018. The purpose of the law was to prevent and deter hate-crimes against Dalits (formerly known as Untouchables).

For the assignment, read both op-eds. After reading them, your assignment will be to write an additional op-ed in which you respond to the arguments made by the other authors and develop your own ideas on the topic.

This assignment will be due on July 20th by midnight PST. You will receive your grade on this project, as well as comments, in time to allow you to prepare for the final exam.

The first op-ed is by a lawyer, and the second is by an academic at Harvard.


https://theprint.in/opinion/supreme-court-sc-st-law-applied-genuine-cases/46359/

You are also welcome to do some background research on the SC/ST Act. Here is a video that may be helpful.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQayw6GEpvU

Discussion Forums

Weekly Discussion Forums

Letters to the Editor

During the first portion of each module you will be responsible for reading and commenting on a contemporary news article that we will provide for you. Your response should be along the lines of a “letter to the editor” with your thoughts on the article. After posting your own response, you should also try your best to respond to comments on the discussion board made by your peers. Please do not simply say “I agree with the article” but try to engage with the article based on what
you have read in the course. For a sample of what we are looking for, look at the Letters to the Editor page of the *New York Times*, available here: https://www.nytimes.com/section/opinion/letters.

**Grading**

You will be graded on the quality of your contribution, both in terms of your letter to the editor and your response to posts made by your peers.

In terms of the 20% of your grade that stems from discussion, 50% will be assigned based upon the quality of the letters to the editor and the remaining 50% will be based upon our assessment of the posts you made to other letters written by your peers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Newspaper Posted</th>
<th>Letter to the Editor Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>June 26th</td>
<td>June 29th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>July 3rd</td>
<td>July 6th</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>July 10th</td>
<td>July 13th</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>July 24th</td>
<td>July 27th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
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**Questions and Answers Forum**

Please use this forum to post questions about the course or topics being studied. The questions will be answered in the forum by the course instructor or GSIs. This way, all students benefit from seeing the answers. This is the preferred place to ask and get answers to questions that are likely to be of general interest.

**Final Exam**

This course includes a 3-hour, in-person final exam. The exam format will reflect that of the quizzes and will include both essay and multiple choice questions. The final exam will take place on **Wednesday, August 8th from 9 am to 12 pm**, location to is TBD, on the Berkeley campus.
If you will not be on campus for the final, it might be possible to take a proctored final off campus. Review the Proctor Info on the left navigation menu. Proctor applications are due by July 13th, 2018.

If you cannot attend the final on campus, you must make arrangements to take a proctored version of the exam at least four weeks before the final exam date.

If you miss taking the final or try to take it in a manner for which you have not received permission, you will fail this class automatically.

**Reminder: Your Course End Date**

Your course will end on August 10th, 2018. As you work through the course, please keep the end date in mind, and if you want to save any commentary or assignments for future reference, please make sure to print or copy/paste those materials before your access ends.

### Grading and Course Policies

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (5)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op-Ed Response Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
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It is important to note that not all components are graded online and included in the online course grade book. Because of this, the online course grade book will not display your overall course grade at any given time or your final grade. Your final letter grade will be mailed to you by the registrar's office.
Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 - 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93 - 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89 - 86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85 - 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82 - 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79 - 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75 - 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72 - 70</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69 - 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65 - 63</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>62 - 60</td>
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<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Late Work Policy

One-third of a grade will be docked for every day an assignment is late. All due dates and times are given in Pacific Daylight Time (PDT).

Course Policies

Promptness

Homework assignments and discussion forum postings all have specific final due dates and times. You will not receive full credit if assignments are submitted after the indicated due date.

Further, each online activity must be submitted through the course website by the due date. Fax or mail submission will not be accepted. Students who wait until the final hours prior to a submission deadline risk having problems with their ISP, hardware, software, or various other site access difficulties. Therefore, it is advisable to submit assignments and tests through the course website early. The multiple days allowed for submission are to accommodate the busy schedules of working professionals, not to accommodate procrastination. Students should plan accordingly and get into the habit of checking the course website several times each week and submitting and posting early.

Honor Code

The student community at UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code: "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." The expectation is that you will adhere to this code.

Collaboration and Independence

Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do with fellow students. This is
recommended. However, unless otherwise instructed, homework assignments and the online exam are to be completed independently and materials submitted as homework should be the result of one’s own independent work.

**Cheating**

A good lifetime strategy is always to act in such a way that no one would ever imagine that you would even consider cheating. Anyone caught cheating on a quiz or exam in this course will receive a failing grade in the course and will also be reported to the University Center for Student Conduct. Exams are to be completed without the assistance of other people, and without reference to texts, notes, and other materials. The expectation is that you will be honest in the taking of exams.

**Plagiarism**

To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, explore the resources linked below:

- [UC Berkeley Library Citation Page, Plagiarism Section](#)
- [GSI Guide for Preventing Plagiarism](#)

**Academic Integrity and Ethics**

Cheating on exams and plagiarism are two common examples of dishonest, unethical behavior. Honesty and integrity are of great importance in all facets of life. They help to build a sense of self-confidence, and are key to building trust within relationships, whether personal or professional. There is no tolerance for dishonesty in the academic world, for it undermines what we are dedicated to doing - furthering knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

**Incomplete Course Grade**

Students who have substantially completed the course but for serious extenuating circumstances, are unable to complete the final exam, may request an Incomplete grade. This request must be submitted in
writing or by email to the GSI and course instructor. You must provide verifiable documentation for the seriousness of the extenuating circumstances. According to the policy of the college, Incomplete grades must be made up within the first three weeks of the next semester.

**Students with Disabilities**

Any students requiring course accommodations due to a physical, emotional, or learning disability must contact the [Disabled Students' Program (DSP)](https://www.disabledstudents.org). They will review all requests on an individual basis.

- Request your Disabled Student Program Specialist to send the instructor a formal request before the official course start date by email
- In addition, notify the instructor and your Online Learning Support Specialist, which accommodations you would like to use.
  - Your Online Learning Support Specialist is Tracie Allen and her email is [summer_online_support@berkeley.edu](mailto:summer_online_support@berkeley.edu)

**End of Course Evaluation**

Before your course end date, please take a few minutes to participate in the [Course Evaluation](https://bCourses.berkeley.edu/) to share your opinions about the course. The evaluation does not request any personal information, and your responses will remain strictly confidential. A link to the evaluation will be made available via bCourses on July 26th, 2018 and will be available until August 8th, 2018. You will also be emailed a link to the course evaluation.

To access the course evaluation via bCourses:

1. Enter the course in bCourses
2. Choose **Course Evaluation** from the left-hand navigation menu.
3. Complete evaluation and submit.

**Course Outline**

Quizzes should be completed by the end of each module. They will be open for the last 48 hours of the module.

**MODULE 1: THE IDEA OF INDIA (June 18th-June 30th)**
Assignments:

Newspaper Posted: June 26th
Letter to Editor due: June 29th
Quiz: July 2nd

Introduction

Readings

- Film: *The Story of India*. PBS documentary, Part 6. (Available on the course website. An HD version is also available on Netflix on instant play).

Lectures

- Topic 1: Introduction (5:35)

The Idea of India

- The Case for Democracy
- India’s Democratic Institutions

Readings


Lectures

- Topic 1.1 The Idea of India (7:35)
- Topic 2: Why Democracy (13:00)
- Topic 3: India's Main Democratic Institutions (9:23)
India’s Political Institutions

Readings


Lectures

• Topic 5: Accommodating Regional Differences (9:07)
• Topic 6: India's Political Institutions (8:00)

MODULE 2: ACCOMMODATING CASTE (June 30th-July 7th)

Assignments:

Newspaper posted: July 3rd
Letter to Editor due: July 6th
Quiz: July 9th

Caste, Jati and the Politics of Social Justice

• Caste over the years
• The History and Effects of Reservations

Readings

American Political Science Review, 108(2): 403-422. Read the entire article.


**Lectures**

- Topic 1: Accommodating Caste (8:20)
- Topic 2: Do Reservations Help? (18:22)

**Explaining Caste and Jati**

**Readings**

- Film: *In the Name of God*

**MODULE 3: DEMOCRACY AND RELIGION (July 7th-July 14th)**

**Assignments:**

- Newspaper posted: July 10th
- Letter to Editor due: July 13th
- Quiz: July 16th

**July 10th – 12th: Topics 1-2**

**Secularism in a Religious Society**

**Readings**

 Lectures  

• Topic 1: Accommodating Religion (7:04)  
• Topic 2: Failure of Religious Accommodation (3:18)  

Hindu and Muslim Politics in India  

Readings  


Lectures  

• Topic 3: Understanding Political Violence: Explanations (26:04)  

Religion and Political Violence  

Readings  


MODULE 4: WHEN DOES ACCOMMODATION FAIL? (July 14th-July 21st)  

Assignments:  

Op-Ed Response Project Due July 20th, Midnight PST  
Quiz: July 18th  

Contested Statehood: Kashmir, Punjab, Mizoram and Nagaland.


**Readings**

- BBC Documentary: Operation Blue Star 1984
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykcvlKz8JoY

**Lectures**

- Topic 1: Failure to Accommodate Regional Differences (6:19)
- Topic 2: Kashmir (1:39:55)—Optional

**MODULE 5: DEMOCRATIC UPSURGE, PARTY POLITICS AND ELECTIONS (July 21th-July 28th)**

**Assignments:**

Newspaper posted: July 24thth
Letter to Editor due: July 27th
Quiz: July 31st

**Political Parties and Elections**

**Readings**

- Gowda, M.V., and Sridharan, E. The roles of political parties and the party system in deepening Indian democracy. Read Chapter 1.

**Lectures**

- Topic 1: Political Parties in India (9:50)
- Topic 2: Fragmentation of the Indian Party System (25:00)

**Party Politics Today: Dynasties and Fragmentation**
Readings


**MODULE 6: DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE (July 28th-August 4th)**

Assignments:

Final Exam: August 8th

Economic Development

Readings


Lecture

- Topic 1: Economic Development in India (8:13)
- Topic 2: The State’s Role in Economic Development (14:41)

Social Change and Conclusion
Readings


• Ahuja, Amit and Susan L Ostermann. 2013. “Blurred Lines: Intermarriage and the Weakening Caste Cleavage in Urban Indian Politics." Read the entire article.


• Ahuja, A., Ostermann, S., and Mehta, A. "Is only fair lovely in Indian politics? Consequences of skin color in a survey experiment in Delhi." Read the entire article.

*Subject to Change*