

# Voluntary Organizations and Politics in Comparative Perspective

Government 337 • Fall 2005  
Georgetown University

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## Overview:

Though they have existed for centuries, voluntary organizations have recently become a central focus of political study and public debate. The boundaries of this category are rather diffuse, including what are called non-government organizations (NGOs), some kinds of non-profit organizations, "civil society," and other concepts. In poor and rich countries alike, voluntary organizations are seen by some as enhancing development and democracy by providing services, calling attention to problems, stimulating civic engagement, demanding government accountability, and increasing social capital. Acting internationally, non-state organizations have influenced major actors such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the World Bank. This course critically explores the politics of the voluntary sector in all its manifestations and in a diverse set of countries.

## Texts:

The following books will be on reserve at the library, and are also available for purchase at the campus book store. It may be convenient to purchase them, but do not feel obliged to do so. Needless to say, you can also look on the web for used or new copies. Note that, for most of the books, substantially less than the entire text is assigned. All readings that do not come from these five books will be available on the course Blackboard web site.

- Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Civil Society and Political Change in Asia: Expanding and Contracting Democratic Space* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), ISBN: 0804750971
- Sanjeev Khagram, James V. Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds., *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2002), ISBN: 0816639078
- Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), ISBN: 0743203046
- Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), ISBN: 0691037388
- Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina, *Civic Engagement in American Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), ISBN: 0815728093

## Assignments and Ground Rules:

- Please read the following items carefully before deciding to stay enrolled in this course.
- Near-perfect class attendance is a firm requirement of this course. Attendance will be taken at every session at the beginning of class. I am quite understanding about family emergencies, illness or other serious exigencies, and will treat them as excused absences if verifiable documentation is provided. Five percentage points will be deducted from your participation grade for every unexcused absence.
- This course involves a substantial amount of reading and it is imperative that you do it. Readings must be completed by Monday's class of that week. Note that although I have strived to make it easy for you to find the readings, it is your responsibility to obtain and read these items. In particular, download the electronic readings ahead of time.
- Students will be asked to make one presentation over the course of the semester.
- The components of your semester grade will be weighted as follows:
  - Class participation — 20 percent
  - Take-home midterm — 20 percent
  - Research paper — 30 percent
  - Take-home final — 30 percent

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SEPTEMBER 5: \*\*\* **No Class Meeting – Labor Day** \*\*\*

### WEEK 1 — SEPTEMBER 12: **Introduction**

- Jessica Mathews, "Power Shift," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan-Feb 1997, pp. 50-61
- Skocpol and Fiorina, *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, ch. 1

### WEEK 2 — SEPTEMBER 19: **Intellectual Lineage**

- Michael W. Foley and Virginia A. Hodgkinson, "Introduction," in *The Civil Society Reader* (Tufts: 2003), pp. vii-xxiv
- Alexis de Tocqueville, selections from *Democracy in America* [1835], taken from *The Civil Society Reader*, pp. 113-132
- Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, selections from *The Civic Culture* [1963], taken from *The Civil Society Reader*, pp. 173-189
- Edward C. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1958), introduction and chapters 1, 5 [just the first page], 6, and 8, pp. 7-31, 85, 107-127, 147-161
- Craig Calhoun, "Introduction," chapter one of *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 1-48

WEEK 3 — SEPTEMBER 26: **Concepts I: Associations / Civil Society**

- Larry Diamond, "Toward Democratic Consolidation," *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 227-40
- Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, pp. 3-7, 68-120, 163-185.
- Sheri Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," *World Politics*, vol. 49, no. 3 (April 1997), pp. 401-429
- Alagappa, "Civil Society and Political Change: An Analytical Framework," ch. 1, pp. 25-60

WEEK 4 — OCTOBER 3: **Concepts II: Networks / Social Capital**

- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 55-63, 112-141
- Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 78 (1973) pp. 1360-1380
- Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 241-258
- Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, chapter 1, "Thinking about Social Change in America," pp. 15-28
- Christiaan Grootaert, "Social Capital: The Missing Link?" World Bank, Social Capital Initiative Working Paper No. 3 (April 1998)
- Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt, "The Downside of Social Capital," *The American Prospect* Vol. 26 (1996), pp. 18-21

OCTOBER 10: \*\*\* **No Class Meeting — Columbus Day** \*\*\*

WEEK 5 — OCTOBER 17: **The Civic Engagement Debate in the U.S., I**

A one-paragraph statement of your research paper topic is due in class today.

- Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, chapters 2-3, 6-9, 14-15, 20-21, 23-24
- Symposium on *Bowling Alone* in *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* vol. 30, no. 3 (May 2001), contributions by Amitai Etzioni, John Wilson, and Bob Edwards and Michael W. Foley
- Tom W. Rice, "Social Capital and Government Performance in Iowa Communities," *Journal of Urban Affairs* Vol. 23 No. 3-4 (2001): 375-89

WEEK 6 — OCTOBER 24: **The Civic Engagement Debate in the U.S., II**

- Skocpol and Fiorina, *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, six selections:
  - Theda Skocpol et al., “How Americans Became Civic,” ch. 2
  - Susan Crawford and Peggy Levitt, “Social Change and Civic Engagement: The Case of the PTA,” ch. 7
  - Jeffrey M. Berry, “The Rise of Citizen Groups,” ch. 10
  - Morris P. Fiorina, “Extreme Voices: A Dark Side of Civic Engagement,” ch. 11
  - Kay Lehman Schlozman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady, “Civic Participation and the Equality Problem,” ch. 12
  - Theda Skocpol, “Advocates without Members: The Recent Transformation of American Civic Life,” ch. 13

A hard copy of your take-home midterm is due in my CDATS mailbox at 10 a.m., Thursday, October 20th.

WEEK 7 — OCTOBER 31: **Civil Society in Other Established Democracies**

- Robert D. Putnam, *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), two selections:
  - Jean-Pierre Worms, “France: Old and New Civic and Social Ties in France,” ch. 4
  - Claus Offe and Susanne Fuchs, “A Decline of Social Capital? The German Case,” ch. 5
- Alagappa, *Civil Society and Political Change*, two selections:
  - Amitabh Behar and Aseem Prakash, “India: Expanding and Contracting Democratic Space,” ch. 6
  - Robert Pekkanen, “Japan: Social Capital Without Advocacy,” ch. 7

WEEK 8 — NOVEMBER 7: **Associational Life in Non-Democracies**

An annotated bibliography for your research paper is due in class today.

- Robert A. Senser, “How Poland’s Solidarity Won Freedom of Association,” *Monthly Labor Review* (September 1989), pp. 34-38
- Alagappa, *Civil Society and Political Change*, two selections:
  - Kyaw Yin Hliang, “Burma: Civil Society Skirting Regime Rules,” ch. 12
  - Mary E. Gallagher, “China: The Limits of Civil Society in a Late Leninist State,” ch. 13
- Benjamin L. Read, “Democratizing the Neighborhood? New Private Housing and Homeowner Self-Organization in Urban China,” *China Journal* (January 2003)
- Klaus Tenfelde, “Civil Society and the Middle Classes in Nineteenth-Century Germany,” in Nancy Bermeo and Philip Nord, eds., *Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons From Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), pp. 83-110

## WEEK 9 — NOVEMBER 14: **Regime Transitions**

- Alagappa, *Civil Society and Political Change*, four selections:
  - Edward Aspinall, "Indonesia: Transformation of Civil Society and Democratic Breakthrough," ch. 2
  - Jennifer C. Franco, "The Philippines: Fractious Civil Society and Competing Visions of Democracy," ch. 3
  - Sunhyuk Kim, "South Korea: Confrontational Legacy and Democratic Contributions," ch. 4
  - Yun Fan, "Taiwan: No Civil Society, No Democracy," ch. 5
- Marc Morjé Howard, "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society," *Journal of Democracy* vol. 13, no. 1 (January 2002), pp. 157-169

## WEEK 10 — NOVEMBER 21: **Development**

- Michael Woolcock and Deepa Narayan, "Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy," *The World Bank Research Observer* Vol. 15 No. 2 (2000): 225-49
- Peter Evans, ed., *Livable Cities? Urban Struggles for Livelihood and Sustainability* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), two selections:
  - Evans, "Introduction: Looking for Agents of Urban Livability in a Globalized Political Economy," pp. 1-30
  - Dara O'Rourke, "Community-Driven Regulation: Toward an Improved Model of Environmental Regulation in Vietnam," pp. 95-131
- Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond," *World Politics* Vol. 53 No. 3 (April 2001), pp. 362-98
- Christiaan Grootaert, "Social Capital, Household Welfare and Poverty in Indonesia," World Bank paper, n.d. [Read this document selectively]
- Anthony Bebbington and Roger Riddell, "Heavy Hands, Hidden Hands, Holding Hands? Donors, Intermediary NGOs and Civil Society Organisations," and conclusion, in David Hulme and Michael Edwards, eds., *NGOs, States, and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* (Houndsmills: MacMillan Press, 1997)

WEEK 11 — NOVEMBER 28: **Governments and Popular Associations**

- Jennifer M. Coston, "A Model and Typology of Government-NGO Relationships," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 3 (September 1998), pp. 358-382
- Alagappa, *Civil Society and Political Change*, two selections:
  - Suzaina Kadir, "Singapore: Engagement and Autonomy within the Political Status Quo," ch. 10
  - Aqil Shah, "Pakistan: Civil Society in the Service of an Authoritarian State," ch. 11
- Theodore C. Bestor, *Neighborhood Tokyo* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), chapter 3
- Jeremy Shiffman, "The Construction of Community Participation: Village Family Planning Groups and the Indonesian State," *Social Science and Medicine* Vol. 54 (2002): 1199-214
- Lily Lee Tsai, "Cadres, Temple and Lineage Institutions, and Governance in Rural China" *The China Journal* 48 (July 2002)
- Stephen Rathgeb Smith and Michael Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire: The Welfare State in the Age of Contracting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), chapter 7

WEEK 12 — DECEMBER 5: **Transnational Civil Society**

Your research paper is due in class today.

- Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink, *Restructuring World Politics*, six selections:
  - Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink, "From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics," ch. 1
  - Sikkink and Jackie Smith, "Infrastructures for Change: Transnational Organizations, 1953-1993," ch. 2
  - Paul J. Nelson, "Agendas, Accountability, and Legitimacy among Transnational Networks Lobbying the World Bank," ch. 7
  - Elizabeth A. Donnelly, "Proclaiming Jubilee: The Debt and Structural Adjustment Network," ch. 8
  - Sanjeev Khagram, "Restructuring the Global Politics of Development: The Case of India's Narmada Valley Dams," ch. 10
  - Sikkink, "Restructuring World Politics: The Limits and Asymmetries of Soft Power," ch. 15

Due date for take-home final exam: to be announced