

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS IN DEMOCRACIES

Terms and concepts to know:

Asymmetrical federal system	Majoritarian democracy
Coalition government	Member of Parliament
Code law	Parliamentarism
Common law	Presidentialism
Consensus democracy	Prime Minister (PM)
Executive	Principal-agent problem
Federal systems	Semipresidentialism
Judicial review	Separation of powers
Judiciary	Unitary systems
Legislative oversight	Vote of no confidence
Legislature	

Study and discussion questions:

1. A democracy must limit the power of its executives to provide accountability. Which institutional choices best ensure accountability, and how?
2. How much power should a minority have in a democracy? How do different democracies seek to guarantee that minorities are protected from possible majority tyranny? Do some institutional choices seem to guarantee this better than others?
3. Do greater participation and representation of many voices in government result in less effective policymaking?
4. Does Israel's recent law titled "Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People" mean that it cannot be simultaneously a state that "ensure[s] complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants"?
5. In your opinion, does Casey Michel's argument that the U.S. was a "kleptocracy" under Trump hold water? Why, or why not?
6. How does Fukuyama explain the difference between "institutional decay" and broader societal or civilizational decline? Do you agree with his thesis?
7. What explains why particular democratic institutions arise in particular countries but not in others?

Readings:

Orvis / Drogus – Chapter 5

Video:

Requiem for the American Dream.