

PSCI 3894 – Political Economy of Corruption

Vanderbilt University
Fall 2020

Professor:	Guillermo Toral (he/him/his)	Meeting time:	Tues & Thurs 2.20 – 3.35pm
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Office hours:	Thursday 4 – 5pm, or by appt.	Course page:	Brightspace link

1 Course description

Corruption is often seen as a major problem for economic and human development around the world. To fight it, states and international organizations have issued laws and conventions, invested billions of dollars, and established specialized agencies. At the same time, corruption scandals seem to be ubiquitous, and have become a real threat for the survival of elected leaders. In the past five years alone, the heads of government of countries as diverse as South Korea, Brazil, Spain, South Africa, Pakistan, and Peru (among others) have been toppled before the end of their mandates in the middle of corruption scandals. Non-democratic regimes like China and Saudi Arabia recently launched wide anti-corruption crackdowns that purged part of the state elite. Corruption seems to be everywhere, and to have far-reaching consequences. Yet, day-to-day discussions about it are often fraught with ambiguity, bitterness, and a sense of helplessness. How can we make sense of corruption, and if not eliminate it at least limit it?

This class takes students through an exploration of the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of corruption in the public sector. We will read academic research from political science, economics, and anthropology, and examine contemporary and historical cases of corruption from around the world. Building on these sources, we will tackle a number of fundamental questions. How can we define and measure corruption? How does corruption relate to economic, social, and political development? How does corruption manifest itself in different areas of the public sector? How can we design effective anti-corruption strategies?

Through an examination of corruption, this class will build students' ability to leverage the concepts, theories, and methods of the social sciences to think through complex social problems and to propose sound policy solutions for them. The skills we build in this class will be useful for those seeking careers in sectors where analyzing complex social problems and devising solutions for them is valuable, be it in business, government, international organizations, or research. The sections below detail the course's [learning objectives](#), [expectations](#), [schedule and readings](#), [additional resources on corruption](#), and [campus resources](#).

2 Learning objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Reflect about different definitions and dimensions of corruption, and discuss some of its causes and consequences.
2. Apply key concepts and theories of political science and economics to debates about the political economy of corruption.
3. Productively participate in discussions about corruption and related social problems, with respect for others, ability to engage with different points of view, and synthesis capacity.

4. Analyze the merits of academic and policy arguments about corruption, and offer reasoned and constructive critiques thereof.
5. Propose anti-corruption policy solutions that are grounded in evidence and are relevant to the local context.

3 Course expectations

3.1 Prerequisites

This class assumes that students have some prior exposure to political science. In particular, students are expected to have taken or be taking PSCI 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, or 1150. Students who have not taken any political science class before should get in touch with me.

3.2 Requirements

Attendance and participation (15%). Students are expected to attend all sessions and actively participate in the discussions and activities therein. Students should attend the class in person whenever possible, but participation via Zoom is possible for those who are not on campus or who have extenuating circumstances preventing them from attending in person. In-class discussions and activities are designed to help students assimilate key concepts, connect ideas, and build their ability to critically engage with arguments and evidence about social phenomena. In so doing, attendance and participation will help students achieve all learning objectives (starting with learning objective 3). Actively and productively participating in group discussions and activities requires doing the readings before class. Absences will negatively affect students' grades unless they are due to extenuating circumstances (which must be adequately documented by email, in advance if possible).

Quizzes (15%). Throughout the semester there will be twelve short quizzes done during class time (i.e., roughly one quiz per week). Quizzes will focus on the readings for the week and the material covered in the previous one or two lectures. I will drop the lowest two quiz grades of each student, and the remaining 10 quiz grades will each be worth 1.5% of the final grade. Quizzes are intended as an incentive for students to do the required readings attentively and critically before class, and to help them achieve learning objectives 2 and 4. They are not designed to trick students – doing the required readings before class, critically reflecting on them, and thinking about how the readings relate to the key concepts and theories that we discuss in class should be sufficient preparation for these quizzes. Students cannot consult the readings themselves or any online resources while taking a quiz, but they may consult their own notes about the readings, either handwritten or printed. If a student misses a session in which a quiz is administered there will be no opportunity to retake it. If it is due to extenuating circumstances (which must be documented by email), that quiz grade will not be taken into account and thus the weight of the remaining quizzes in the final grade will increase.

Take-home exercises (15%). Throughout the semester there will be three graded exercises (each worth 5% of the grade) where students will be required to apply the concepts and theories covered in class to the analysis of a particular case. Exercises are designed to help students develop skills for the group project, and to help them achieve learning objectives 2, 4 and 5. Each of these exercises will follow from in-class group discussions or activities, but will require students to work individually at home.

Paper reviews (25%). Students are expected to write two reviews on two academic papers. These reviews should briefly synthesize the paper; offer a constructive critique of the paper's argument, its evidence, and/or the connection between the two; and discuss some of the paper's implications (e.g., for how we study corruption or how we control it). Paper reviews should have between 4 and 5 pages of text using a 12-point

font, 1.5-point line spacing, and 1-inch margins. In-class discussion of the readings and activities will help students prepare for these assignments. Writing paper reviews will help students achieve learning objectives 1, 2 and 4. The first paper review will be worth 10% of the grade and the second one will be worth 15% of the grade. The difference reflects that I expect students' ability to critically engage with research papers to improve throughout the semester. Papers for review are marked with a star in the reading list in 4.

Group project (30%). Students are expected to work in groups on a final project where they will act as international anti-corruption consultants. Each group will be assigned to a hypothetical case where a government or a government official faces a corruption problem and is seeking their advice to solve it. The final deliverable is a policy report that, leveraging the concepts and theories we will cover throughout the semester, analyzes the corruption problem and proposes an anti-corruption strategy to solve it. Final group projects will help students achieve learning objectives 2 and 5. The policy report should have between 15 and 20 pages of text using 12-point font, 1.5-point line spacing, and 1-inch margins. Tables, graphs, and/or diagrams can be included in an appendix (with no page limit) to support the group's analyses and proposals. Before submitting the final report, groups will present their preliminary findings and recommendations in class. Other groups are expected to ask thoughtful questions and constructively challenge the findings and recommendations of the group presenting. After presenting, groups should incorporate at least some of the feedback they receive into their final policy report. Groups will be graded on both the content and the format of their presentation, including how well they engage with the rest of the class (5% of the grade), and their final report (25% of the grade). In order to help students make progress towards the final presentation and report, there will be two intermediate milestones: a two-page memo with initial ideas about the case about a month after groups are formed, and a follow-up group meeting with me over Zoom about a month before the final report is due. Beyond that, groups are welcome to email me and/or come to office hours for additional support along the way.

More details and guidelines for the take-home exercises, the paper reviews, and the group project (memo, presentation, and final report) will be made available on Brightspace.

3.3 Readings

Rather than follow a textbook, in this class we will be reading academic papers and chapters from political science, economics, and anthropology. These readings use a variety of methodological approaches (from experiments to ethnography) to study corruption. While I do not expect students to have a background in social science methods, I do expect them to make an effort to read and engage with the papers even when they leverage methods students are unfamiliar with. Through in-class activities and workshops we will build students' ability to read social science research, to understand the basics of major methodological approaches to the social world, and to engage critically with scholarly arguments.

All required readings (listed in 4) will be available on Brightspace. I expect students to do all required readings before class, paying close attention to the authors' argument, their evidence, and the consistency between the two. I encourage students to take notes before class on each piece's argument and evidence, on potential weak points, on how a reading speaks to or contradicts other pieces or theories we see throughout the semester, as well as any questions that emerge in the process. Critical reading of the texts helps students boost their grades in every component of the course (participation, quizzes, paper reviews, exercises, and group project).

Optional readings are listed for those who want to go deeper in particular topics of interest, and as useful starting points for the research required for group projects. Additional scholarly works on corruption can easily be found and downloaded through [Google Scholar](#) (within the Vanderbilt network) or obtained from the [Library](#).

Students are not required to purchase any books for this course, but in 5.1 below I list two recent textbooks on corruption that students can use to complement their readings and to do further research throughout the semester.

3.4 Grading

Grading scale. Assignments will be graded in a 0-100 scale. Students who do not submit a given assignment will receive a 0 for it. Final numeric grades will be calculated through a simple weighted average, using the weights detailed in 3.2. Final numeric grades will be transformed to letter grades using the following system: 94 or above → A; 90 to 93.99 → A-; 87 to 89.99 → B+; 83 to 86.99 → B; 80 to 82.99 → B-; 77 to 79.99 → C+; 73 to 76.99 → C; 70 to 72.99 → C-; 67 to 69.99 → D+; 63 to 66.99 → D; 60 to 62.99 → D-; 59.99 or below → F.

Late submission policy. Assignments submitted after the deadline (even if by a few minutes) will incur in an automatic penalty. 10 points will be deducted if the delay is shorter than 24 hours, 20 if it is between 24 and 48 hours, and so on. Students who submit any assignment late due to extenuating circumstances may send me an email, with documentation for the delay's motives, to request a penalty waiver. Such requests should be sent in advance whenever possible.

Grade revisions. If a student is unhappy with their grade on an assignment, they should feel free to email me or come to office hours. I am happy to explain the grade and suggest ways to get a better grade next time around. Students may also request a review of any graded assignment. To do so, they must send me an email with a reasoned argument to motivate the request no later than 3 days after the assignment has been returned. I will examine the argument and determine whether the grade should be revised. As a result of the review, the grade may be raised, lowered, or left unchanged. Any revised grades will be final.

3.5 Important dates

These are the course's most important dates and deadlines. All hours are in Nashville time (CT).

Groups formed and cases assigned	.....	September 8, in class
Exercise #1 due	.....	September 18, 6pm
Exercise #2 due	.....	September 29, 2pm
Group memo due	.....	October 7, 6pm
Paper review #1 due	.....	October 13, 2pm
Exercise #3 due	.....	October 27, 2pm
Paper review #2 due	.....	November 10, 2pm
Group check-in with instructor	.....	November 11 - 13
Group presentation	.....	December 1 or 3, in class
Group policy report due	.....	December 9, 6pm

3.6 Technology in the classroom

Quizzes will be done online, so in order to take them students must come to class with a wifi-enabled device (cellphones are fine, since quizzes will be short). For the remaining of the sessions I expect students not to use electronic devices unless it's strictly necessary (e.g., to connect via Zoom). Abundant research has shown that students who use laptops during class [get lower grades](#), and that even when laptops are used exclusively to take notes they are [detrimental to learning](#), when compared to taking notes by hand. Students who have special needs requiring them to use electronic devices to take notes should get in touch with me.

3.7 Academic integrity

Students are expected to have read and agreed to Vanderbilt University's [Honor System](#). In all written assignments, students must use standard citation practices in the social sciences and properly cite any books, articles, or other resources used. Any case of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty would be taken very seriously, in agreement with Vanderbilt policy. Consequences of academic dishonesty can include a 0 grade in the assignment, failure of the course, or disciplinary action.

3.8 Diversity and inclusion

I am committed to making this course a safe and productive learning environment for all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, abilities, or religion. I see people's diverse backgrounds and worldviews not merely as differences to tolerate but as valuable assets to recognize and celebrate. When in the classroom, I expect students to treat each other with kindness, openness, and respect.

Any student who feels they need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should email me as soon as possible to discuss their needs. We will work with Vanderbilt's [Student Access Services](#) to accommodate their needs.

3.9 One-on-one support

Students are welcome to meet with me to discuss any questions or concerns they may have. I hold office hours on Thursday after class (from 4 to 5pm) over Zoom (969 9350 6431). Students who cannot come to office hours at the set time should feel free to email me so we can find an alternative time. Students are also welcome to email me with any questions or concerns. I typically respond within 48 hours.

3.10 Brightspace and syllabus

The course's Brightspace page is <https://brightspace.vanderbilt.edu/d2l/home/233447>. I will post readings, slides, assignments, grades, and announcements on Brightspace, in alignment with this syllabus. Assignments, including quizzes, will be submitted through Brightspace. This syllabus remains the main guiding document for the class. I reserve the right to amend the syllabus throughout the semester, but I will alert students of any changes should they be necessary. This version of the syllabus is dated August 24, 2020.

4 Course schedule and readings

The course is organized around weekly themes, which we will explore through readings, in-class discussions and activities, and a variety of assignments. Weekly themes are, in turn, organized in blocks:

- First, a block of 2 weeks focused on the conceptualization and measurement of corruption. We will consider different ways of thinking about and measuring corruption, and investigate their implications for the study as well as the control of corruption.
- Second, we will spend 3 weeks examining the three main *Approaches* to corruption. We will look at corruption from the lens of economics, institutions, and culture, and examine how the concepts and theories of these three perspectives help us understand corruption.
- Next, we will do a block of 4 weeks centered on some of the most important *Arenas* of corruption in the public sector, namely public service delivery, public procurement, public employment, and elections and

legislatures. We will examine how corruption plays out in different areas of government activity, and the promises and pitfalls of policies designed to counter corruption in these areas specifically.

- The last four weeks of the semester will be dedicated to major *Answers* to corruption, or public policy anti-corruption strategies that are commonly leveraged across sectors of government activity. For each of these four *Answers* (transparency and technology; sanctions and selection at the polls; citizen participation and civil society; and auditors, judges, and prosecutors) we will dissect their rationale and consider how the political, economic, cultural, and organizational context matters for their success.

4.1 Conceptualizing corruption (August 25 & 27)

Required readings

- Scott, James C. *Comparative political corruption*. Prentice Hall, 1972. Preface and Chapter 1. [21 pages]
- Bussell, Jennifer. "Typologies of corruption: A pragmatic approach." Chapter 1 in Rose-Ackerman, Susan, and Paul Lagunes, eds. *Greed, corruption, and the modern state: Essays in political economy*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015. [22 pages]
- Warren, Mark E. "Political corruption as duplicitous exclusion." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39.4 (2006): 803-807. [4 pages]

Suggested readings

- Heidenheimer, Arnold J., and Michael Johnston, eds. *Political corruption: Concepts and contexts*. Third edition, Transaction Publishers, 2002. Chapters 2 and 3.
- Rothstein, Bo, and Aiysha Varraich. *Making sense of corruption*. Cambridge University Press, 2017. Chapters 1 and 2.
- Karklins, Rasma. "Typology of post-communist corruption." *Problems of post-communism* 49.4 (2002): 22-32.

4.2 Measurements and patterns of corruption (September 1 & 3)

Required readings

- Heywood, Paul M. "Measuring Corruption: perspectives, critiques, and limits." Chapter 10 in Heywood, Paul M., ed. *Routledge handbook of political corruption*. Routledge, 2014. [15 pages]
- Olken, Benjamin A. "Corruption perceptions vs. corruption reality." *Journal of Public Economics* 93.7-8 (2009): 950-964. [14 pages]
- Svensson, Jakob. "Eight questions about corruption." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19.3 (2005): 19-42. [22 pages]

Suggested readings

- Razafindrakoto, Mireille, and François Roubaud. "Are international databases on corruption reliable? A comparison of expert opinion surveys and household surveys in sub-Saharan Africa." *World Development* 38.8 (2010): 1057-1069.

- Ang, Yuen Yuen. "Unbundling Corruption: Revisiting Six Questions on Corruption." *Global Perspectives* 1.1 (2020): 12036.
- Seligson, Mitchell A. "The measurement and impact of corruption victimization: Survey evidence from Latin America." *World Development* 34.2 (2006): 381-404.
- Transparency International. 2020. *Corruption perceptions index 2019*.

4.3 Approaches to corruption I: Economics (September 8 & 10)

Required readings

- Bardhan, Pranab. "The economist's approach to the problem of corruption." *World Development* 34.2 (2006): 341-348. [7 pages]
- Banerjee, Abhijit V., Esther Duflo, and Rachel Glennerster, 2008. "Putting a Band-Aid on a Corpse: Incentives for Nurses in the Indian Public Health Care System." *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 6(2-3): 487-500. [14 pages]
- Kang, David C. "Transaction costs and crony capitalism in East Asia." *Comparative Politics* (2003): 439-458. [16 pages]

Suggested readings

- Olken, Benjamin A., and Rohini Pande. "Corruption in developing countries." *Annual Review of Economics* 4.1 (2012): 479-509.
- Banerjee, Abhijit V. "A theory of misgovernance." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112.4 (1997): 1289-1332.
- Persson, Anna, Bo Rothstein, and Jan Teorell. "Why anticorruption reforms fail: Systemic corruption as a collective action problem." *Governance* 26.3 (2013): 449-471.
- McMillan, John, and Pablo Zoido. "How to subvert democracy: Montesinos in Peru." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18.4 (2004): 69-92.

4.4 Approaches to corruption II: Institutions (September 15 & 17)

Required readings

- Johnston, Michael. *Syndromes of corruption: wealth, power, and democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2005. Chapter 3. [24 pages]
- Dahlström, Carl, Victor Lapuente, and Jan Teorell. "The merit of meritocratization: Politics, bureaucracy, and the institutional deterrents of corruption." *Political Research Quarterly* 65.3 (2012): 656-668. [10 pages]
- Helmke, Gretchen, and Steven Levitsky. "Informal institutions and comparative politics: A research agenda." *Perspectives on Politics* 2.4 (2004): 725-740. [10 pages]

Suggested readings

- Treisman, Daniel. "What have we learned about the causes of corruption from ten years of cross-national empirical research?." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007): 211-244.

- Jana Kunicova and Susan Rose-Ackerman, "Electoral Rules and Constitutional Structures as Constraints on Corruption." *British Journal of Political Science* 35 (2005)
- Gingerich, Daniel W. *Political institutions and party-directed corruption in South America: Stealing for the team*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. Chapter 1.
- Carothers, Christopher. "Taking Authoritarian Anti-Corruption Reform Seriously." Forthcoming in *Perspectives on Politics*.

4.5 Approaches to corruption III: Culture (September 22 & 24)

Required readings

- Olivier De Sardan, Jean-Pierre. "A moral economy of corruption in Africa?" *Journal of Modern African Studies* (1999): 25-52. [25 pages]
- Gupta, Akhil. "Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics, and the imagined state." *American Ethnologist* 22.2 (1995): 375-402. [20 pages]

Suggested readings

- Fisman, Ray and Edward Miguel. "Nature or Nurture? Understanding the Culture of Corruption". Chapter 4 in Fisman, Ray, and Edward Miguel. *Economic gangsters: Corruption, violence, and the poverty of nations*. Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Barr, Abigail, and Danila Serra. "Corruption and culture: An experimental analysis." *Journal of Public Economics* 94.11-12 (2010): 862-869.
- Rothstein, Bo, and Davide Torsello. "Bribery in preindustrial societies: Understanding the universalism-particularism puzzle." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 70.2 (2014): 263-284.
- Hira, Anil. "Broken windows: Why culture matters in corruption reform." *Journal of Developing Societies* 32.1 (2016): 1-16.

4.6 Arenas of corruption I: Public service delivery (September 29 & October 1)

Required readings

- Stokes, Susan C., Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno, and Valeria Brusco. *Brokers, voters, and clientelism: The puzzle of distributive politics*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. Chapter 1. [25 pages]
- Fried, Brian J., Paul Lagunes, and Atheendar Venkataramani. "Corruption and inequality at the crossroad: A multimethod study of bribery and discrimination in Latin America." *Latin American Research Review* (2010): 76-97. [17 pages]

Suggested readings

- Auyero, Javier. "The logic of clientelism in Argentina: An ethnographic account." *Latin American research review* (2000): 55-81.
- Bertrand, Marianne, et al. "Obtaining a driver's license in India: an experimental approach to studying corruption." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122.4 (2007): 1639-1676.
- Gans-Morse, J., Borges, M., Makarin, A., Mannah-Blankson, T., Nickow, A., & Zhang, D. (2018). "Reducing bureaucratic corruption: Interdisciplinary perspectives on what works." *World Development*, 105, 171-188.

4.7 Arenas of corruption II: Public procurement (October 6 & 8)

Required readings

- OECD. *Preventing corruption in public procurement*. (2016). [24 pages]
- Blundo, Giorgio. “An ordered corruption? The social world of public procurement.” Chapter 7 in Blundo, Giorgio, Jean-Pierre Olivier de-Sardan, N. Bako Arifari, and M. Tidjani Alou. *Everyday corruption and the state: Citizens and public officials in Africa*. Zed Books Ltd., 2013. [38 pages]

Suggested readings

- Charron, Nicholas, Carl Dahlström, Mihaly Fazekas, and Victor Lapuente (2017). “Careers, Connections, and Corruption Risks: Investigating the impact of bureaucratic meritocracy on public procurement processes.” *The Journal of Politics*, 79(1), 89-104.
- Bandiera, Oriana, Andrea Prat, and Tommaso Valletti. “Active and passive waste in government spending: Evidence from a policy experiment.” *American Economic Review* 99.4 (2009): 1278-1308.
- Di Tella, Rafael, and Ernesto Schargrodsky. “The role of wages and auditing during a crackdown on corruption in the city of Buenos Aires.” *The Journal of Law and Economics* 46.1 (2003): 269-292.

4.8 Arenas of corruption III: Public employment (October 13 & 15)

Required readings

- Colonnelli, Emanuele, Mounu Prem, and Edoardo Teso. 2019. “Patronage and selection in public sector organizations.” Forthcoming in *American Economic Review*. [36 pages]
- Sorauf, Frank J. “The silent revolution in patronage.” *Public Administration Review* (1960): 28-34. [7 pages]
- ★ Hassan, Mai. “The strategic shuffle: Ethnic geography, the internal security apparatus, and elections in Kenya.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61.2 (2017): 382-395. [12 pages] (*paper for review*)

Suggested readings

- Grindle, Merilee. 2012. *Jobs for the Boys: Patronage and the State in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Introduction.
- Guardado, Jenny. “Office-selling, corruption, and long-term development in Peru.” *American Political Science Review* 112.4 (2018): 971-995.
- Wade, Robert. “The market for public office: Why the Indian state is not better at development.” *World Development* 13.4 (1985): 467-497.
- Geddes, Barbara. “A game theoretic model of reform in Latin American democracies.” *The American Political Science Review* (1991): 371-392.

4.9 Arenas of corruption IV: Elections and legislatures (October 20 & 22)

Required readings

- Hidalgo, F. Daniel, and Simeon Nichter. "Voter buying: Shaping the electorate through clientelism." *American Journal of Political Science* 60.2 (2016): 436-455. [17 pages]
- Ofosu, George Kwaku. "Do fairer elections increase the responsiveness of politicians?." *American Political Science Review* 113.4 (2019): 963-979. [15 pages]
- Kalla, Joshua L., and David E. Broockman. "Campaign contributions facilitate access to congressional officials: A randomized field experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 60.3 (2016): 545-558. [12 pages]

Suggested readings

- Gans-Morse, Jordan, Sebastian Mazzuca, and Simeon Nichter. "Varieties of clientelism: Machine politics during elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 58.2 (2014): 415-432.
- Asunka, Joseph, Sarah Brierley, Miriam Golden, Eric Kramon, and George Ofosu (2019). "Electoral fraud or violence: The effect of observers on party manipulation strategies." *British Journal of Political Science*, 49(1), 129-151.
- Callen, Michael, and James D. Long. "Institutional corruption and election fraud: Evidence from a field experiment in Afghanistan." *American Economic Review* 105.1 (2015): 354-81.
- Bertrand, Marianne, Matilde Bombardini, and Francesco Trebbi. "Is it whom you know or what you know? An empirical assessment of the lobbying process." *American Economic Review* 104.12 (2014): 3885-3920.

4.10 Answers to corruption I: Transparency and technology (October 27 & 29)

Required readings

- Reinikka, Ritva, and Jakob Svensson. "Fighting corruption to improve schooling: Evidence from a newspaper campaign in Uganda." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 3.2-3 (2005): 259-267. [8 pages]
- Hetherington, Gregg. *Guerrilla auditors: The politics of transparency in neoliberal Paraguay*. Duke University Press, 2011. Chapter 1. [23 pages]
- Lewis-Faupel, Sean, Yusuf Negggers, Benjamin A. Olken, and Rohini Pande. "Can electronic procurement improve infrastructure provision? Evidence from public works in India and Indonesia." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 8.3 (2016): 258-83. [23 pages]

Suggested readings

- Bussell, Jennifer. *Corruption and reform in India: Public services in the digital age*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapter 1.
- Balán, Manuel. "Competition by denunciation: The political dynamics of corruption scandals in Argentina and Chile." *Comparative Politics* 43.4 (2011): 459-478.

- Malesky, Edmund, Paul Schuler, and Anh Tran. “The adverse effects of sunshine: A field experiment on legislative transparency in an authoritarian assembly.” *American Political Science Review* (2012): 762-786.
- Muralidharan, Karthik, Paul Niehaus, and Sandip Sukhtankar. “Building state capacity: Evidence from biometric smartcards in India.” *American Economic Review* 106.10 (2016): 2895-2929.

4.11 Answers to corruption II: Sanctions and selection at the polls (November 3 & 5)

Required readings

- Boas, Taylor C., F. Daniel Hidalgo, and Marcus André Melo. “Norms versus action: Why voters fail to sanction malfeasance in Brazil.” *American Journal of Political Science* 63.2 (2019): 385-400. [14 pages]
- Chong, Alberto, et al. “Does corruption information inspire the fight or quash the hope? A field experiment in Mexico on voter turnout, choice, and party identification.” *The Journal of Politics* 77.1 (2015): 55-71. [16 pages]
- Fernández-Vázquez, Pablo, Pablo Barberá, and Gonzalo Rivero. “Rooting out corruption or rooting for corruption? The heterogeneous electoral consequences of scandals.” *Political Science Research and Methods* 4.2 (2016): 379-397. [17 pages]

Suggested readings

- Bobonis, Gustavo J., Luis R. Cámara Fuertes, and Rainer Schwabe. “Monitoring corruptible politicians.” *American Economic Review* 106.8 (2016): 2371-2405.
- Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. “Exposing corrupt politicians: the effects of Brazil’s publicly released audits on electoral outcomes.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123.2 (2008): 703-745.
- Bauhr, Monika, and Nicholas Charron. “Insider or outsider? Grand corruption and electoral accountability.” *Comparative Political Studies* 51.4 (2018): 415-446.
- Incerti, Trevor. “Corruption information and vote share: A meta-analysis and lessons for experimental design.” Forthcoming in *American Political Science Review*.

4.12 Answers to corruption III: Citizen participation and civil society (November 10 & 12)

Required readings

- Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina. “Controlling corruption through collective action.” *Journal of Democracy* 24.1 (2013): 101-115. [14 pages]
- Johnston, Michael. *Corruption, contention and reform: The power of deep democratization*. Cambridge University Press, 2014. Chapter 1. [28 pages]
- ★ Ang, Yuen Yuen. “Authoritarian restraints on online activism revisited: Why “I-paid-a-bribe” worked in India but failed in China.” *Comparative Politics* 47.1 (2014): 21-40. [16 pages] (*paper for review*)

Suggested readings

- Olken, Benjamin A. “Monitoring corruption: Evidence from a field experiment in Indonesia.” *Journal of Political Economy* 115.2 (2007): 200-249. [45 pages]

- Klitgaard, Robert E., Ronald MacLean Abaroa, and H. Lindsey Parris. 2000. *Corrupt cities: A practical guide to cure and prevention*. World Bank.
- Transparency International. 2014. "Anti-corruption kit: 15 ideas for young activists."

4.13 Answers to corruption IV: Auditors, judges, and prosecutors (November 17 & 19)

Required readings

- O'Donnell, Guillermo A. "Horizontal accountability in new democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 9.3 (1998): 112-126. [11 pages]
- Zamboni, Yves, and Stephan Litschig. "Audit risk and rent extraction: Evidence from a randomized evaluation in Brazil." *Journal of Development Economics* 134 (2018): 133-149. [15 pages]
- Alt, James E., and David Dreyer Lassen. "Enforcement and public corruption: Evidence from the American states." *The Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 30.2 (2012): 306-338. [28 pages]

Suggested readings

- Avis, Eric, Claudio Ferraz, and Frederico Finan. "Do government audits reduce corruption? Estimating the impacts of exposing corrupt politicians." *Journal of Political Economy* 126.5 (2018): 1912-1964.
- Li, Li, et al. "Enforcement and political power in anticorruption: Evidence from China." *World Development* 98 (2017): 133-147.
- Van Aaken, Anne, Lars P. Feld, and Stefan Voigt. "Do independent prosecutors deter political corruption? An empirical evaluation across seventy-eight countries." *American Law and Economics Review* 12.1 (2010): 204-244.
- Della Porta, Donatella, and Alberto Vannucci. "Corruption and anti-corruption: The political defeat of 'Clean Hands' in Italy." *West European Politics* 30.4 (2007): 830-853.
- Transparency International. 2007. *Global Corruption Report 2007: Corruption in Judicial Systems*.

4.14 Group presentations and conclusions (December 1 & 3)

No required readings

5 Additional resources on corruption

In addition to the required readings detailed above, here I include some additional resources (academic, policy, and fiction) that students may find useful throughout the semester.

5.1 Textbooks

In this class we will not follow a particular textbook and instead read academic papers, policy reports, book chapters, and other materials. That being said, the following textbooks have plenty of good ideas about corruption and anti-corruption efforts which may be useful for complementing the required readings as well as for completing assignments.

- Rose-Ackerman, Susan, and Bonnie J. Palifka. *Corruption and government: Causes, consequences, and reform*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

- Fisman, Raymond, and Miriam A. Golden. *Corruption: What everyone needs to know*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

5.2 Key organizations and online resources

Here I list the sites of some leading organizations in the anti-corruption field that provide useful resources for researchers and policymakers:

- [Transparency International](#) – leading, global anti-corruption NGO. Their website has dozens of reports and resources specific to countries and to [policy areas](#).
- [UNODC](#) – United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime, which covers global anti-corruption efforts under the scope of the UN Convention Against Corruption.
- [OECD Anti-Corruption Hub](#) – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development anti-corruption page, with useful resources by sector and by country.
- [GRECO](#) – the Council of Europe's Group of States Against Corruption.
- [OAS Anti-Corruption Portal](#) – Organization of American States' anti-corruption site, including country reports and best practices.
- [Global Anti-Corruption Portal](#) – UNDP site with useful resources on the link between corruption and development, organized by country and by sector.
- [ProPublica](#) – well-researched, investigative journalism stories on corruption (and other problems), mostly in the US.
- [European Research Centre for Anti-Corruption and State building](#) – Berlin-based center publishing data and reports on anti-corruption efforts.

5.3 Novels, movies, and TV shows

Fiction can provide useful insights into the dynamics of corruption and anti-corruption efforts. While not required at all for succeeding in this class, watching or reading some of these materials may be helpful and interesting. As you read or watch any of these, think about how corruption and anti-corruption are represented, and about how those representations relate to the social and political context of creators.

- *Conversation in the cathedral* – novel written by Mario Vargas Llosa, set in Peru during the Odría dictatorship in the 1950s.
- *Serpico* – movie directed by Sidney Lumet, about police corruption in New York in the 1960s.
- *1992* – TV show about the *Mani Pulite* corruption scandal in the Italy of the early 1990s.
- *The wire* – TV show about the interplay of corruption in policing, politics, and bureaucracy, set in Baltimore in the 2000s.
- *The mechanism* – TV show about the *Lava Jato* corruption scandal in Brazil that started in 2014.

6 Campus resources

6.1 Academic writing

Writing is a critical communication skill in almost any job you will have after graduation. Writing well, especially writing well about complex issues like corruption, is by no means an innate skill. It takes reflection, feedback, and practice to become a good writer. This class will provide students with an opportunity to improve their writing through those three channels. Additional support, for those who find it more difficult to write or who simply want to get better at it, can be obtained from Vanderbilt's [Writing Studio](#).

6.2 Mental health

Staying emotionally and mentally healthy is critical for personal, academic, and professional success. The ongoing public health, economic and political crises can make this more of a challenge. If you are struggling with any mental health issues, and/or if you want to build your emotional and mental wellbeing, the office of Vanderbilt's [Dean of Students](#) offers a number of useful resources, including the [University Counseling Center](#) and the [Center for Student Wellbeing](#). A student who is dealing with difficulties that hinder their ability to succeed in this class, to a point where they feel they need special accommodations, should email me so we can discuss their situation.

6.3 Equity, diversity and inclusion

College is a unique opportunity not only to gain skills and knowledge, but also and critically to gain insight into one's background and identities and how they relate to the identities and backgrounds of others around us. Vanderbilt has a number of centers that can provide useful resources in that journey, including the [Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), the [Black Cultural Center](#), the [Women's Center](#), and the [Office of LGBTQI Life](#). I am available to discuss matters of equity and diversity and will keep those conversations as confidential as possible. Students should be aware however that all faculty are "mandated reporters" who are legally obligated to report any allegations of sexual misconduct and any suspected discrimination to Vanderbilt's [Title IX Coordinator](#).

6.4 Career guidance

I encourage all students to think hard about what they want to do after graduation and about what they want to do in the long term. Vanderbilt's [Career Center](#) offers a number of useful resources, including coaching, ads on job and internship opportunities, and advice for fellowships and graduate schools. I hope that this class will motivate students to take more classes in political science and other social sciences, and to consider careers related to politics and public policy. I am always happy to meet students to discuss their post-graduation plans, and I can offer first-hand advice on careers in academia and in international organizations.