Course description
The peculiar and enigmatic relationship between corruption and politics is poorly understood and commonly distorted by ideological rhetoric. This seminar explores the many unusual paradoxes of corruption and its effect on economic and social variables. Our aim is to understand characteristics of different forms of corruption, the sweeping anti-corruption efforts that are gaining steam worldwide, and the often-questionable political motives behind them. We will also investigate many paradoxes of corruption and the economy such as how China has grown rapidly while ranking among the most corrupt countries, and why Latin America is the only region where corruption seems to reduce inequality. Overall, we aim to show a precise picture of when and how corruption thrives, and how to properly combat it.

Course materials
Your will read 4-5 papers per week, for a total of 120 pages. When I say read, I mean reading strategically, not linearly. Your job is to *mine* the text you are reading for information. Instead of cruising along with the narrative, you need to dive in, find the information you need, and move along to the next stack of readings for class.

All required materials will be uploaded to our website and will remain there for the entire course. The only book that I recommend you buy is:

To succeed in this course, you must read the required readings before class. In each class, I will generally tell you a bit about how to prepare for the next class.

Requirements & grading
– Participation (20%): Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to class, actively engage in discussions, and link assigned materials to relevant debates in the media and politics. Readings marked as “additional readings” are not required.
– Midterm exam (30%): Response paper (900 words), due on October 15th.
– Final paper (50%): Research must be delivered as a written paper (5000 - 7500 words). The project may be co-authored with another student. Most successful papers tend to be collaborations between students that have similar interests. Quantitative research such as coding quantitative measures or developing original statistical analysis (R, Stata, or Python) can also be delivered as final projects if visualizations of the data and replicable code are provided. You will be required to hand in the following sections (in advance, on the dates indicated) as progress reports throughout the course:
  – October 21: Abstract and sources (10%)
  – November 11: Preliminary results (15%)
  – December 6: Final paper (25%)

Late Policy
Barring an extraordinary excuse, late papers will be marked down one-third of a grade (e.g., A to A-minus) per day.

1Extract from Sweeney 2012, available [here](#).
Collaboration in Written Work

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

Harvard Honor Code

Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgment of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one’s own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.

Required readings

Introduction (September 4)

Corruption (September 9)

Types of corruption (September 16)

Clientelism (September 23)


**Influence (September 30)**


**Electoral corruption & democratization (October 7)**


**Midterm due on October 15th, 2019. Papers delivered late won’t be accepted.**

**Final paper deadline: Deliver abstract and sources that will be used for your final paper by October 21**

**Economic effects (October 21)**


Protest (October 28)

Accountability (November 4)

(Final paper deadline: Deliver preliminary results of your final paper by November 11)

Media & transparency (November 18)

Bureaucratic reform (November 25)

(Final paper due on December 6)
Additional readings
You do not have to read these. This list will be helpful in case you want to know more about a specific topic.

Corruption

Types of corruption

Clientelism
Influence

Electoral corruption & democratization

Economic effects

**Protest**

**Accountability**

**Media & transparency**
Bureaucratic reform


Audits