Purpose: This course concerns the interaction between colonialism and the origins of democracy. By “colonialism” I mean the spread of European political authority over nearly the whole world between the fifteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. By “democracy” I mean a state with two characteristics: universal enfranchisement of adults and election of all those exercising ultimate political authority. Colonialism interacts with democracy through its effect on political discourse among colonizers. The term “discourse” refers to a higher-order element of the neural process that compiles and interprets texts; a “text” is any communicative event. A single spoken text is called an “utterance”; spoken text in general is called “talk.” Linguistic discourse selects among components of language and arrangements of the components while coordinating their combination into utterances and graphic or tangible texts. Discourse is political when participants in linguistic communication interpret the texts that it shapes as pertaining to the exercise of political authority.

Evaluation of performance: Students will write a final essay of five thousand words that uses all three assigned readings to answer the prompt: How did colonialism cause democracy?

The essay is due Friday 23 March at 11:59 p.m.

The assigned length is a target. Very concise essays may be shorter if they answer the question fully; essays that are longer should say more to earn the same grade.

The lectures make an argument that colonialism caused democracy. This argument contradicts existing theories of democracy summarized in the reading by Barbara Geddes. Your essay must show knowledge of the argument. You may accept it or criticize it. Since criticism is more difficult and evokes more skepticism in me, critical evaluation of the argument presented in the lectures and the assigned book written by me earns an automatic third of a grade (except that if your paper is an A anyway, you do not automatically earn A+). But do not decide to criticize in order to earn this third of a grade. It exists to make you just indifferent between accepting and criticizing what you have been taught. Either way you must know the argument, since if you do not know it, any criticism that you offer will be directed at something else.

You must submit your essay through turnitin.com at the link on the class site. Please single space
your essay.

**Do not plagiarize.** Posted on the course website are guidance concerning mandatory references to the assigned readings or to other sources that you may use in your paper and guidance concerning the difference between quotation and paraphrase, either of which still requires proper reference.

Readings:

