

17.50, Introduction to Comparative Politics (Fall 2006)
Prof. Chappell Lawson
Session 11: Class Debate

Format for class debate on the collapse of German democracy

We are to divide the class into groups of four, with the remainder of the students acting as judges. The groups will be assigned one of four angles to explain the collapse of the Weimar Republic: structural, cultural, institutional, or agency/accident. The debate will be conducted in four rounds. In round one, the first member of each group will state the group's argument. In round two, the second member of each team will critique the case made by the other three groups. In round three, the third member will respond to the critiques of her group's argument. In round four, the last member will summarize the case for his group. The judge will then select what she thought was the best case and state why. The teams will then decide among themselves who will assume which role in their assigned group; all statements will be limited to two minutes each. Following the debate, we will then have the class vote on (1) who made the best case and (2) which explanation was most convincing, independent of presentation.