

Political science professors sign statement warning of threats to US democracy | Newswise

By University of Notre Dame

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Five University of Notre Dame professors who specialize in different areas of democracy studies recently signed a strong statement of concern issued by the think tank New America warning of the serious threats to democracy in the U.S. Notre Dame is a longtime leader in research on democratization in comparative perspective through a number of campus institutes, and the American politics subfield that is part of the Department of Political Science emphasizes research on inclusion.

As demonstrated by the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project, there has been a “significant erosion of liberal democracy in the U.S. since 2016,” Michael Coppedge, professor of political science and one of the V-Dem principal investigators, said. V-Dem has measured hundreds of attributes of democracy and governance for most countries going back to 1789. The 2021 V-Dem report on democracy, “Autocratization Goes Viral,” underscores the dramatic spikes in countries becoming more autocratic. In fact, V-Dem reports that, as of 2020, only 4 percent of the world’s population is living in democratizing nations. It also reports that no country in North America or Western and Eastern Europe has advanced in democracy in the last decade, while democracy in the U.S. (along with Hungary, Poland, Serbia and Slovenia) has declined substantially.

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