

Political Science 472H
Democratic Theory
Spring 2010
Tuesdays and Thursday, 11:00am to 12:15pm, 115 Murphy

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30pm; Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30am and by appointment

Democratic theory is a large topic and can be approached in many different ways. In this course we will try to come with some answers to this basic but surprisingly difficult question: what is a democracy? We will spend the first part of the course surveying some of the classic theories of democracy; after that we will move to contemporary arguments about democracy. A large part of the course will be devoted to the problems and possible solutions of democratic theory and practice. A primary goal of this course is to gain a better understanding of democracy theory, while secondary goals are to learn to read texts well, write carefully constructed arguments, and to learn to think critically.

Requirements

Reading and Participation

I expect students to do the readings every week and to come prepared to discuss them in class. Make sure you bring the assigned readings with you to class. This class will rise or fall on the shoulders of the students: all students must contribute intelligently to class discussion. I will rarely lecture. If you do not attend class, then you cannot participate, which will be reflected in your grade. Class participation is worth 10% of the grade.

Quizzes and Exams

There will be one quiz, one midterm and one final. The midterm and final will be cumulative. All quizzes and exams will include short questions that will each ask you to explain one aspect about a particular reading; the final and possibly the midterm may also have longer questions that will ask you to discuss two readings in tandem with each other. The quiz is worth 5% of the grade; the midterm is 15%; the final is 25%.

Writings Assignments

Very Short Papers: You will write three papers, two double-spaced pages each, on the day's reading over the first few weeks of the semester. You must email me the paper schedule you prefer (see below) by noon on January 18th. You may not change your schedule once you choose it. Each short paper is 5% of your grade.

Final Paper: There will be one 10 to 15 page paper on a topic of your choosing, though I will suggest some topics. You will need to meet with me to discuss your topic, you will need to hand in a draft of at least four pages before the paper is due, and you will need to present your paper to the class. I will hand out a full schedule later in the semester, with a breakdown of how it will be graded. The final paper is worth 30% of your grade.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	F	62 or below
B	83-87	C-	70-72		

E-Mail Policy

I sign on to email during the week, but only occasionally on the weekend. Do not expect me to reply to your email immediately, though I will respond within 24 hours during the week, and often quicker than that. I use email for questions that can be answered briefly; I do not use email to get into extended discussions. If you need to discuss a paper, an exam, or a course reading (or something else), please come see me during my office hours or make an appointment to see me. Email is an excellent way to make an appointment with me.

Laptop and Electronics Policy

Laptops may only be used for taking notes in class; if they become distracting they will be banned from class. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and out of view during class.

Readings

The following books have been ordered for class. Try to get the right edition of each book as we will often refer to page numbers in class.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Penguin)
J.S. Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford)
Madison, et. al, *Federalist Papers* (Penguin)
James Bohman, *Democracy across Borders* (MIT Press)
Henry Richardson, *Democratic Autonomy* (Oxford)
Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (Transaction)

Readings marked (BB) can be found through the external link on the Blackboard site for this course.
Readings marked (ER) can be found through electronic reserves.

Short Paper Schedule

1. January 21, February 11, February 18
2. January 26, February 9, February 23
3. February 2, February 16, February 25

Be sure to email me the number of the schedule you want by noon on January 18th.

Class Schedule

(The schedule is tentative and I may make changes as the semester progresses.)

Foundations

- 1/12 Introduction; Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron"
- 1/14 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 1 and Book 2, chs. 1-6
- 1/19 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, finish Book 2
- 1/21 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 3 and Book 4, chs. 1-2, 7-8
- 1/26 Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chs. 2-3, 5
- 1/28 Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chs. 6-8
- 2/2 Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chs. 10, 12, 16
- 2/4 Quiz; Federalist Papers, #1, 9, 10, 35, 37, 39
- 2/9 Federalist Papers, 47-57
- 2/11 Federalist Papers, 62-64, 78; The Letter of Brutus, nos. 1-4 (BB)
- 2/16 Petit, "Republican Freedom and Contestory Democratization" (ER)

Deliberation

- 2/18 Richardson, *Democratic Autonomy*, introduction and chapters 2-4
- 2/23 Richardson, *Democratic Autonomy*, chapters 5-9
- 2/25 Richardson, *Democratic Autonomy*, chapters 10-14
- 3/2 Richardson, *Democratic Autonomy*, chapters 15-17 and conclusion
- 3/4 Midterm
- 3/9 Spring Break
- 3/11 Spring Break

Globalization

- 3/16 Bohman, *Democracy across Borders*, introduction and chapter one
- 3/18 Bohman, *Democracy across Borders*, chapter two
- 3/23 Bohman, *Democracy across Borders*, chapter three
- 3/25 Bohman, *Democracy across Borders*, chapter four and conclusion

Criticisms and Complexities

- 3/30 Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, part 4 (chs 20-3) (ER)
- 4/1 Individual meetings about final paper
- 4/6 Roemer, *Equal Opportunity*, 1-24 (ER)
- 4/8 Draft of paper due
- 4/13 Phillips, "'Really' Equal: Opportunities and Autonomy" (BB); Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, part one
- 4/15 Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, part two
- 4/20 Presentations
- 4/22 Presentations
- 4/26 Conclusion; final paper due
- 5/6 Final Exam (8:30am)