

POLS 110DT - Democratic Theory and Its Critics

University of California, Santa Barbara
Spring 2018

Course Information

Instructor: Caleb R. Miller

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Course Time: TR 9:30-10:45am

Office Hours: TR 11-12:30pm

Course Location: Phelps 1445

Office Location: Ellison 2813

Course Description

What defines democracy? Why do we value democratic practices? Is democracy really the best form of government? In this course, students will become familiar with the basics of democratic theory, as well as a number of contemporary debates concerning the nature and value of democracy itself. By engaging with relevant theoretical criticisms and empirical accounts, special attention will also be paid to the contemporary obstacles to democratic practice.

Students should expect heavy reading loads throughout the term, sometimes bordering on 60-70 pages. As always, students are also encouraged to read actively, underlining/highlighting the text, writing marginal notes, and keeping a separate set of reading notes. To succeed, students must attend all lectures and sections.

Additionally, students are asked to download the free Socrative Student app for their laptop, tablet, or phone for use in class. This software allows students to easily complete quizzes posed at the start of class and will be used for attendance purposes. If students are unable to use this app, paper copies of the quiz will be made available.

Course Objectives

- Critically engage with contemporary works of political theory and philosophy
- Cogently discuss the arguments and ideas appropriate to these works
- Write tightly argued, coherent, well-supported essays that places different thinkers in conversation with one another

Required Texts

- Anthony Arblaster — *Democracy* (Open University Press/978-0335209699)

- Chantal Mouffe — *On the Political* (Routledge/978-0415305211)

All other readings will be made available on Gauchospace.

Assignments and Grading

20%	In-Class Quizzes
5%	Discussion Questions
20%	Paper 1
25%	Paper 2
30%	Paper 3

In-Class Quizzes: At the beginning of each lecture, students will be given a few minutes to respond to a series of multiple choice questions related to the day's reading using the Socrative app. Students with excused absences may make up missed quizzes within one week during office hours; students with unexcused absences will receive a zero on that day's quiz. At the end of the quarter, the quiz scores will be curved according to the highest scoring student.

Discussion Questions: Over the quarter, students will be asked to email the professor 2-3 discussion questions by 5pm the day before the lecture. These questions should focus on major concepts in the text and aim to inspire discussion. To sign up on the schedule, students should use the Google Spreadsheet available on the Gauchospace page.

Papers: Three 4 page (maximum) double-spaced papers, 1" margins, addressing concepts relevant to the course. These papers will be used to assess the students' ability to make strong, concise, conceptual arguments through reference to the text. Paper topics will be made available roughly one and a half weeks in advance of due date. Chicago style citations (as endnotes), title page, and works cited page are required. Papers will be graded according to a rubric found on the course Gauchospace page; students are asked to attach a rubric to each paper they turn in.

Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to meet with a writing lab fellow prior to turning in their first papers. Appointments can be made through the MyCLAS system or at the CLAS office, SRB 3210.

Finally, plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such. If any students are caught plagiarizing, the case will be turned over to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Any student unclear about what may constitute plagiarism can turn to the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity on the Judicial Affairs website.

Course Schedule

Week 1 - *Introduction*

T, 4/3 - Introduction

R, 4/5 - Wendy Brown - "We are All Democrats Now..." from *Democracy in What State?*; Theda Skocpol - "A Transformed Civic World" & "From Membership to Management" from *Diminished Democracy*; & John Cassidy - "Is America an Oligarchy?"

Week 2 - *Basic Theory*

T, 4/10 - Anthony Arblaster - *Democracy*, Introduction & Part I

R, 4/12 - Anthony Arblaster - *Democracy*, Part II

Week 3 - *Critiquing Democracy*

T, 4/17 - Michael Oakeshott - "The masses in representative democracy" in *Rationalism in Politics*; Friedrich Hayek - *The Constitution of Liberty*, Ch. 7

R, 4/19 - Joseph Schumpeter - *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, Ch. XXI; Water Lippmann - *Public Opinion*, Ch. 1

Week 4 - *Realist Democracy*

T, 4/24 - E. E. Schattschneider - *The Semisovereign People*, Preface & Ch. 1-3

R, 4/26 - E. E. Schattschneider - *The Semisovereign People*, Ch. 8; Christopher Achenes and Larry Bartels - *Democracy for Realists*, Ch. 11

FIRST PAPER DUE

Week 5 - *Deliberative Democracy*

T, 5/1 - Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson - *Why Deliberative Democracy*, Ch.1

R, 5/3 - Jurgen Habermas - "Deliberative Politics" in *Democracy*

Week 6 - *Agonistic Democracy*

T, 5/8 - Chantal Mouffe - *On the Political*, Ch. 1-3

R, 5/10 - Chantal Mouffe - *On the Political*, Ch. 4-6

Week 7 - *Aversive Democracy*

T, 5/15 - Stanley Cavell - *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome*, Ch. 1

R, 5/17 - Aletta Norval - *Aversive Democracy*, Ch. 4

SECOND PAPER DUE

Week 8 - *The New Plebiscite*

T, 5/22 - Jeffrey Green- *The Shadow of Unfairness*, Ch. 2

R, 5/24 - NO CLASS

Week 9 - *Ocular Democracy*

T, 5/29 - Jeffrey Green - *The Eyes of the People*, Ch. 1 & 7

R, 5/31 - David Foster Wallace - "Up, Simba"

Week 10 - *Wither Democracy?*

T, 6/5 - Jacques Ranciere - "Democracy or Consensus" in *Dis-Agreement*;
Sheldon Wolin - "Fugitive Democracy"

R, 6/7 - Colin Crouch - *Coping with Post-Democracy*, Ch. 1 & 6

Week 11 - Finals

T, 6/12 **THIRD PAPER DUE @ 8am to Gauchospace (No Hard Copy Needed)**

Other Services

Campus Learning Assistance Service (CLAS): helps students increase their mastery of course material through course-specific tutoring and academic skills development, including a Writing Lab. Visit their website: www.clas.ucsb.edu. Sign up for services at their website or main office, Student Resource Building, Room 3210, Monday- Friday 9am to 5 pm. 805.893.3269

Counseling & Career Services: offers counseling for personal & career concerns, self-help information and connections to off-campus mental health resources. 805.893.4411

Student Health Social Services: provides a range of services to help students identify and overcome obstacles to academic performance stemming from financial, medical,

emotional, social, or family situations. 805.893.3380

Disabled Students Program (DSP): provides academic support services to eligible students with temporary and permanent disabilities. Please inform the professor if you require special classroom accommodations due to a disability. You must register with DSP prior to receiving these accommodations, and you must re-register each quarter. 805.893.2668