

DEMOCRACY STUDIES

Department Website: <https://democracy.uchicago.edu>

PROGRAM OF STUDY

In this age of global democratic crisis, a thorough grounding in the study of self-government is essential to intellectual and civic competence. Although democracy was long a central thematic of both general education and curricular programs in the social sciences and humanities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, it gradually fell out of curricular programming toward the end of the Cold War and is oddly absent as a systematic focus today.

A minor in Democracy Studies provides students with a corrective to this erosion, providing essential knowledge, insights, methods, and critical perspectives necessary to understanding the world around us and the historical developments that have placed it in such a precarious state. Students in the minor will learn that bitter, even divisive contests over public power, representation, and inclusiveness are not recent developments, but have defined democracy since the dawn of politics. More fundamentally, they will learn that tensions between liberty and equality, political will and the rule of law, collective welfare and individual rights, cooperation and competition, produce dilemmas that must always be confronted but can rarely be fully resolved. Finally, they will learn that democracy entails more than a matter of elections or governmental structures. Democratic society extends well beyond the political arena. It is not just a governance system or a structure of power, it is a mode of social organization and cultural cohesion. It encompasses a broad set of structures, conceptions of which have evolved throughout time: political institutions; civic organizations; laws; deliberative practices; rhetorical strategies; cultural forms; collective imaginaries; moral, ethical, and spiritual codes; and more.

The minor therefore offers a broad range of courses allowing students to select cross-disciplinary electives suitable to forming a broadly conceived program of study.

Beyond its broader educational and civic value, a minor in Democracy Studies offers preparation for a range of career interests, from politics, law, and public policy to education, social work, journalism, media, and public interest advocacy. Students pursuing careers in STEM may find a minor in Democracy Studies to be useful preparation for the ethical and professional challenges awaiting them in the marketplace. A minor in Democracy Studies also provides a compelling interdisciplinary topical focus for students interested in pursuing graduate study in the social sciences and humanities.

APPLICATION TO THE DEMOCRACY STUDIES MINOR

Interested students must complete the Democracy Minor Map (<https://democracy.uchicago.edu/files/2022/08/Democracy-Minor-Map-220812.docx>) and return it to Program Administrator Annie Diamond (anniediamond@uchicago.edu (elizabethshen@uchicago.edu)) to declare their intention to pursue the minor, no later than Spring Quarter of their third year. The Program Administrator will contact the student to let them know if they have been approved, upon which the student should submit the approval to their College adviser for the latter's approval during the quarter. Note that students may be given credit for approved courses taken before declaring the minor.

SUMMARY OF MINOR REQUIREMENTS

Students who wish to complete the minor in Democracy Studies will need to complete a total of five courses, including one required course, DEMS 15000 Democracy and Its Critics, and four electives (see table below).

DEMS 15000 Democracy and Its Critics	100
Four electives chosen from list of approved courses	400
Total Units	500

The required Democracy and Its Critics course provides students with an introduction to the many ways in which struggles over self-government have raised fundamental challenges within politics, culture, and society. Critically engaging the concept of democracy from multiple disciplinary perspectives, students discover how democratic questions may be tackled in a distinctive fashion using different disciplinary approaches.

Students are required to take one "global" course, which largely focuses on the democratic experience of countries outside of the United States. Students are further encouraged, but not required, to take one course on democracy in ancient times (defined as prior to 650 AD).

Qualifying courses counting as electives are indicated in the Approved Courses list below, with those qualifying as "global" marked with an asterisk * and those as "ancient" denoted with an obelus †.

APPROVED COURSES

The following elective courses and any of their cross-listings may be counted toward minor requirements. The current list of approved course offerings will be continually updated on the Democracy Curriculum website

(<https://democracy.uchicago.edu/democracymenor/>). As of December 2022, the list includes the following elective courses and any of their cross-listings.

Big Problems

BPRO 25900	Digitizing Human Rights
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Classical Studies

CLCV 21222	Democratic Failure in Greece and Rome.
CLCV 23921	Thucydides and Athenian Democracy at War ⁺⁺
CLCV 24521	Politics and Political Space in Ancient Rome ⁺⁺
CLCV 27709	Caesar and his Reception ⁺⁺
GREK 23922	Plato on Tyranny and Injustice

English Language and Literature

ENGL 25230	Democracy and the School: Writing about Education
ENGL 27250	Wealth, Democracy and the American Novel

Germanic Studies

GRMN 25421	Babylon Berlin: Politics and Culture in the Weimar Period [*]
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Global Studies

GLST 22600	What Is Socialism? Experiences from Eastern Europe [*]
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History

HIST 18001	The United States in the Age of Total War
HIST 18101	Democracy in America?
HIST 18802	Performing Democracy
HIST 20507	The Idea of Freedom in Antiquity ⁺⁺
HIST 22610	Paris and the French Revolution [*]
HIST 25300	American Revolution, 1763 to 1789
HIST 26409	Revolution, Dictatorship, & Violence in Modern Latin America
HIST 27103	American Revolution in Global Context ⁺⁺
HIST 28301	Early American Political Culture, 1600-1820

Human Rights

HMRT 21001	Human Rights: Contemporary Issues [*]
HMRT 21002	Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations
HMRT 21005	Militant Democracy and the Preventative State
HMRT 23511	Memory, Reconciliation, and Healing: Transitional Justice [*]
HMRT 23561	Democracy: Athens and America ⁺⁺

Law, Letters, and Society

LLSO 28050	The American Constitution
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Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse

PARR 18600	Public Engagement and Participation
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Philosophy

PHIL 21403	Locke and Rousseau
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Political Science

PLSC 10500	What Should Democracy Mean Today?
PLSC 20817	Race, Social Movements and American Politics
PLSC 23100	Democracy and the Information Technology Revolution [*]
PLSC 23313	Democracy and Equality
PLSC 23615	Reconstructing Democracy: Tocqueville and Du Bois
PLSC 24810	Politics of the U.S. Congress
PLSC 25201	After Multiculturalism: Democratic Citizenship & Indigenous Resurgence in Settler Colonial Contexts
PLSC 25215	The American Presidency
PLSC 26615	Democracy's Life and Death [*]
PLSC 26703	Political Parties in the United States
PLSC 28405	Democratic Erosion
PLSC 28555	The Economy of Conspiracy
PLSC 28605	Challenges to Democracy

PLSC 28701	Introduction to Political Theory **
PLSC 28901	Introduction to Comparative Politics *
Public Policy Studies	
PBPL 25563	Does American Democracy Need Religion?
PBPL 25910	The Health of American Democracy
PBPL 28765	The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes
Race, Diaspora, and Indigeneity	
Religious Studies	
RLST 28612	The Global Revolt Against Liberalism *
Romance Languages and Literatures	
ITAL 21322	Literature and/of/Against Fascism *
Sociology	
SOCI 20106	Political Sociology
SOCI 20544	Democratic Backsliding *
SOSC 21001	Human Rights: Contemporary Issues
South Asian Languages and Civilizations	
SALC 26711	South Asia after Independence *

* Approved as "global" elective course

** This counts toward the minor in AY2022–23, as it focuses on democracy, but may not in future years.

† Approved as "ancient" elective course

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Courses in the minor may not be double-counted with a student's major(s), other minors, or general education requirements. This prohibition against double-counting holds for courses in the Democracy general education sequence (SOSC 18400-18500-18600 Democracy: Equality, Liberty, and the Dilemmas of Self-Government I-II-III), although students participating in the minor are welcome to also take that sequence. Courses for the minor must be taken for quality grades (not Pass/Fail). More than half of the course requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

DEMOCRACY STUDIES COURSES

DEMS 10100. Discourse Analysis of Public Dialogue: Identities, Ideologies, Interactions. 100 Units.

It has been proposed that dialogue is "the first obligation of citizenship" and a "workplace of democracy." In this course, you will learn about different forms of dialogue and arguments about its role in making democracy work. You will also learn to analyze dialogic events, think about ways to evaluate the dialogic process and its outcomes, and gain agency as a participant in public dialogue. The course will consist of three parts. We will first consider theoretical underpinnings of public dialogue as a democratic practice. We will then spend three weeks doing a close analysis of a Braver Angels debate on immigration, mapping ideological frames that underlie this debate, and tracking conversational dynamics that create openings and impediments for dialogue. Finally, we will discuss the larger organizational field of dialogue and deliberation work, the limits of free expression in such settings, and the interplay between public dialogue and civic action.

Instructor(s): Ekaterina Lukianova Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): LING 10600, PUBD 10100

DEMS 10600. Power and Resistance in the Black Atlantic. 100 Units.

Beginning with the arrival of European explorers on the West African coast in the fifteenth century and culminating with the stunning success of radical abolitionist movements across the Americas in the nineteenth century, the formation of the Black Atlantic irrevocably reshaped the modern world. This class will examine large-scale historical processes, including the transatlantic slave trade, the development of plantation economies, and the birth of liberal democracy. Next, we will explore the lives of individual Africans and their American descendants, the communities they built, and the cultures they created. We will consider the diversity of the Black Atlantic by examining the lives of a broad array of individuals, including black intellectuals, statesmen, soldiers, religious leaders, healers, and rebels. We will examine African diasporic subjects as creative rather than reactive historical agents and their unique contributions to Atlantic cultures, societies, and ideas. Within this geographically and temporally expansive history students will explore a key set of animating questions: What is the Black Atlantic? How can we understand both the commonalities and diversity of the experiences of Africans in the Diaspora? What kinds of communities, affinities, and identities did Africans create after being uprooted by the slave trade? What methods do scholars use to understand this history? And finally, what is the historical and political legacy of the Black Atlantic?

Instructor(s): M. Hicks Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 10600, RDIN 10600, LACS 10600

DEMS 15000. Democracy and Its Critics. 100 Units.

This course provides an introduction to the study of self-government. Over the course of the quarter, we will investigate the strengths and weaknesses of democracy as a political regime and a form of social organization. We will explore the relationship between democracy and values such as equality and freedom; democratic threats to minorities; the risks of elite capture and manipulation; and democratic erosion and collapse. Drawing on writings from advocates, analysts, and critics of democracy, we will introduce students to the study of democracy in several different disciplines, including history, philosophy, political science, and sociology. Written assignments will be satisfied through a set of short papers. This course is offered annually (the quarter varies depending on the year) and will next be offered in Spring 2026. Graduate students may enroll with instructor consent.

Instructor(s): Clifford Ando Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 26726, SOCI 20562, HIST 18103, PBPL 20562, PLSC 20562

DEMS 17810. Reforming America: Social and Political Change, 1890-1950. 100 Units.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the American state was a creaking, antiquated apparatus struggling to manage the social and economic changes that had occurred in the previous fifty years. From the turn of the century through World War II, the country underwent a profound program of political change—earning this period the name "the age of reform." In this class we examine the relationship between social and economic upheaval (industrialization, urbanization, immigration, depression, war) and political movements and activism (agrarian populism, the Ku Klux Klan, the early civil and women's rights movements, organized labor) in order to explain how government in America was transformed for new conditions.

Instructor(s): G. Winant Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 17810, CCCT 17810, HIST 17810

DEMS 17908. African-American History to 1865. 100 Units.

This introductory undergraduate lecture course examines histories of people of African descent in continental North America from the colonial period to the US Civil War. relationship between slavery and republicanism in the early United States. With an interdisciplinary approach and transnational perspective, it considers the contested role of chattel slavery in the creation of US political systems, market relations, social hierarchies, and cultural productions. We will use primary sources and secondary literature to consider the possibilities and limits of archival research; contingent histories of race-making; the relationship between slavery and capitalism; the workings of domination, agency, and resistance; and black "freedom dreams" in the antebellum United States.

Instructor(s): R. Johnson Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 17909, HIST 17908, RDIN 17908

DEMS 17910. Independent Study - Archival Research in London. 100 Units.

The meaning of democracy has been contested in London over hundreds of years. Home to the Palace of Westminster, where parliament has assembled since the thirteenth century, it has also been a site of protest, petitions and revolutionary action for democratic change. The center of political power in the British Empire, London was a focal point of struggles for national self-determination. It was also a site of exile for revolutionaries, radicals and democrats who found sanctuary and spaces to organize underground networks of resistance to the regimes they fled. This dynamic history has left a rich archival treasure trove, from the official transcripts of Parliament's famous orators, to the seventeenth century pamphleteers of the English Revolution who imagined a 'world turned upside down', the secret diaries and letters written by hunger-striking suffragette prisoners, and much else besides. Exploring these archives will inspire and inform students as they choose a historical topic related to democracy that they would like to explore. The instructor will guide the students on techniques of archival research, which they will use first-hand in their independent study.

Instructor(s): Katherine Connelly Terms Offered: Winter

DEMS 19902. Workers of the World: Global Labor History, 1600-present. 100 Units.

Workers of the world, unite!" But who are the workers of the world? Why would such a diverse group be considered as one? In this class, we look at the making of the modern world from below, through the perspectives, experiences, and movements of those who worked the plantations, mills, mines, and households where capitalism was forged. How did diverse experiences of free and unfree labor relate to each other? What have been the historical relationships between class, gender, race, and nationality? How have workers' movements related to the great ideological struggles between liberalism, socialism, fascism, and colonialism? We will both study the social history and political economy of work—who did what jobs where, when, under what circumstances?—and the efforts to make common political meaning out of those diverse experiences of work.

Instructor(s): G. Winant Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 19902, LLSO 29902, CCCT 19902

DEMS 20235. Contemporary Democratic Theory: Realism, Deliberative Democracy, and Agonism. 100 Units.

What is democracy? Is democracy a matter of finding consensus or regulating dissensus? How might we go about making our own society more democratic? Should we strive for more democracy or is democracy merely a means to an end? What is the relationship between democratic theory and practice? This course will consider leading attempts in contemporary democratic theory to grapple with these questions and many more. We will consider both the foundational texts of contemporary democratic theory including Hannah Arendt, Carl Schmitt, Jürgen Habermas, and Robert Dahl, and then build from those texts to see how contemporary theorists have attempted to rearticulate, redefine, redesign, and revolutionize democracy in the past 25 years.

Instructor(s): Smith, Max Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 30230, PLSC 20406, MAPS 30230

DEMS 21000. Rhetorical Strategies for Civic Leadership. 100 Units.

This course is about your development as a leader in a complex civic environment where the character and even desirability of democratic governance are at stake. Drawing on thinkers from Aristotle to Arendt and today's rhetorical criticism, you'll study how leaders inspire, persuade, deliberate, and dissent. Along the way, you will workshop your own speech acts through multiple rounds of coaching and revision, plus learn from field trips in civic settings, such as City Club Chicago.

Instructor(s): Ekaterina Lukianova Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PUBD 21000, CHST 21000

DEMS 21001. Human Rights: Contemporary Issues. 100 Units.

This course examines basic human rights norms and concepts and selected contemporary human rights problems from across the globe, including human rights implications of the COVID pandemic. Beginning with an overview of the present crises and significant actors on the world stage, we will then examine the political setting for the United Nations' approval of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948. The post-World War 2 period was a period of optimism and fertile ground for the establishment of a universal rights regime, given the defeat of fascism in Europe. International jurists wanted to establish a framework of rights that went beyond the nation-state, taking into consideration the partitions of India-Pakistan and Israel-Palestine - and the rising expectations of African-Americans in the U.S. and colonized peoples across Africa and Asia. But from the beginning, there were basic contradictions in a system of rights promulgated by representatives of nation-states that ruled colonial regimes, maintained de facto and de jure systems of racial discrimination, and imprisoned political dissidents and journalists. Cross-cutting themes of the course include the universalism of human rights, problems of impunity and accountability, notions of "exceptionalism," and the emerging issue of the "shamelessness" of authoritarian regimes. Students will research a human rights topic of their choosing, to be presented as either a final research paper or a group presentation.

Instructor(s): Susan Gzesh, Senior Lecturer, (The College) Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LACS 21001, HMRT 21001, SOSC 21001, HIST 29304, CHST 21001, LLSO 21001

DEMS 21002. Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations. 100 Units.

In this class we explore the philosophical foundations of human rights, investigating theories of how our shared humanity in the context of an interdependent world gives rise to obligations of justice. We begin by asking what rights are, how they are distinguished from other part of morality, and what role they play in our social and political life. But rights come in many varieties, and we are interested in human rights in particular. In later weeks, we will ask what makes something a human right, and how are human rights different from other kinds of rights. We will consider a number of contemporary philosophers who attempt to answer this question, including James Griffin, Charles Beitz, Joseph Raz, Jiewuh Song, Pablo Gilibert, and Martha Nussbaum. Throughout we will be asking questions such as, "What makes something a human right?" "What role does human dignity play in grounding our human rights?" "Are human rights historical?" "What role does the nation and the individual play in our account of human rights?" "When can one nation legitimately intervene in the affairs of another nation?" "How can we respect the demands of justice while also respecting cultural difference?" "How do human rights relate to global inequality and markets?" (A)

Instructor(s): Ben Laurence, Pozen Center for Human Rights Instructional Professor Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 39319, HIST 29319, HMRT 21002, MAPH 42002, INRE 31602, PHIL 31002, HMRT 31002, PHIL 21002

DEMS 21005. Militant Democracy and the Preventative State. 100 Units.

Are states of exception still exceptional? The current debates and developments as well as the existential governmental crises has led to a securitization of rights. State security discourse narrates how states understand and mediate their legal obligations and has been used justify pre-emptive actions and measures which otherwise would not fit within an international law framework. When narrated in the public square, States often construct a discourse around a necessity defence-measures that may be extra-legal but argued to be necessary to protect democratic values and the democratic 'way of life.' This typifies what we refer to as 'militant democratic' language of the 'preventive state' and has been most visible in the raft of antiterrorism measures that were introduced after the events of September 11, 2001 and remain to date. This course will examine the impact of militant democracy and the preventative state on the current human rights landscape. It will look specifically how the narrative of prevention and protection has impacted normative changes to fundamental human rights and how the permanence of emergency is beginning to give the concept of 'securitization of rights' legal legs.

Instructor(s): Kathleen Cavanaugh, Senior Lecturer, Executive Director, Pozen Center for Human Rights Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 21005, HMRT 31005, PLSC 21005

DEMS 21354. Democracy! Politics in postcolonial India. 100 Units.

India is famously known as the world's largest democracy. This course investigates what constitutes democracy in the Global South, the preconditions that have informed its development in India over the last seven decades, and the impossibility of a unidimensional definition for a phenomenon that affects the lives of one and a half billion people every day. We will take up themes which address the elements that goes into the creation of a democratic state - such as the constitution and elections; governance and international relations; law and

questions of identity; people and popular culture. With each category, we will ask - What is so distinctively democratic about it? How does it relate to and deviate from conventional understanding of democracy (that is, the rule of the people)? How are they informed by India's colonial and precolonial past? Who are the stake holders of such democracy and whose voice remains marginalized in the process? By attending to some of the most crucial events in independent India - from wars, Emergency, globalization, and emergence of varying shades of political ideologies - we will collectively seek to understand the many lives of democracy that exists from the corridors of the parliament house to a roadside tea stall. In the process, we hope to grasp the extent of the heterogeneity of postcolonial India.

Instructor(s): Titas De Sarkar Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): SALC 21354, HIST 21354

DEMS 22100. Politics and Policy. 100 Units.

This course has two fundamental aims. The first is to introduce students to a set of analytical tools and concepts for understanding how political institutions generate public policy. The second is to apply these tools in examining the major institutions of democracy in the United States. Note(s): Public Policy 22100-22200-22300 may be taken in any order.

Instructor(s): C. Berry Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Public Policy 22100-22200-22300 may be taken in any order.

Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 22100

DEMS 22124. The Cultural History and Politics of Postwar Germany. 100 Units.

The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again," announced the critic Theodor Adorno on German radio in 1966. By this he meant not only the education of children, but also the re-education of the German people. After World War II, with the Third Reich in ruins and confronted with the horrors of the Holocaust, Germans were forced to reckon with their past as they attempted to build the country anew, entering into a period of dramatic political and cultural reorientation. This course traces the history of "rebuilding" Germany after 1945, from the immediate postwar period through the East/West division to reunification to today. Drawing on a broad range of source material, including film, literature, government documents, art, and architecture, this interdisciplinary seminar studies the limits and possibilities of conceiving of Germany as a post-war Wirtschaftswunder (economic miracle), and its implications for German cultural production. We will pay special attention to the way that debates from the postwar era still reverberate today, for instance in racial discrimination and the rise of the German far-right. This course is required for all Germanic Studies majors and minors. Readings and discussion in English.

Instructor(s): Sophie Salvo Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 32124, GRMN 22124, HIST 23100

DEMS 23200. Understanding One Another in a World of Evil. 100 Units.

The moral turn in the human sciences has led to an increasing emphasis on the problem of evil. While the Holocaust is frequently presented as the paradigmatic case of evil, this problem has also been used to underscore the unredressed wrongs of slavery and genocide in the history of empire and colonialism. This course aims to take the problem of evil seriously while also raising a doubt about the certainty with which some scholars have characterized evil as a problem of willful or culpable wrongdoing. We aim to think the problem of evil alongside and through a related problem, namely how we come to understand one another as shared participants in a moral universe. This will lead us to consider a series of subsidiary questions: How do we understand one another when ethical stances strike us as unacceptable or, more emphatically, inhuman? Under what conditions do we characterize acts that seem to conform to rival systems of value as evil? In other words, to what extent is the problem of evil a problem of understanding? And do our pronouncements about evil necessarily carry certain assumptions about transhistorical and transcultural human values? Our course resources include works by Ludwig Wittgenstein on the problem of human understanding, Hannah Arendt's account of the problem of evil, and Stanley Cavell's account of the problem of acknowledgement, as well as a number of film screenings.

Instructor(s): A. Brandel, D. Grant Terms Offered: May be offered in 2027-2028

Prerequisite(s): Third or fourth-year standing

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 23200, CCCT 23200, ANTH 23200, BPRO 23200, HIST 22804

DEMS 23480. Law, Rights, and Democracy in Crisis: Israel and Palestine in Comparative Perspective. 100 Units.

How do law and politics interact in contexts of deep national division? What are the limits of international law, human rights, and liberal democracy in addressing violent conflict? And what alternatives arise when conventional approaches—such as territorial partition and a focus on individual rights—fall short? This course explores these questions through the case of Israel-Palestine, examined in comparative perspective alongside other divided societies, including Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Cyprus. Students will analyze how legal frameworks—both domestic and international—shape, constrain, or enable political arrangements in protracted conflicts. Core concepts such as sovereignty, self-determination, and the tension between individual and collective rights will be explored through competing understandings of peace and justice. Drawing on the emerging framework of Collective Equality, the course invites critical reflection on the foundational principles needed to support sustainable models of conflict transformation.

Instructor(s): Limor Yehuda Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 23480, PLSC 23480, PLSC 33480, HMRT 23480

DEMS 24700. Organizing Coalitions for Change: Growing Power and Social Movements. 100 Units.

Coalitions are building blocks of social movements, often bringing people together across race, class, faith and ethnicity to build the power required to make social change. Coalitions address local, state, national and international policies, public and private sector matters. They are employed successfully, or not, from the far left to the far right. They vary widely, engaging people from very grassroots and local communities to civic, faith, labor, business, and political leadership. At times spontaneously precipitated, at times methodically built, effective coalitions can change the fundamental relationships in our society, change society and challenge what we know or think we know. This course will examine the conceptual models of diverse coalitions formed to impact social, legal, and political structures. We will explore the strengths and limitations of coalitions, and their impact upon low-income and oppressed communities. We will study recent examples to stop public housing displacement, end police misconduct, halt deportations, and seek fair tax reform. We will explore the role of coalitions in changing political machines. Too, we will investigate the use and impact of coalitions in building relations between racial, religious and ethnic groups. As part of class exercises, students will "create" coalitions to address an identified need for social change.

Equivalent Course(s): SSAD 24700, CHST 24700, SSAD 64700

DEMS 25300. American Revolution, 1763 to 1789. 100 Units.

This lecture and discussion course explores the background of the American Revolution and the problem of organizing a new nation. The first half of the course uses the theory of revolutionary stages to organize a framework for the events of the 1760s and 1770s, and the second half of the course examines the period of constitution making (1776-1789) for evidence on the ways in which the Revolution was truly revolutionary.

Instructor(s): E. Cook Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 25300, HIST 35300

DEMS 25563. Does American Democracy Need Religion? 100 Units.

In the United States, we find ourselves living as part of a democracy. But that simple fact doesn't necessarily make us fans of democracy by default. In fact, it leaves many questions unanswered: Is democracy a good thing? If so, why and on what grounds? Why should you or I value democracy and its ideals (e.g., equality, liberty, fraternity)? If we do, what (if anything) grounds our devotion to this shared political tradition? And does, can, or should religion have a role to play? In this course, we will explore American democracy as a normative tradition and its relationship to various religious traditions in American society. Through examining key interpreters of American democracy such as Danielle Allen, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cornel West, Joshua Abraham Heschel, and Amanda Gorman, we will approach the question of how religion and democracy relate to one another. We'll investigate the relative independence of democracy and religion, focusing on philosophers and poets who emphasize American democracy as tradition in its own right. We will also consider "Civil Religion in America," through the work of sociologists and historians who suggest the dependence of the democratic on religion or something like it. Finally, we'll question the relative interdependence of American democracy and religious traditions by turning to claims of influential religious and political leaders and activists. No prerequisite knowledge required.

Instructor(s): Derek Buyan

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 25563, RLST 25563, PBPL 25563

DEMS 25850. No Justice, No Speech! Free Speech and the Place that Shall Not Be Named. 100 Units.

Are there-or should there be-limits to free speech? What is the relationship between free speech and hate speech? Does speech deserve special kinds of protections (or limits) in the context of the university campus? In this course, we will critically engage with these questions as they relate to political organizing and political expression on (and in) P_____. Our course will examine these foundational questions before turning to some of the sticking points in the debate over free speech and P_____ today: What is freedom of expression in I____-P_____, and what does it have to do with the politics of US campuses? What is the call for Boycott Divest and Sanctions, and is it intended to foster or limit academic freedom? Is anti-Z_____ anti-S_____? To consider these questions, we will do critical readings of primary texts such as the guidelines issued by PACBI (P_____ Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of I_____) and the definition of anti-S_____ issued by the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance), as well as ethnographic and other accounts of the problem of political expression in P_____ today.

Instructor(s): Callie Maidhof Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 25850, PARR 22100, NELC 25850, PBPL 25850, GLST 25850

DEMS 25900. Digitizing Human Rights. 100 Units.

In an era in which disruptive technologies have hijacked our consciousness and computer code has woven itself into the fabric of our existence, the lines between the virtual and the physical are increasingly blurred, and the nature of human existence itself increasingly uncertain. Digitizing Human Rights invites you to ponder, question, and even reshape the future of the species. We'll consider digital surveillance, data consent, access to tech, online agency, algorithmic bias and the future of artificial intelligence, among other topics. Drawing on cross-disciplinary perspectives, the course aims to illuminate the often misunderstood aspects of the digital age with the goal of creating an annotated digital document to serve as a blueprint for steering humanity towards a more equitable and just -- and perhaps a more secure -- future. Annotations will draw on a broad array of philosophical traditions and contextualize current issues and debates. We will also problematize the document itself to build into our work a consideration of the digital form through which we are thinking and representing claims about humanity, morality, truth, and justice, for example, that are entailed in the project of "human rights."

The class will meet both in small groups and the larger seminar to refine the provisions and annotations, review progress, and shape the document as a whole.

Instructor(s): J. Spruill, N. Briz Terms Offered: Not offered in 2026-2027

Prerequisite(s): PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing.

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 25900, BPRO 25900, MADD 25900

DEMS 26080. Government Accountability in the Trump Era. 100 Units.

The second Trump Presidential Administration has made novel and broad claims of executive authority across many areas of government activity. Students will explore the legal and normative bases for these claims, how they are changing the existing systems of government oversight, and how courts are shaping public understanding of these issues. The first half of the course will cover foundational concepts of government structure: checks and balances, federalism, and the role of the federal courts, and the growth of the administrative state. In the latter half of the course, we will focus on Trump Administration claims of authority in the domain of domestic law enforcement and the future of policing and police reform.

Instructor(s): Robert Owens Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 26080

DEMS 26409. Revolution, Dictatorship, & Violence in Modern Latin America. 100 Units.

This course will examine the role played by Marxist revolutions, revolutionary movements, and the right-wing dictatorships that have opposed them in shaping Latin American societies and political cultures since the end of World War II. Themes examined will include the relationship among Marxism, revolution, and nation building; the importance of charismatic leaders and icons; the popular authenticity and social content of Latin American revolutions; the role of foreign influences and interventions; the links between revolution and dictatorship; and the lasting legacies of political violence and military rule. Countries examined will include Guatemala, Cuba, Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Mexico. Assignments: Weekly reading, a midterm exam or paper, a final paper, participation in discussion, and weekly responses or quizzes.

Instructor(s): B. Fischer Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Some background in Latin American studies or Cold War history useful.

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 26409, HMRT 26409, LACS 36409, HIST 36409, HIST 26409

DEMS 26500. History of Mexico, 1876 to Present. 100 Units.

From the Porfiriato and the Revolution to the present, this course is a survey of Mexican society and politics, with emphasis on the connections between economic developments, social justice, and political organization. Topics include fin de siècle modernization and the agrarian problem; causes and consequences of the Revolution of 1910; the making of the modern Mexican state; relations with the United States; industrialism and land reform; urbanization and migration; ethnicity, culture, and nationalism; economic crises, neoliberalism, and social inequality; political reforms and electoral democracy; violence and narco-trafficking; the end of PRI rule; and AMLO's new government.

Instructor(s): E. Kouri Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Assignments: two essays

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 36500, HIST 36500, HIST 26500, LACS 26500

DEMS 26920. Freedom, Justice and Legitimacy. 100 Units.

In this course we will explore two main questions, which are central to both contemporary political theory and political discourse: (1) how different concepts and conceptions of freedom ground different theories of social justice and political legitimacy and (2) how to understand the relationship between justice and legitimacy. To what extent are justice and legitimacy separate ideas? Does legitimacy require justice? Are just states necessarily legitimate? We will critically analyze and normatively assess how different contemporary theories have answered, whether explicitly or implicitly, such questions. The course will focus on five major contemporary theories: liberal-egalitarianism as represented by the work of John Rawls; libertarianism, as represented by the work of Robert Nozick, neo-Lockean theories as represented by the work of John Simmons, neo-republicanism as represented by the work of Philip Pettit, and neo-Kantian theories as represented by the work of Arthur Ripstein.

Instructor(s): J. Wilson Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 26920, HMRT 26920, LLSO 26920, PLSC 36920

DEMS 27001. Law and Society in Early America, 1600-1800. 100 Units.

This colloquium considers law, legal institutions, and legal culture within the lived experience of colonial and revolutionary America. It will emphasize the interaction of social development and legal development and will explore the breadth of everyday experience with legal institutions like the jury, with courts as institutions for resolving disputes, and with the prosecution of crime.

Instructor(s): E. Cook Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Upper-level undergraduates and early state graduate students.

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 27001, HIST 37001

DEMS 27605. United States Legal History. 100 Units.

This course focuses on the connections between law and society in modern America. It explores how legal doctrines and constitutional rules have defined individual rights and social relations in both the public and private spheres. It also examines political struggles that have transformed American law. Topics to be addressed include the meaning of rights; the regulation of property, work, race, and sexual relations; civil disobedience;

and legal theory as cultural history. Readings include legal cases, judicial rulings, short stories, and legal and historical scholarship.

Instructor(s): A. Dru Stanley Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This course will not overlap with Law and Society in Nineteenth Century America (HIST 27612/LLSO 29714); it will be substantially different.

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 27605, GNSE 27605, HMRT 37605, HIST 37605, GNSE 37605, AMER 27605, HMRT 27061, LLSO 29704

DEMS 27818. Philosophical Foundations of Public Policy. 100 Units.

Evidence-based policy making" sounds like a slogan everyone can get behind. But its central components, cost-benefit analysis and program evaluation, have each been subject to severe philosophical questioning. Does cost-benefit analysis ignore important ethical concerns? Does program evaluation ignore valuable kinds of knowledge? We will introduce each of these debates, and then take up the question of how evidence-based policy might be reconciled with democratic theory. Class discussion and assignments will consider these topics in the context of specific policy areas, including climate change, discrimination, and education.

Instructor(s): S. Ashworth Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): ECON 20000, PBPL 20000, ECON 20100, or PBPL 22200.

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 27818, PBPL 27818

DEMS 28050. The American Constitution. 100 Units.

This is a survey of the main themes of the American Constitution-popular sovereignty, separation of powers, federalism, and rights-and of the basic techniques of constitutional interpretation. The course introduces the history and doctrines of American constitutional law primarily through the analysis of cases.

Instructor(s): David Lebow Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 28050

DEMS 28302. The American Founding, 1763-1789. 100 Units.

This course examines the founding of the United States from the global crisis of the British Empire following the Seven Years' War to the launching of the new national government in 1789. The architects of the American republic believed they were laying the foundations not only of a new political regime but also of a new world. As Thomas Paine's revolutionary pamphlet *Common Sense* asserted in 1776, American independence would "begin the world over again." The lectures consider the revolutionary origins of the United States in the long-term context of three centuries of world history commencing with Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492. Course readings consist of primary sources ranging from major works of Enlightenment social and historical theory to political pamphlets, newspaper opinion pieces, and parliamentary debates. This is a lecture course; the assignments consist of two take-home essay exams and a paper.

Instructor(s): J. Vaughn Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 28302, HIST 38302

DEMS 28801. Introduction to American Politics. 100 Units.

This survey course canvasses the basic behavioral, institutional, and historical factors that comprise the study of American politics. We will evaluate various modes of survey opinion formation and political participation both inside and outside of elections. In addition to studying the primary branches of U.S. government, we will consider the role of interest groups, the media, and political action committees in American politics. We also will evaluate the persistent roles of race, class, and money in historical and contemporary political life.

Instructor(s): R. Bloch Rubin Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 28801

DEMS 28901. Introduction to Comparative Politics. 100 Units.

Why are some nations rich and others are poor? Why is inequality skyrocketing across the developed world? Why are some countries democratic and others are dictatorships, and what determines switching between regimes? Does democracy matter for health, wealth, and happiness? Why are some countries beset by civil violence and revolution whereas others are politically stable? Why do political parties organize themselves politically around ethnicity, language, religion, or ideology? This course explores these and other similar questions that lie at the core of comparative politics. Drawing on political science, economics, sociology, and anthropology, while utilizing a wealth of data and case studies of major countries, we will examine how power is exercised to shape and control political, cultural, and economic institutions and, in turn, how these institutions generate policies that affect what we learn, what we earn, how long we live, and even who we are.

Instructor(s): M. Nalepa, Z. Luo Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 28901

DEMS 28929. Cabal, Cult, and Crisis: Religion and Contemporary Conspiracy Theory. 100 Units.

We live in an age of crisis for liberal democracy, and conspiracy theories are often said to be at the heart of this crisis. While Alex Jones, Infowars, and QAnon have become household names, there is still no consensus on what makes a "conspiracy theory" or how scholars should approach these topics. Are "New World Order"-style conspiracy beliefs irrational or false on their face? Can liberal-democratic regimes which pride themselves on their ability to accommodate diverse religious viewpoints successfully integrate conspiracy believers? In this course, we will approach the subject of conspiracy theory by engaging with theorists in their own words, videos, and images, while sampling a range of academic and public-facing literature on new religious movements, religion and politics, and epistemology. In so doing, we will apply critical lenses of diverse sorts to mixed media,

as we collectively develop methodologies for carrying out original research on "low-status" subjects using uncurated archives. No prior acquaintance with conspiracy-oriented materials required.

Instructor(s): Justin Smolin Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 28929, RLST 28929, MADD 10929

DEMS 29712. Comparative Constitutional Law. 100 Units.

This course will aim to understand how constitutional systems in both old and new democracies address several key common themes in public law. The course is organized thematically and will begin by introducing the field of comparative constitutional studies and exploring the different ends constitutions may serve in different political contexts. It will then examine the ways in which constitutional design can help or hinder a society's project of establishing democratic government, promoting political stability, and protecting fundamental rights. From there, the course will proceed to examining institutional arrangements from a comparative perspective to understand how features of institutional design have a bearing on the political system and its democratic performance. Besides covering influential jurisdiction like the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and South Africa, we will draw our examples from jurisdictions that have traditionally been overlooked in comparative constitutional law including countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, and others. This course counts as a Junior Colloquium.

Instructor(s): Shamshad Pasarlay Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Legal Reasoning preferred but not required

Note(s): This course counts as an LLSO Junior Colloquium.

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29712

DEMS 29754. Amending the United States Constitution. 100 Units.

This course examines the evolution of the United States Constitution from the founding era to the present. It focuses, in particular, on the major political, institutional, and ideological forces that have rendered the United States Constitution as one of the most difficult in the world to amend. Students in the course will learn about the Constitution's creation and subsequent amendment efforts, the formal and informal mechanisms of constitutional change, and the history of both successful and unsuccessful amendment campaigns. Over the course of the quarter, students will read and engage critically with multidisciplinary materials drawn from law, history, philosophy, and political science. For LLSO majors, this course can count as a junior colloquium.

Instructor(s): Shamshad Pasarlay Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29754

