

## What is democracy and how do we study it?

Department of Political Science  
Special Topics Course Winter 2018  
PS3397G

This course is designed to introduce students to different approaches to political science analysis. This will be accomplished through a series of lectures taught by different professors, each tackling the same question: "What is democracy and how do we study it?" Each lecture will focus on a specific approach to the question, will consider the conceptualization and operationalization of the relevant ideas, and detail the method of analysis used to study democracy in that way. The benefit of this course is that students will be able to understand and compare the differences between approaches to political science and the conclusions that they produce.

**Course coordinator:** Laura Stephenson, [laura.stephenson@uwo.ca](mailto:laura.stephenson@uwo.ca), 519-661-2111 x85164, office hours by appointment

**Class time and location:** Tuesday, 1:30-3:30, SSC 4255

### Learning objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Have gained an appreciation of the range of approaches that are used in political science research
- Be able to compare and contrast different approaches to research in terms of their assumptions and outcomes

### Grading

Participation/Attendance	10%
Faculty members will take attendance each week and record participation	
Reading responses	40%
1/2 page answers to 2-3 questions posed by the instructor each week	
Questions are indicated in the reading list	
Responses are due by the beginning of class (1:30pm) and should be submitted on OWL	
Research paper (3000-3500 words, double-spaced, 12 pt. font)	50%
Students will choose a topic related to the content of one of the weeks of class. The number of students who can write on a specific topic will be limited. The faculty member who presented on that topic will grade the paper. More information will be provided during the term.	

**Topics, Readings and Questions (Readings can be found on OWL or through the library)**

**January 9 – Introduction**

**January 16 – Charles Jones, Meaning and Justification**

**Readings**

- Waldron, Jeremy. (2012) "Democracy." In David Estlund (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.187-203.
- Simmons, John. (2008) *Political Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.105-127.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. (2009) "Democracy: Instrumental vs Non-Instrumental Value." In Thomas Christiano and John Christman (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Political Philosophy*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 213-228.

**Questions for Reading Response**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**January 23 – Richard Vernon, Should democrats believe in majority rule?**

**Readings**

- Dahl, Robert A. (1991) *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Chapter 10: Majority Rule and the Democratic Process)
- Heinberg, John Gilbert. (1932) "Theories of Majority Rule." *The American Political Science Review* 26(3):452-469.
- Spitz, Elaine. (1984) *Majority Rule*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, Inc. (Chapter 8: Justifications)

**Questions for Reading Response**

1. Does the history of the idea of majority rule suggest anything about its validity (Heinberg reading)?
2. Who wins the argument, Dahl's "majoritarian" or his "critic" (Dahl reading)?
3. In what sense does majority rule produce good decisions (Spitz reading)?

**January 30 – Dave Armstrong, Measures of Democracy**

**Readings**

- Dahl, R. (1998) *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Chapter 4: What is Democracy)
- Bollen, K. (1990) "Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps". *Studies in Comparative International Development* 25(1): 7-24.
- Munck, G. and Verkuilen, J. (2002) "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative indices". *Comparative Political Studies* 35(1): 5-34

**Questions for Reading Response**

1. To what extent should the normative concerns surrounding democracy be in evidence in our empirical conceptualization and measurement of democracy?

2. Of the different measures of democracy considered by Munck & Verkuilen, which do you think is most analytically useful and why?
3. Which do you think would be “better” for understanding the causes and consequences of democracy (without regard to the feasibility of either proposal) - 1) scholars agree to use the same conceptualization and measurement for democracy or 2) scholars all use potentially different conceptualizations and measures of democracy that suit their own needs, and why do you think that?

**February 6 – Cameron Anderson and Laura Stephenson, *Citizen Engagement with Democracy***  
**Readings**

- Elections Canada. (2016) “Turnout and Reasons for Not Voting During the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Election: Results from the Labour Force Survey.”  
[http://www.elections.ca/res/rec/eval/pes2015/lfs/lfs\\_e.pdf](http://www.elections.ca/res/rec/eval/pes2015/lfs/lfs_e.pdf)
- Blais, André and Daniel Rubenson. (2013) “The Source of Turnout Decline : New Values or New Contexts?” *Comparative Political Studies* 46(1): 95-117.
- Bolzendahl, Catherine and Hilde Coffé. (2013) “Are ‘Good’ Citizens ‘Good’ Participants? Testing Citizenship Norms and Political Participation across 25 Nations.” *Political Studies* 61(S1)L 63-83.
- Lefevere, Jonas, and Peter Van Aelst. (2014) “First-order, second-order or third-rate? A comparison of turnout in European, local and national elections in the Netherlands.” *Electoral Studies* 35: 159-170.

**Questions for Reading Response**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**February 20 – Bruce Morrison, *Democratization in Time***  
**Readings**

TBA

**Questions for Reading Response**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**February 27 – Rob Leone and Josh Morgan, *Representation and the Practice of Politics***  
**Readings**

- Dicey, A.V. (1915) *Introduction to the Study of Law and of the Constitution*. London: Macmillian, Chapter 1.
- Burke, Edmund. (1774) “Speech to the electors at Bristol.” In *The Founders’ Constitution*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Volume 1, Chapter 13, Document 7  
<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch13s7.html>
- Aucoin, Peter and Lori Turnbull. (2003) “The democratic deficit: Paul Martin and parliamentary reform,” *Canadian Public Administration* 46(4): 427-449.
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2014. *The Municipal Councillor’s Guide*

2014. Toronto: Government of Ontario, Section 1.

### Questions for Reading Response

1. Is there a democratic deficit and can it be fixed by reforming the nature of representation in democratic political institutions?
2. Should a representative always listen to his/her constituents even if it goes against the interests of the whole community, province or country?
3. What tools do politicians have at their disposal, formal or otherwise, that can be used to make a difference in the lives of their constituents?

### March 6 – Marta Dyczok, *Democracy and Media*

#### Readings

- Hall, Stuart, "Encoding/Decoding," in *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-1979* (London: Hutchinson, 1980): 128-38
- Keane, John, *The Media and Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), Preface
- Mancini, Paolo, *Between Commodification and Lifestyle Politics* (Oxford: [Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism](#), 2011), Introduction
- McChesney, Robert W., *Rich Media, Poor Democracy. Communication Politics in Dubious Times*. (University of Illinois Press, 1999, 2000), Introduction

#### Questions for Reading Response

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### March 13 – Dan Bousfield, *Hatred of Democracy: Deep state, Plutonomy and the Possibility of Politics*

#### Readings

- Rancière, J. Democracies against Democracy—An Interview with Eric Hazan. *Democracy in What State*, (2011): 76-81. 5 pages
- Faulkner J, 2017, "'White Women Elected Trump': Feminism in Dark Times, Its Present and Future", *Continental Thought and Theory: A Journal of Intellectual Freedom*, vol. 1, pp. 650-672. 17 pages
- Peters, B. Guy, and Jon Pierre, eds. *The politicization of the civil service in comparative perspective: A quest for control*. Routledge, 2004. Ch. 7, 8. 34 pages
- Hay, I. "On plutonomy: Economy, power and the wealthy few in the Second Gilded Age." *Handbook on Wealth and the Super-Rich*. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar (2016): 68-93. 25 pages

#### Questions for Reading Response

1. To what extent does egalitarianism reinforce existing privileges and benefits under democracy?
2. Does democracy produce inherent prejudices against those who are not part of the currently recognized demos?
3. To what extent does elitism produce disdain for concepts such as 'the public', 'the social' and 'the common good'?

**March 20 – Chris Alcantara and Andy Sancton, Indigenous Self-Government**

**Readings**

- Sancton, Andrew and Christopher Alcantara. Unpublished manuscript. "Membership Rules for Democratic Communities: Canada and the United States." (Draft article to be made available prior to the class.)
- Smith, Miriam. (2005) "Institutionalism in the Study of Canadian Politics: The English-Canadian Tradition." In Andre Lecours, ed, *New Institutionalism: Theory and Analysis*. University of Toronto Press, pp. 101-107
- Gover, Kirsty. (2010) "Comparative Tribal Constitutionalism: Membership Governance in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States." *Law and Social Inquiry* 35(3):689-762. [This article has only 34 pages of text and a long appendix listing various "tribes" in the four countries.]
- Poelzer, Greg and Ken S. Coates. (2015) *From Treaty Peoples to Treaty Nation*. UBC Press, pp.206-13.
- McCabe, Barbara Coyle. (2011) "Homeowner Associations as Private Governments: What we Know, What we Don't Know, and Why it Matters" *Public Administration Review* 71(4):535-542.

**Questions for Reading Response**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**March 27 – Joe Lyons, Democratic Dimension of Specialized and General-Purpose Jurisdictions**

**Readings**

- Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-Level Governance." *American Political Science Review* 97: 233–43.
- Mullin, Megan. 2008. "The Conditional Effect of Specialized Governance on Public Policy." *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 125-41.
- Berry, Christopher. 2008. "Piling On: Multilevel Government and the Fiscal Common-Pool." *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 802-20.
- Lyons, Joseph and Zachary Spicer. Forthcoming. "Accountability and Local Collaborative Governance." In *Accountability and Responsiveness at the Municipal Level: Views from Canada*, edited by Sandra Breau and Jérôme Couture, 197-220. Montreal and Kingston: MQUP.

**Questions for Reading Response**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**April 3 – Nandita Biswas-Mellamphy, Rethinking Democracy**

**Readings**

- Benhabib, Seyla. (1996) "The Democratic Moment and the Problem of Difference" in Seyla Benhabib (ed.) *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the*

*Political* Princeton University Press, 3-18.

- Mansbridge, Jane. (1996) "Using Power/Fighting Power: The Polity" in S. Benhabib (ed.) *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* Princeton University Press, 46-66.
- Mouffe, Chantal. 2000. "Democracy, Power, and 'the Political'." In *The Democratic Paradox* (Verso: 2000). 17-35.
- Dean, Jodi. (2003) "Why the Net is not a Public Sphere" *Constellations* 10, pp. 95-112.

### **Questions for Reading Response**

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a 'deliberative' model of democracy?
2. "Democracy needs to be reconceived as something other than a form of government: as a mode of being that is conditioned by bitter experience, doomed to succeed only temporarily, but is a recurrent possibility as long as the memory of the political survives" (Sheldon Wolin, in Benhabib, 8). Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Is the Net democratic? (Be sure to explain how you conceptualize the term 'democratic' in your answer).

**APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility**

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

**Essay course requirements**

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

**Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")**

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.

Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

**Security and Confidentiality of Student Work** (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar*  
(<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/>)

"**Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams** - All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

**Duplication of work**

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

**Grade adjustments**

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

**Academic Offences**

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

## **Submission of Course Requirements**

**ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS MUST BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.**

**THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.**

## **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

EXAMINATIONS/ATTENDANCE (Sen. Min. Feb.4/49, May 23/58, S.94, S.3538, S.3632, S.04-097) A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations: 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year. 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

## **Medical Policy, Late Assignments, etc.**

Students registered in Social Science should refer to

[http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having\\_problems/index.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having_problems/index.html) for information on Medical Policy, Term Tests, Final Examinations, Late Assignments, Short Absences, Extended Absences, Documentation and other Academic Concerns. Non-Social Science students should refer to their home faculty's academic counselling office.

## **University Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct**

**Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking:** "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> )."

**Multiple-choice tests/exams:** "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic\\_policies/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html)



## PLAGIARISM\*

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different types of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

**A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.**

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication, and page number.

Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

**B. In adopting other writers' ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.**

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases in their suspension from the University.

\*Reprinted by permission of the Department of History

Adopted by the council of the Faculty of Social Science, October, 1970; approved by the Dept. of History August 13, 1991

**Accessibility at Western:** Please contact [poliscie@uwo.ca](mailto:poliscie@uwo.ca) if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Registrar's office can be accessed for Student Support Services at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services (including the services provided by the USC listed here) can be reached at:  
<http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Services can be reached at: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western  
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.