

Political Science 571

Theories of Democracy

Professor Michael Neblo
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Class: T/R 1:30-3:18
O. Hrs: W 10:30-11:30
2114 Derby Hall

This course is an advanced survey of theories of democracy. Among other topics, we will investigate: competing definitions of democracy, the relations between democracy and other values, participation and representation, deliberation, and conception of diversity and identity. The readings are organized thematically, but we will explore many concepts through the lens of both historical and contemporary thinkers.

Course Requirements

There are three main course requirements:

1. *Seminar participation:* I have high expectations for attendance and class preparation. In addition to you being expected to volunteer your views during discussion, you may be called upon at random. Some of these readings are dense and difficult, so I strongly encourage you to take notes as you read, and whenever possible, to read them twice and/or discuss them with classmates before the class session. *I do not expect you to come to class with all the "right" answers. However, I do expect you to come to class having thought seriously about our texts and the questions they raise.* "A" level participation involves demonstrating consistently high levels of engagement with the readings, as well as insightfully connecting them to each other, the course themes, other students' contributions, real politics, etc... General seminar participation will count for 30% of the final course grade.

In addition to general participation, each member of the class will be assigned the role of "point person" for one class session. This role involves turning in a formally written set of comments on the readings (about three pages), and making a short (about 5 minute) class presentation designed to spark discussion. Your discussion, presentation, and written responses for this session will count for 10% of your final grade.

2. *Quizzes:* I will give several short, unannounced quizzes to check for preparation and understanding. The quizzes will not be difficult if you have done the readings for that class session. The combined quizzes will count for 10% of your final grade.
3. *Final paper:* One nine (approx.) page paper on a subject of the seminar member's choice, relevant to the course themes, and contingent on my prior approval. This paper will count for 40% of the final course grade and is due on June 3rd by noon in electronic format (MS-Word is preferred). When you email me the paper, you should not consider it received until you get a confirmation response from me.
4. *Colleague comments:* For the May 27th meeting you will be expected to produce a written set of comments on three other seminar members' draft papers, using substantive and Booth et. al. criteria. The colleague comments will count for 10% of your final grade.

A note on academic integrity: I require electronic copies of your paper because they will be run through a software program designed to detect plagiarism from the web, as well as a database of papers turned in at OSU. I do this *not* because I do not trust you. I believe that the vast majority of students are honest. I even believe that most students who plagiarize do so, not because they are generally dishonest, but because they panic in the end of term crush. I check for plagiarism to reassure students who do their own work that they are not chumps, and to help students who are tempted to plagiarize under pressure to avoid making a decision that they will come to regret.

Course Materials

David Held, *Models of Democracy*

John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*

Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*

Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture*

Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

All other course materials and readings will be available on Carmen.

Recommended: Booth et. al. *The Craft of Research 2nd Ed.*

Students with disabilities should make their needs known to the instructor and seek available assistance in the first week of the quarter. For course materials in alternative formats please see Mr. Wayne DeYoung, 2140 Derby Hall, 292-2880, also in the first week of the quarter.

Schedule of Readings for Class Meetings

March 25th *Introduction*

March 26th *Background, Democratic Theory I*
David Held, *Models of Democracy*, Chapters 1-3.

April 1st *Background, Democratic Theory II*
Held, *Models of Democracy*, Chapters 4-6.

April 3rd *Background, Democratic Theory III*
Held, *Models of Democracy*, Chapters 7, 9-10.

April 8th *Deliberative Democracy I*
Dewey: The Problem of Method
Habermas: The Public Sphere
Fishkin: Giving the People Voice

- April 10th *Deliberative Democracy II*
 Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, Translator's Introduction, Preface, Postscript, Chapter 1.
- April 15th *Deliberative Democracy III*
 Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, Chapters 7-8.
- April 17th *Democracy & Culture I*
 Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture*, Chapters 1-4.
- April 22nd *Democracy & Culture II*
 Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture*, Chapters 5-7.
- April 24th *Political Liberalism I*
 John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, Introduction, Introduction to the Paperback Edition, Lectures I, II, sections 1-3
- April 29th *Political Liberalism II*
 John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, Lectures IV, VI.
- May 1st *Equality in Modern Democracies*
 Rousseau: Discourse on Inequality
 Burke: Reflections on the Revolution in France
 Walzer: In Defense of Equality
- May 6th *Power and the Corrosion of True Democracy?*
 Gaventa: from Power & Powerlessness
- May 8th *Writing Seminar/Paper Planning*
 Booth et. al. from *The Craft of Research* 2nd ed.
- May 13th *Imagining Democratic Communities*

Anderson from *Imagined Communities*

May 15th *Democratic Theory as Democratic Culture I*
Rorty: Introduction and Chapters 1 & 2 (CIS)

May 20th *Democratic Theory as Democratic Culture II*
Rorty: Chapters 3, 4 & 9 (CIS)

May 22nd *Democratic Theory as Democratic Culture III*
Morrison Chapters 1-14

May 27th *Democratic Theory as Democratic Culture IV*
Morrison Chapters 15-28

May 29th *Paper Workshop*
Read colleague draft papers.