

HONS 400 Democracy and the Politics of Hate

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4 and by appt
Semester and Year: Winter 2021
3.00 credit hour course
Course Meeting Times and Format(s): W
9:30-10:45

Course Description

Democracy has been understood as a setting where equal citizens collectively make decisions about law and public policy in an environment of equality, fairness, and mutual respect. Political theorists from JS Mill to John Rawls have attempted to define the conditions that make a democratic civil society possible. Today the world's democracies are challenged by powerful political movements based on intolerance and division. The course considers current thinking about populism and the rise of racism and religious bigotry as political tools of mobilization. How should democratic theory respond to the challenge of hate-based political movements? The course reexamines classic ideas in democratic theory, current sociological research on hate-based populism, and current strategies open to citizens in the twenty-first century to reclaim the values of tolerance and respect in their democratic institutions. The course is intended to provide students with better intellectual resources for understanding the political developments currently transforming societies as diverse as the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and India.

Required Materials and/or Technology:

John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* 978-0674005112

Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today* 978-1509536849

Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism*

Justin Gest, *The New Minority: White Working Class Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality*

AAAS 2020 Democracy and common purpose (PDF)

Daedelus American Democracy (PDF)

Little, Democracy and hate-based populism (e-book)

Teaching modality

This course is designed as a hybrid course, with part of the work in person (online-synchronous) and part of it online (asynchronous). We will have 75 minutes of live (synchronous) discussion on Zoom of the materials and issues each week. The other half your work will be done through reflection, reading, and interaction on the online discussion board on Canvas. I have taken special effort to find ways of helping you be fully engaged with the course materials and with each other.

It is crucial in this course to keep up with all readings and written assignments and to be prepared for lively discussion on Wednesday mornings. This is a course about intellectual stimulation, and – like exercise at the gym – you only get out of it a multiple of what you put into it. The more engaged you are in the readings, videos, and assignments, the more you will learn and expand your understanding of philosophy, history, morality, and our place in time and culture. I encourage you to think independently and creatively about the topics and texts that we will be discussing. Each person’s perspective is valued, and sometimes our ideas get much better when we see how we agree or disagree with others. All your thoughts are welcome, whether in Zoom discussion, online discussion, responses to short questions, white papers, or full papers. All I ask is civility in relation to others and reasons for your opinions.

Course Objectives:

- Gain and deepen knowledge of the philosophical premises of democracy [based on assigned papers, in-class discussion of readings and class topics]
- Acquire sociological background about the current realities and dynamics of extremist-populist political movements [based on assigned papers, in-class discussion of readings and class topics]
- Develop ideas about how to use current philosophical thinking about democratic societies to respond to hate-based politics [as evidenced by assigned papers]
- Improve skills in writing and speech in articulating evidence-based arguments for one’s opinions and judgments [as evidenced by assigned papers and in-class discussion]
- Learn skills for engaging in difficult discussions within a setting of civility and mutual respect [as evidenced by in-class discussion of assigned topics]

Assignment and Grading Distribution:

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| Short questions on each assignment 9 pts | 18% |
| In-class team presentation 1 60 pts | 9% |
| In-class team presentation 2 60 pts | 9% |
| Discussion with comments on other people’s comments 9 pts | 18% |
| Paper 1 (6-8 pages) 150 pts | 23% |
| Paper 2 (8-10 pages) 150 pts | 23% |

In-class team presentations

Each week we will have a short 20-minute presentation by a team of 2 students on a topic related to the week’s readings. The team will prepare an organized set of ideas about the topic and help stimulate discussion from students in the course. Each student will participate in two presentations.

Evaluation system for short questions, presentations, discussions

- 3 very good
- 2 satisfactory
- 1 needs improvement
- 0 unsatisfactory

Course Outline

| Date | Activity and Content (full assignments in Modules on Canvas) |
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| Session 1 January 13 | <p><i>Setting the stage: Democracy and Hate</i> READ syllabus VIDEO session 1 Overview of course READ US Constitution (Canvas) READ Universal Declaration on Human Rights (Canvas)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 1 DISCUSSION week 1</p> |
| Session 2 January 20 | <p><i>Classical liberalism: the minimal state</i> VIDEO lecture session 2 SLIDES lecture session 2 READ Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>, Chapters 1, 2 (Canvas)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 2 DISCUSSION week 2</p> |
| Session 3 January 27 | <p><i>Modern liberal democracy: Rawls's theory</i> VIDEO lecture session 3 SLIDES lecture session 3</p> <p>READ Rawls, <i>Justice as Fairness</i> sections 1-11</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 3 DISCUSSION week 3</p> |
| Session 4 February 3 | <p><i>Overlapping consensus and democratic stability</i> VIDEO lecture session 4 SLIDES lecture session 4</p> <p>READ Rawls, <i>Justice as Fairness</i> sections 54-60</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 4 DISCUSSION week 4</p> |
| Session 5 February 10 | <p><i>A property-owning democracy; inequalities</i> VIDEO lecture session 5 SLIDES lecture session 5 READ Rawls, <i>Justice as Fairness</i>, sections 41-45</p> |

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| | <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 5 DISCUSSION week 5</p> |
| <p>Session 6 February 17</p> | <p><i>Fundamental challenges to democracy</i> VIDEO lecture session 6 SLIDES lecture session 6 READ Levitsky and Ziblatt, <i>How Democracies Die</i> (ch. 1-5)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 6 DISCUSSION week 6</p> |
| <p>Session 7 February 24</p> | <p><i>Populism, racism, and hate</i> VIDEO lecture session 7 SLIDES lecture session 7 READ Mudde, <i>The Far Right Today</i> (intro, chaps. 2-4) READ Mudde, "Populist Zeitgeist", pp. 541-548</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 7 DISCUSSION week 7</p> |
| <p>Session 8 March 3</p> | <p><i>Populism and authoritarianism</i> VIDEO lecture session 8 SLIDES lecture session 8 READ Mudde, <i>The Far Right Today</i> (ch. 5,6,8) READ Blee, "Ethnographies of the Far Right"</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 8 DISCUSSION week 8</p> |
| <p>March 5</p> | <p>1st paper due (6-8 pps)</p> |
| <p>Session 9 March 10</p> | <p><i>Authoritarian personality and social dominance</i> VIDEO lecture session 9 SLIDES lecture session 9 READ Little, <i>Theories of authoritarian personality</i> (e-book) READ Saunders-Ngo, "The Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale" READ Pratto Sidanius and Stallworth Malle, "Social Dominance Orientation"</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 9 DISCUSSION week 9</p> |
| <p>Session 10 March 17</p> | <p><i>White working class stresses</i> VIDEO lecture session 10 SLIDES lecture session 10</p> |

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| | <p>READ Gest, <i>The New Minority</i> (chs. 1,2,4,5)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 10 DISCUSSION week 10</p> |
| <p>Session 11 March 24</p> | <p><i>Marginalization and the rust-belt</i> VIDEO lecture session 11 SLIDES lecture session 11</p> <p>READ Gest, <i>The New Minority</i> (chs. 6-9) READ Free Press Analysis of 2020 presidential vote in Michigan</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 11 DISCUSSION week 11</p> |
| <p>Session 12 March 31</p> | <p><i>Populism and electoral politics</i> VIDEO lecture session 12 SLIDES lecture session 12</p> <p>READ Norris and Inglehart, <i>Cultural Backlash</i> (chs. 2,8,12,13)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 12 DISCUSSION week 12</p> |
| <p>Session 13 April 7</p> | <p><i>Liberal democracy in a multicultural society</i> VIDEO lecture session 13 SLIDES lecture session 13 READ Daedalus, <i>American Democracy and the Common Good</i> (Canvas) READ AAAS 2020, <i>Democratic Citizenship, Our Common Purpose</i> (pp. 10-19)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 13 DISCUSSION week 13</p> |
| <p>Session 14 April 14</p> | <p><i>A vision for the future</i> VIDEO lecture session 14 SLIDES lecture session 14</p> <p>READ Little, <i>Democracy and the Politics of Division and Hate</i> (ebook, sections to be assigned)</p> <p>QUICK QUESTIONS week 14 DISCUSSION week 14</p> |

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| April 19 | 2nd paper due (8-10 pps) |
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| April 20 | All classes end |
| April 22-28 | Final exams |