

POLS 603: Democratic Theory (65890)

Spring 2015

Classes: Monday and Wednesdays, 11:00-12:15 in 114 Blake

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 pm and by appointment

Objectives: The purposes of this course are to:

- explore the meaning of democracy and the characteristics of democratic regimes
- understand the history of democracy both in theory and practice
- examine a wide range of models of democracy
- analyze the major justifications and critiques of democracy
- consider whether democracy is, indeed, triumphant in the U.S. and elsewhere
- analyze some of the major problems that plague the achievement of democracy in various countries around the world

Readings: To aid in meeting these objectives students should purchase four books

- *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* 2nd ed by Robert Dahl (Yale, 2003)
- *The Spirit of Democracy*, by Larry Diamond (Holt, 2008)
- *Does American Democracy Still Work?* by Alan Wolfe (Yale, 2006)
- *Democracy Incorporated: The Specter of Inverted Totalitarianism* by Sheldon Wolin (Princeton, 2008)

Other readings (marked with an asterisk) can be downloaded from the Assignment folder on Blackboard. Many of these readings (marked with a #) can be found in *The Political Theory Reader*, edited by Paul Schumaker, which was used in POLS 301 (still available at union).

Requirements

(1) Class attendance and participation will count 25 percent of your grade. To participate effectively in class discussions, you should read assigned materials prior to class. You should also study notes that I will deposit in the Course Documents folder on Blackboard at least 24 hours prior to class. These notes will outline some of the main ideas in the readings, provide some relevant outside material, and occasionally provide my interpretations of the themes for the day. Rather than listening to me lecture on these matters, we can use these notes and the readings themselves as starting points for class discussions.

Your attendance and participation (A&P) grade: You will be docked one point (from the 25-point scale) for every class you miss. Thus, if you miss twice (and your participation in class is average), you might expect to get 23/25, which translates into a (low) A; if you miss 5 classes you might expect a 20/25 (a very low) B; if you miss 10 classes, you might expect 15/25, a barely passing performance. Such attendance-based scores will then be adjusted for quality of participation. Those whose participation is excellent (both quantitatively and qualitatively) would have two points added to the participation-based score. Those whose participation is minimal or poor would have two points deducted from the attendance-based grade indicated above. If overall participation in class discussions is poor, I reserve the right to begin providing quizzes (and performances on them would be factored into your A&P grade).

Students having excused absences will be credited with being in attendance if they notify me in advance of class, provide documentation, and write a 300 - 400 word précis, briefly describing and evaluating the key points in the assigned readings and notes on Blackboard for the missed class.

(2) A midterm exam, counting 25 percent of your grade, will be given on March 11. For this exam, you will be asked to provide short answers (each about two pages of a large bluebook in length) demonstrating your understanding of concepts taken from the readings and/or discussed in class. Class notes for each session, as provided on Blackboard, will list about four key concepts for that session. Five of the concepts so listed for Sessions 2 - 13 will appear on the exam, and you will need to write on four (4) of them.

(3) A final exam, counting 25 percent of your grade, will be given on Monday, May 11, at 10:30am to 1pm in 114 Blake, and will have two parts. Part one will be similar to the midterm exam, but will involve the identification of concepts encountered during Sessions 15 - 28. Part two will involve writing a comprehensive essay. A study guide containing possible essay questions will be distributed by May 8.

(4) A term paper, focusing on the current state of democracy and prospects for democracy in one country will count 25 percent of your grade. You will be required to give a preliminary report in class during April, and your completed paper is due on **May 6**. This paper should be between 2000 and 2500 words in length.

If you focus on a country other than the US, the starting point for your analysis should be Diamond's *Spirit of Democracy*. Such a paper should provide:

- (a) A description of Diamond's discussion of the extent and quality of democracy in that country
- (b) A discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of Diamond's description of democracy in that country, assessing what his theory reveals and conceals
- (c) A discussion of how democracy in that country might be understood differently if other theoretical perspectives (explored in this course) had guided Diamond
- (d) The results of additional (library and/or internet) research about the politics of that country, that confirm, supplement, or contradict the views provided by Diamond
- (e) A conclusion that provides composite assessments of the present state of democracy in that country, the future of democracy there, and whether or not Diamond's theory has led to useful and accurate assessments of these matters

If you focus on the U.S. (or a particular state or community within the U.S.), the starting points of your analysis should be the books by Wolfe and Wolin. Such a paper should provide

- (a) An overview of the state of democracy in (or within) America, as depicted by Wolfe and Wolin, along with discussions of the similarities and differences in their views
- (b) A discussion of the explanations offered by Wolfe and Wolin for the conditions of and prospects for democracy in (or within) the U.S.
- (c) A discussion of whether and how alternative theoretical perspectives considered in this course might lead to different conclusions about the overall state of and prospects for American (or, for example, Kansan) democracy
- (d) A more detailed focus on one particular challenge to American democracy, as discussed by Wolfe and/or Wolin; you should then engage in (library and/or internet) research to confirm, supplement, or challenge his (their) conclusions about this challenge.
- (e) A conclusion that provides composite assessments of the prospects for democracy in (or within) this country and of the ideas of Wolfe and Wolin

To avoid problems of **academic misconduct**, it is not only imperative that your papers reflect your own work and analysis but that you appropriately cite your sources. Any material taken verbatim from assigned or outside sources should be placed in quotation marks and cited. You should also cite those ideas taken from such sources that you are paraphrasing (or putting in your own words). Such citations should be provided immediately following your drawing from these materials.

You should use in-text or parenthetical (APSA) citation conventions. Details of these methods are available at (<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocAPSA.html>) , and (<http://citesource.trincoll.edu/apsa/apsa.html>). Here are the basics, with some simplifying modifications for this course.

When you are drawing from assigned readings, your citations can be embedded in your paper providing only the author's last name and the cited page of the work that we have read, as illustrated here:

- an attribution to an idea on page 101 of *Does American Democracy Still Work?* would be: (Wolfe, 101).
- an attribution of an idea on page 92 of the extract by Hardt and Negri in the *Political Theory Reader*, would be: (Hardt and Negri in *PTR*, 92).
- an attribution of an idea on page 740 of the article by Winters and Page, posted in the Assignments folder on Blackboard, would be (Winters and Page, 740).

You can draw from lecture notes as posted on Blackboard, citing relevant notes as illustrated here:

- an attribution of an idea about Athenian democracy contained in the "class notes" for January 28, posed in the Documents folder on Blackboard, would be: (S2, p. x.)

It is not necessary to list such citations from our required readings or from class notes in your list of references at the end of the paper.

You must also draw from unassigned readings, and these should be cited using in-text conventions; in these cases you should indicate within parentheses the last name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the page number. For example, if you were drawing from material in the larger book that is the source of the extract from Hardt and Negri noted above, the parenthetical citation would be (Hardt and Negri, 2004, pp. xx).

All unassigned readings that are cited using this in-text method should then be included in a *List of References* at the end of your paper. All such citations should be listed alphabetically, by the last name of the first author. For each work, you should provide standard information about the author(s), the title of her work, the publisher, the year of publication, and the page(s) as illustrated below.

- A book: Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), pp. xx-yy.
- A journal article: Wimpler, Brian. "Participation, Representation and Social Justice: Using Participatory Governance to Transform Representative Democracy (in Brazil)" *Polity* 44 (October 2012), pp. 666-82.
- An article on the web: Schaeffer, Ute, and Loay Mudhoon. "Egypt's rocky road to Democracy," www.dw.de/egypts-rocky-road-to-democracy/a-16251375. (deposited 9/20/12; accessed 7/12/12)

Assistance at the Writer's Roost. There are several Writer's Roosts on campus that provide consultation at no charge for their services. For more information, please call 864-2399 or send an e-mail to writing@ku.edu. When you visit, bring your work in progress along with areas of your writing where you seek assistance, such as organization, documentation, editing, etc.

Grading: Students can accumulate up to 100 points for performances on tests, the term paper, and for their attendance and participation in discussions. Students earning 90 or more points will be assured of an A; those earning 80 or more points will be assured of a B; etc. While "plus-minus grading" will not normally be employed in assigning final grades for the course, I reserve the right to assign such marks in exceptional cases. For example, if you end up with 88 or 89 points and it is my judgment that your overall effort and learning is much like students who earned an "A" because they accumulated 90 points, I could choose to assign you an B+ or an A-.

Scale and expectations:

- F: LT 60:** Failing work. Attendance is irregular or lacking altogether. There is little recognition of basic themes and concepts and hence little evidence of having thought much about democratic theory.
- D: 60-69:** Deficient work. Attendance is irregular. Basic themes in readings, class notes, and discussions are recognized but not understood in much depth. Papers and exams suggest limited effort and thought about the material.
- C: 70-79:** Adequate work. Misses classes about 25% of the time. Shows some familiarity with most readings, but studying is less thorough than that of A and B students. Participation in discussions is sporadic. Exams demonstrate basic understanding of materials covered in the readings, class notes and discussions, but significant gaps are revealed. Term paper demonstrates basic understanding of relevant readings; some but not all of the required themes for the paper are addressed; outside research is provided but is minimal; writing is comprehensible but not very well organized, clear, and grammatical.
- B: 80-89:** Good work. Attends classes fairly regularly, but with some absences. Completes assigned readings and reflects upon them prior to class. Participates effectively in discussions. Exams demonstrate good understanding of readings and lectures. Term paper is responsive to the assignment, demonstrates good understanding of relevant readings, indicates effective research of outside sources, is well written, and is completed on time.
- A: GT 90:** Excellent work: Same as B but demonstrates more effort, more contemplation, thoughtfulness, creativity, and critical insight.

The staff of Services for **Students with Disabilities** (SSD), 135 Strong, 785-864-2620, coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted SSD, please do so as soon as possible. Please see me privately if you are granted such an accommodation.

Calendar and Assigned Readings

* Reading can be found in the Assignment Folder on Blackboard

An abridgement of this reading can be found in *The Political Theory Reader*

Recommended readings are intended for graduate students and your summer reading list

S1, Jan. 21: Introduction

Course themes and requirements

Discussion of your views about democracy – ideas to be addressed more rigorously as the semester unfolds: the meanings and characteristics of democracy; the pros and cons of democracy; trends and future prospects of democracy

Part I: Democracy and theoretical understandings of democracy in historical perspective

S2, Jan. 26: Premodern democracy

* Robert Dahl, *On Democracy*, Chapter 2

* Jane Mansbridge, *Beyond Adversarial Democracy*, Chapters 2-3, (1980): 8-35

Recommended readings

* Bernard Grofman, et al. Symposium on “Lessons of Athenian Democracy,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (1993: 471-490)

* Aristotle, “Politics”

* Dahl, “On Guardianship,” from *Democracy and Its Critics* (1989)

S3, Jan 28: The origins of modern democracy

- *# John Locke, extracts from *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), *PTR*, 31-37
- * Jean Jacques Rousseau, from *The Social Contract* (1762)

Recommended reading:

- *# Niccollo Machiavelli. "The threat posed by corrupt citizens," *PTR*, 236-7

S4, Feb. 2: The American experiment in democracy

Robert Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* 179-183, 1-72.

Recommended readings

- *# James Madison, "Federalist Number 10," *PTR*, 193-96 and other Federalist Papers
- Harvey Kaye, "The lost founder: Thomas Paine," in *American Prospect* (July 2005) 34-38.
- "The Six Nations: oldest living democracy on Earth." www.ratical.org/many_worlds/6Nations
- Donald Robinson, *Town Meeting* (2011), Part One

S5, Feb. 4: Further assessments of the American constitution

Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* 73-139, 190-1 (Table 5)

Recommended readings

- * Louis Seidman, "Let's Give Up the Constitution," *New York Times*, 12/31/12
- * Paul Schumaker, "The good, the better, the best: The Electoral College, the popular-plurality, and the instant runoff methods for selecting the American president," pp. 203-222 in Gary Bugh (ed.) *Electoral College Reform* (2010)

S6, Feb. 9: Democracy in the 19th Century

- *# Alexis de Tocqueville, "The unlimited power of the majority," in *PTR*, 268-71 and "Associations in Political Life" from *Democracy in America* (1835)
- *# John Stuart Mill, from "On Liberty" in *PTR*, 240-42
- * John Stuart Mill, from *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861)

S7, Feb. 11: Democratic elitism in the early 20th Century

- *# Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942), in *PTR*, 271-275
- * Anthony Downs, from *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957)

Recommended reading

- * Ian Shapiro, "State of Democratic Theory," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, edited by Ira Katznelson and Helen Milner (2002). 236-265.
- * Fredrick von Hayek, *Political Order of a Free People*

S8, Feb. 16: Pluralist democracy (the orthodox challenge to elitism)

- * C. Wright Mills, "The Higher Circles," from *The Power Elite* (1956)
- * Robert Dahl, extracts from *Who Governs?* (1961)
- *# Theodore J. Lowi, "The New Public Philosophy: Interest Group Liberalism," from *The End of Liberalism*, in *PTR*, 11-17.

Recommended readings

- * Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *APSR* 56 (Dec. 1962): 947-52

- * Robert Wasté, "Community Power and Pluralist Theory," in Wasté (ed.) *Community Power: Directions for Future Research* (1986): 117-137
- * Paul Schumaker, *Critical Pluralism, Democratic Performance, and Community Power* (1991), Chap. 2

S9, Feb. 18: Elite theory today

- * Alan Wolfe, "The Power Elite Now" *American Prospect* (May-June 1999)
- * Chrystia Freeland, "The Rise of the New Global Elite," *Atlantic Monthly* (Jan/Feb. 2011): 44-55
- * Jeffrey Winters, "Oligarchy," *Perspectives on Politics* (March 2012), 137-43

Recommended reading

- John Judis, "Explaining the power of 21st Century Plutocracy," *The New Republic* (June 2, 2104)
- * Jeffrey Winters and Benjamin Page, "Oligarchy in the United States?" in *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (December 2009), 732-744
- Lawrence Jacobs and Desmond King (eds.), *The Unsustainable State* (2009)
- Jacob Hacker and Paul Peterson, *Winner-take-all-politics* (2010)

S10, Feb. 23: Populist democracy

- * Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics* (Sept. 2014)
- *# William Riker, "Liberalism, Populism, and the Theory of Public Choice," in *PTR*, 283-85

Recommended reading

- * Paul Schumaker, *Critical Pluralism, Democratic Performance, and Community Power* (1991), Chap. 12
- * Symposium on "Substantive democracy: public opinion, institutions, and policy-making," featuring articles by Lawrence Jacobs, Robert Shapiro, Benjamin Page, James Stimson, Michael MacKuen, and Robert Erikson, "PS: *Political Science and Politics* (March 1994): 9-17, and 25-34

S11, Feb. 25: Participatory democracy

- * Arthur Lupia and John Matsusaka, "Direct democracy: new approaches to old questions," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2004: 463-482
- * Carole Pateman, "Participatory Democracy Revisited," *Perspectives on Politics* 2012: 7-19

Recommended readings

- * John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (1926)
- *# James Barber, extract from *Strong Democracy* in *PTR*, 175-80
- Ronald Robinson, *Town Meeting: Practicing Democracy in Rural New England*, (2011)
- * APSA Task Force, "American democracy in an age of rising inequality," full report, *Perspectives on Politics* (December 2004): 651-666

S12, March 2: Deliberative democracy

- *# Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, "What deliberative democracy means," in *PTR*, 280-282.
- * Archon Fung, "Continuous Institutional Innovation and the Pragmatic Conception of Democracy," in *Polity* 44 (October, 2012), pp. 609-624

Recommended

- * Cheiri J. Strachan and Michael Wolf, "Political Civility: A Symposium," *PS* (June 2012), 401-434

James Fishkin and Bruce Ackerman, "Deliberation Day," *Journal of Political Philosophy* (2002): 129-52

S13, March 4: Tele-democracy

- * Benjamin Barber, "Pangloss, Pandora, or Jefferson? Three scenarios for the future of technology and democracy," from Barber, *A Passion for Democracy* (Princeton U Press, 1998): 245-257.
- * Morley Winograd and Michael Hais, *Millennial Makeover: MySpace, YouTube, and the Future of American Politics* (2008), pp. 1-8

Recommended reading

- * Eric Lawrence, John Sides, and Henry Farrell, "Self-selection or deliberation? Blog readership, participation, and polarization," *POP* (March 2010)

S14, March 9: Inclusive democracy

- * Paul Schumaker, "Policy Responsiveness to Protest Group Demands," *JOP* (1975)
- * Cornell West, extract from *Race Matters* (1993)
- *# Iris Young, "Polity and Group Difference, in *PTR*, 226-231

Recommended reading

Anne Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (1991)

S15, March 11: Midterm exam

March 15-19: Spring Break

S16, March 23: Radical views of democracy around the world in an age of Globalization

- * Noam Chomsky, "Consent without consent," from *Profit over People* (1998)
- *# Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, "Globalization and democracy" in *PTR*, 92-98
- * John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, "The State of the State; The Global Contest for the Future of Government," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August, 2014)

Recommended reading

- * John Guidry and Mark Sawyer, "Contentious pluralism," *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2003)
- Hardt and Negri, *Multitude* (2004)
- John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Fourth Revolution: The Global Race to Reinvent the State* (Penguin, 2014)
- Chantal Mouffe, *Dimensions of radical democracy* (2000)

Part II: Applying theory to practice: Democratic achievements and deficiencies

S17, March 25: Democracy around the world: Leading theories of democratic transformation and maintenance

Larry Diamond, *Spirit of Democracy*, pp. 1 – 87

Recommended readings

- * Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After 20 Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 115-144.
- * Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some social requisites of democracy: economic development and political legitimacy," *APSR* (1959): 69-10
- * Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (2007)

- S18, March 30: Democracy around the world: A closer look at causal forces**
Larry Diamond, *Spirit of Democracy*, pp. 88-168
- S19, April 1: Democracy around the world: Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia**
Larry Diamond, *Spirit of Democracy*, 171-237
- S20, April 6: Democracy around the world: the Middle East and Africa**
Larry Diamond, *Spirit of Democracy*, 238-287
- S21, April 8: Democracy around the world: Future prospects**
Larry Diamond, *Spirit of Democracy*, pp. 291-370
- S22, April 13: America's new dumb-downed democracy**
Alan Wolfe, *Does American Democracy Still work?* Chapters 1 & 2
- S23, April 15: America's inadequate accountability and mediating institutions**
Alan Wolfe, *Does American Democracy Still work?* Chapters 3 & 4
- S24, April 20: Disinterest and injustice in America's conservative democracy**
Alan Wolfe, *Does American Democracy Still work?* Chapters 5 - 7
- S25, April 22: The hypothesis of "inverted totalitarianism" in America**
Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated*, pp. ix-xxiv - 40
- S26, April 27: The contradiction between democracy and Superpower**
Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated*, 41-113
- S27, April 29: Elitism and education in our incorporated America**
Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated*, 114-210
- S28, May 4: Citizenship under and against managed democracy**
Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated*, 211-292
- S29, May 6: Course wrap-up**
Term Papers due
- Monday, May 11, 10:30am - 1:00pm: Final exam**