POLI 365: Democratic Theory
Instructor: Jimmy Lim

Course Description
This course will cover classic and cutting-edge literature in democratic theory. What is democracy? Is democracy justified? What is it good for? Can democracy avoid tyranny of the majority? Is democracy compatible with capitalism? Do we live under a democratic regime? Is democracy possible?

Please note: This is a manual note-taking lecture course. The use or display of any mobile computing or communications devices (including computers, recording devices, phones, iPads, or iPods) is strictly banned during class, except with the explicit permission of the instructor in exceptional cases.

Course Objectives
This course has three objectives: 1) to become acquainted with key normative concepts, problems, and questions in democratic theory; 2) to develop the capacity to think critically in an analytically rigorous way, to give articulate oral expression to that thinking, and to give articulate written expression to that thinking in a thesis-driven, analytical essay format; and 3) to develop the capacity to focus on and listen to lectures, digest the main points on the spot, and effectively to take hand-written notes that synthesize (rather than transcribe) lecture content.

Required Texts Available for Purchase at Paragraphe Bookstore

Evaluation Policy
2 Paper Proposals 5% each = 10% total
First Paper (1500–1750 words) 25%
Second Paper (1500–1750 words) 25%
Final Exam 25%
Conference Attendance 5%
Conference Participation 10%

You must pass each of the six portions of the class to receive at least a D in the class as a whole. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
5  Student Responsibilities

Paper Proposals

Your paper topics must be approved by me beforehand. To acquire approval, you must hand in a paper proposal of 350-500 words by the proposal due date. The proposal must indicate (1) your overriding thesis, (2) what your main arguments supporting your thesis are, and (3) what objections you think you will consider. I will then inform you whether your proposal is approved. In addition to a grade, you will receive a colour “light”: green light means “go ahead”; yellow light means “caution, your proposal is approved but you may wish to meet with your TA/professor to discuss”; and red light means “your proposal is not approved and you must meet with your TA/professor to discuss and must hand in a new proposal.” Any paper submitted without an approved paper proposal will lose six letter grades (i.e., from A to C, A- to C-, B+ to D+, etc.). Keep your approved paper proposal—you need to hand it in with your paper.

Paper Assignments

All papers must be in hardcopy, double-spaced, at least 11-point font, proper reference citation, with no separate title page but your title, name, TA name, and final word count (including footnotes) placed at the top of your first page. If you are using notes, use numbered footnotes (not endnotes, and Arabic not Roman numerals). I do not care which reference citation system you use, as long as you are consistent and complete. (You may wish to use the Modern Language Association (MLA) system.) Papers that fail to meet these criteria will be penalized by dropping to the next possible letter grade (e.g., from A to A-). Submissions by email will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made beforehand.

Your papers must have: 1) an explicit thesis; 2) explicit arguments in support of your thesis; and 3) good explicit objections to your thesis and/or arguments. You must of course deal with these objections and show that they do not undermine your thesis. I will discuss in class the elements of a good political theory paper.

Late Work

Papers and proposals must be completed on time. Late work will be penalized by dropping each day (including Saturday and Sunday) by one third of a grade (i.e., from A+ to A to A- to B+ etc.), unless you have secured explicit permission in advance to turn in your paper late. Late make-up essays will not be accepted. Be proactive. If there are any foreseeable problems, come talk to me or your TA early, rather than waiting until after the fact. I will not grant extensions a couple of days before the due date.

6  Make-Up Work Policy

If you are absent for documented emergency medical or family reasons, an alternative homework submission date will be arranged. The alternative arrangement is only open to those who can provide a valid medical/ family reason for missing the homework. If you cannot provide a valid reason for your absence, you will receive 0 points for the homework submission.

Students who need to miss a class due to a religious holiday should notify me at least fourteen days prior to the holiday. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.
7 Language of Submission

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

8 Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

9 Class Schedule

Readings should be done by dates shown, before class, since lectures will assume that the associated readings have already been done. Please note that the first class is substantive. You are expected to have done the reading beforehand.

* = reading available on online [most items you will need to access via a campus connection]
~ = book for purchase at Paragraphe
^ = check MyCourses for how to obtain text

Week 1 to 3: Democracy Classics (For and Against)

A. The Classical Greek Heritage: Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy
1. Tues Jan 7
   *Plato, Statesman, sections 302b-303b

   *Aristotle, Politics, Book III, chapters 7-8 [1279a22-1280a6]; Book IV, chapter 4, sections 22-31 [1291b29-1292a38]; Book IV, chapter 14 [1297b35-1299a2]; Book VI, chapter 2 [1317a40-1318a10]
   [This online edition gives book but not chapter and section numbers; if you use this translation, you will have to follow the line numbers I give in brackets]

   *Thomas Hobbes (1640), Elements of Law, Part 2, chapters 1-2 (“Of the Requisites to the Constitution of a Commonwealth,” and “Of the Three Sorts of Commonwealth”; also sometimes referred to as chapters 20-21)

B. Freedom as Self-Rule: Direct Legislation in the Republican Tradition
2. Thurs Jan 9
   ~Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762), On the Social Contract, Bks I & II.
3. Tues Jan 14
   ~Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762), On the Social Contract, Bks III & IV
C. Tyranny of the Majority: Worries in the Liberal Tradition
4. Thurs Jan 16
   *Benjamin Constant (1815), *Principles of Politics Applicable to All Governments*, Bk II: chapters 1-2 [6pgs]
   http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/constant-principles-of-politics-applicable-to-all-governments
   *Benjamin Constant (1819), The Liberty of Ancients Compared with that of Moderns*, [12pgs]
   *James Madison (1818), *Federalist*, No 10 [8pgs]
   http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/788

D. Maximum Human Welfare: Representative Government in the Utilitarian Tradition
5. Tues Jan 21
   *James Mill (1825), *Essay on Government* [32pg] (Jan 27)
   http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/1761
   *Lord Macaulay (Thomas Babington) (1829), *Mill on Government* [42pgs]
   http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/99/48507

6. Thurs Jan 23
   *John Stuart Mill (1861), *Considerations on Representative Government*, chapters 3, 5, 8 [41pgs]
   http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/234

First Paper Proposal Due Friday, January 24 at 12:00pm. See MyCourses for where to hand in.

Week 4 to 5: Democracy as an Ideal (Proceduralism versus Instrumentalism)

A. Procedural Equality and Fairness: Equal Consideration of Preferences
7. Tues Jan 28

B. Procedural Equality and Fairness: Fair Compromise between Equals
8. Thurs Jan 30
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/4545289

C. Pure Instrumentalism
9. Tues Feb 4
   http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/usflr22&g_sent=1&collection=journals&tid=11
Week 5 to 6: Democracy as Method, not Ideal (Minimalism)

A. Democracy as Method, not Ideal: Elite Competition
10. Thurs Feb 6

B. Peaceful Conflict Resolution
11. Tues Feb 11

Week 6 to 8: Participation and Deliberation

A. Participatory Democracy
12. Thurs Feb 13

B. Deliberative Democracy
13. Tues Feb 18

First Paper Due: Wednesday, February 19 at 4pm. See MyCourses for where to hand in.

C. Epistemic Democracy
14. Thurs Feb 20
   http://muse.jhu.edu/book/30685

D. Sortition
15. Tues Feb 25
   http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003055406062071
   http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/papa.12029
E. Moral Psychology
16. Thurs Feb 27
   https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1088-4963.2000.00081.x
   https://www.jstor.org/stable/2183165?seq=1

Second Paper Proposal Due: Friday February 28 at 4pm. See MyCourses for where to hand in.

Study break: 2 to 6 March

Week 9 to 13: Democracy and Capitalism

A. Symbiosis?
17. Tues Mar 10
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/info/2938736
18. Thurs Mar 12

B. Incompatibility?
19. Tues Mar 17
20. Thurs Mar 19
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/2130588
   http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1537592714001595
21. Tues Mar 24
22. Thurs Mar 26

Second Paper Due Friday March 27 at 4pm. See MyCourses for where to hand in.

C. Alternatives?
23. Tues Mar 31
24. Thurs Apr 2
   continued
25. Tues Apr 7
26. Thurs Apr 9, Review session