PROGRAM OF STUDY

In this age of global democratic crisis, a thorough grounding in the study of self-government is essential to intellectual and civic competence. Although democracy was long a central thematic of both general education and curricular programs in the social sciences and humanities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, it gradually fell out of curricular programming toward the end of the Cold War and is oddly absent as a systematic focus today.

A minor in Democracy Studies provides students with a corrective to this erosion, providing essential knowledge, insights, methods, and critical perspectives necessary to understanding the world around us and the historical developments that have placed it in such a precarious state. Students in the minor will learn that bitter, even divisive contests over public power, representation, and inclusiveness are not recent developments, but have defined democracy since the dawn of politics. More fundamentally, they will learn that tensions between liberty and equality, political will and the rule of law, collective welfare and individual rights, cooperation and competition, produce dilemmas that must always be confronted but can rarely be fully resolved. Finally, they will learn that democracy entails more than a matter of elections or governmental structures. Democratic society extends well beyond the political arena. It is not just a governance system or a structure of power, it is a mode of social organization and cultural cohesion. It encompasses a broad set of structures, conceptions of which have evolved throughout time: political institutions; civic organizations; laws; deliberative practices; rhetorical strategies; cultural forms; collective imaginaries; moral, ethical, and spiritual codes; and more.

The minor therefore offers a broad range of courses allowing students to select cross-disciplinary electives suitable to forming a broadly conceived program of study.

Beyond its broader educational and civic value, a minor in Democratic Studies offers preparation for a range of career interests, from politics, law, and public policy to education, social work, journalism, media, and public interest advocacy. Students pursuing careers in STEM may find a minor in Democracy Studies to be useful preparation for the ethical and professional challenges awaiting them in the marketplace. A minor in Democratic Studies also provides a compelling interdisciplinary topical focus for students interested in pursuing graduate study in the social sciences and humanities.

APPLICATION TO THE DEMOCRACY STUDIES MINOR

Interested students must complete the Democracy Minor Map (https://democracy.uchicago.edu/files/2022/08/Democracy-Minor-Map-220812.docx) and return it to the Program Administrator (elizabethshen@uchicago.edu) to declare their intention to pursue the minor, no later than Spring Quarter of their third year. The Program Administrator will contact the student to let them know if they have been approved, upon which the student should submit the approval to their College adviser for the latter’s approval during the quarter. Note that students may be given credit for approved courses taken before declaring the minor.

SUMMARY OF MINOR REQUIREMENTS

Students who wish to complete the minor in Democracy Studies will need to complete a total of five courses, including one required course, DEMS 15000 Democracy and Its Critics, and four electives (see table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEMS 15000 Democracy and Its Critics</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four electives chosen from list of approved courses</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>500</td>
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</table>

The required Democracy and Its Critics course provides students with an introduction to the many ways in which struggles over self-government have raised fundamental challenges within politics, culture, and society. Critically engaging the concept of democracy from multiple disciplinary perspectives, students discover how democratic questions may be tackled in a distinctive fashion using different disciplinary approaches.

Students are required to take one “global” course, which largely focuses on the democratic experience of countries outside of the United States. Students are further encouraged, but not required, to take one course on democracy in ancient times (defined as prior to 650 AD).

Qualifying courses counting as electives are indicated in the Approved Courses list below, with those qualifying as “global” marked with an asterisk * and those as “ancient” denoted with an obelus †.

APPROVED COURSES

The following elective courses and any of their cross-listings may be counted toward minor requirements. The current list of approved course offerings will be continually updated on the Democracy Curriculum website (https://democracy.uchicago.edu/democracyminor/). As of December 2022, the list includes the following elective courses and any of their cross-listings.
# Democracy Studies

## Big Problems
- **BPRO 25900** Digitizing Human Rights

## Classical Studies
- **CLCV 21222** Democratic Failure in Greece and Rome.
- **CLCV 23921** Thucydides and Athenian Democracy at War
- **CLCV 24521** Politics and Political Space in Ancient Rome
- **CLCV 27709** Caesar and his Reception
- **GREK 23922** Plato on Tyranny and Injustice

## English Language and Literature
- **ENGL 25230** Democracy and the School: Writing about Education
- **ENGL 27250** Wealth, Democracy and the American Novel

## Germanic Studies
- **GRMN 25421** Babylon Berlin: Politics and Culture in the Weimar Period

## Global Studies
- **GLST 22600** What Is Socialism? Experiences from Eastern Europe

## History
- **HIST 18001** The United States in the Age of Total War
- **HIST 18101** Democracy in America?
- **HIST 18802** Performing Democracy
- **HIST 20507** The Idea of Freedom in Antiquity
- **HIST 22610** Paris and the French Revolution
- **HIST 25300** American Revolution, 1763 to 1789
- **HIST 26409** Revolution, Dictatorship, & Violence in Modern Latin America
- **HIST 27103** American Revolution in Global Context
- **HIST 28301** Early American Political Culture, 1600-1820

## Human Rights
- **HMRT 21001** Human Rights: Contemporary Issues
- **HMRT 21002** Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations
- **HMRT 21005** Militant Democracy and the Preventative State
- **HMRT 23511** Memory, Reconciliation, and Healing: Transitional Justice
- **HMRT 23561** Democracy: Athens and America

## Law, Letters, and Society
- **LLSO 28050** The American Constitution

## Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse
- **PARR 18600** Public Engagement and Participation

## Philosophy
- **PHIL 21403** Locke and Rousseau

## Political Science
- **PLSC 10500** What Should Democracy Mean Today?
- **PLSC 20817** Race, Social Movements and American Politics
- **PLSC 23100** Democracy and the Information Technology Revolution
- **PLSC 23313** Democracy and Equality
- **PLSC 23615** Reconstructing Democracy: Toqueville and Du Bois
- **PLSC 24810** Politics of the U.S. Congress
- **PLSC 25201** After Multiculturalism: Democratic Citizenship & Indigenous Resurgence in Settler Colonial Contexts
- **PLSC 25215** The American Presidency
- **PLSC 26615** Democracy’s Life and Death
- **PLSC 26703** Political Parties in the United States
- **PLSC 28405** Democratic Erosion
- **PLSC 28555** The Economy of Conspiracy
- **PLSC 28605** Challenges to Democracy
- **PLSC 28701** Introduction to Political Theory
- **PLSC 28765** The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 28901</td>
<td>Introduction to Comparative Politics</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBPL 25563</td>
<td>Does American Democracy Need Religion?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PBPL 25910</td>
<td>The Health of American Democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBPL 28765</td>
<td>The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRES 21748</td>
<td>Global Human Rights Literature</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRES 22112</td>
<td>African American Political Thought: Democracy’s Reconstruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRES 27002</td>
<td>The Age of Emancipation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 28612</td>
<td>The Global Revolt Against Liberalism</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITAL 21322</td>
<td>Literature and/of/Against Fascism</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 20106</td>
<td>Political Sociology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 20544</td>
<td>Democratic Backsliding</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 21001</td>
<td>Human Rights: Contemporary Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALC 26711</td>
<td>South Asia after Independence</td>
<td>*</td>
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* Approved as "global" elective course
** This counts toward the minor in AY2022–23, as it focuses on democracy, but may not in future years.
† Approved as "ancient" elective course

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Courses in the minor may not be double counted with a student’s major(s), other minors, or general education requirements. This prohibition against double counting holds for courses in the Democracy general education sequence (SOSC 18400-18500-18600 Democracy: Equality, Liberty, and the Dilemmas of Self-Government I-II-III), although students participating in the minor are welcome to also take that sequence.

Courses for the minor must be taken for quality grades (not pass/fail). More than half of the course requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

**DEMOCRACY STUDIES COURSES**

**DEMS 10600. Power and Resistance in the Black Atlantic. 100 Units.**

Beginning with the arrival of European explorers on the West African coast in the fifteenth century and culminating with the stunning success of radical abolitionist movements across the Americas in the nineteenth century, the formation of the Black Atlantic irrevocably reshaped the modern world. This class will examine large-scale historical processes, including the transatlantic slave trade, the development of plantation economies, and the birth of liberal democracy. Next, we will explore the lives of individual Africans and their American descendants, the communities they built, and the cultures they created. We will consider the diversity of the Black Atlantic by examining the lives of a broad array of individuals, including black intellectuals, statesmen, soldiers, religious leaders, healers, and rebels. We will examine African diasporic subjects as creative rather than reactive historical agents and their unique contributions to Atlantic cultures, societies, and ideas. Within this geographically and temporally expansive history students will explore a key set of animating questions: What is the Black Atlantic? How can we understand both the commonalities and diversity of the experiences of Africans in the Diaspora? What kinds of communities, affinities, and identities did Africans create after being uprooted by the slave trade? What methods do scholars use to understand this history? And finally, what is the historical and political legacy of the Black Atlantic? 
Instructor(s): M. Hicks Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Assignments: short and long papers.
Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 10600, LACS 10600, HIST 10600

**DEMS 11301. Global British Empire to 1784: War, Commerce, and Revolution. 100 Units.**

This course traces the origins, development, and revolutionary transformation of the British Empire. Students will explore the English Civil War, King Philip’s War, Bacon’s Rebellion, the development of slavery, the Revolution of 1688, the making of British India, the rise of Irish discontent, the Scottish Jacobite Rebellions, the causes of the American Revolution, and the transformation of the British Empire into an authoritative state. Students will read selections from Locke, Defoe, Swift, Franklin, Burke, and many others.

Instructor(s): S. Pincus Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Assignments: one short paper, a classroom presentation, and one longer research-based paper.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 11301
DEMS 13802. The Russian Empire. 100 Units.
Empire is back in contemporary Russia. Old imperial insignia have replaced hammers and sickles on government buildings, the bodies of the last tsar and his family have been exhumed and venerated, and Putin’s foreign policy stakes imperial claims on the nations on Russia’s border. This course examines what the Russian empire was, how it worked, and the legacies that it left behind. Themes to be considered include the culture of the autocracy and the tradition of reform from above; imperial expansion and multiethnic society; the construction of class, ethnic, and estate identities; and the causes and consequences of the Old Regime’s collapse. Mondays and Wednesdays are reserved for lectures, Fridays for discussion. Note(s): First-year students warmly welcomed; no prior Russian history, culture, or language assumed. Equivalent Course(s): REES 13802
Instructor(s): F. Hillis Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): First-year students warmly welcomed; no prior Russian history, culture, or language assumed. Equivalent Course(s): HIST 13802, REES 13802

DEMS 17908. African-American History to 1865. 100 Units.
This introductory undergraduate lecture course examines histories of people of African descent in continental North America from the colonial period to the US Civil War. relationship between slavery and republicanism in the early United States. With an interdisciplinary approach and transnational perspective, it considers the contested role of chattel slavery in the creation of US political systems, market relations, social hierarchies, and cultural productions. We will use primary sources and secondary literature to consider the possibilities and limits of archival research; contingent histories of race-making; the relationship between slavery and capitalism; the workings of domination, agency, and resistance; and black “freedom dreams” in the antebellum United States. Instructor(s): R. Johnson Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 17908, HIST 17908

DEMS 18101. Democracy in America? 100 Units.
Is the United States a democracy? Has it ever been? Why has the concept of democracy—as genuine ideal or false idol-been so central to Americans’ self-understanding, and so constitutive of their politics? Throughout its past, the United States has been defined by endless and unpredictable struggles to establish and extend self-government of one kind or another—often at great resistance and relied on the exclusion or subordination of some portion of society to underwrite expanding freedom and equality for those enjoying the fullest benefits of citizenship. Indeed, for most of US history the right to self-government was not exercised by most people, and its denial was at times justified in the name of openly undemocratic ideals, including elite wisdom, male prerogative, slavery, empire, and economic efficiency. The enemies of democracy have been just as determined as—and perhaps better endowed than—its advocates. Yet at critical junctures in US history, citizenship and political life have expanded to articulate the meaning and practice of self-government anew. In this class we will critically examine these junctures using empirical case studies and classic works of US political philosophy in order to uncover the historical realities lurking behind enduring statements of democratic principle.
Instructor(s): J. Sparrow Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): 1st and 2nd years get preference
Note(s): Assignments: a short essay, a presentation, discussion thread entries, and a final research paper.
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 28101, HIST 18101

DEMS 20235. Contemporary Democratic Theory: Realism, Deliberative Democracy, and Agonism. 100 Units.
What is democracy? Is democracy a matter of finding consensus or regulating dissensus? How might we go about making our own society more democratic? Should we strive for more democracy or is democracy merely a means to an end? What is the relationship between democratic theory and practice? This course will consider leading attempts in contemporary democratic theory to grapple with these questions and many more. We will consider both the foundational texts of contemporary democratic theory including Hannah Arendt, Carl Schmitt, Jurgen Habermas, and Robert Dahl, and then build from those texts to see how contemporary theorists have attempted to rearticulate, redefine, redesign, and revolutionize democracy in the past 25 years.
Instructor(s): Smith, Max Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 20406, PLSC 30230, MAPS 20230, MAPS 30230

DEMS 21001. Human Rights: Contemporary Issues. 100 Units.
This course examines basic human rights norms and concepts and selected contemporary human rights problems from across the globe, including human rights implications of the COVID pandemic. Beginning with an overview of the present crises and significant actors on the world stage, we will then examine the political setting for the United Nations’ approval of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948. The post-World War 2 period was a period of optimism and fertile ground for the establishment of a universal rights regime, given the defeat of fascism in Europe. International jurists wanted to establish a framework of rights that went beyond the nation-state, taking into consideration the partitions of India-Pakistan and Israel-Palestine - and the rising expectations of African-Americans in the U.S. and colonized peoples across Africa and Asia. But from the beginning, there were basic contradictions in a system of rights promulgated by representatives of nation-states that ruled colonial regimes, maintained de facto and de jure systems of racial discrimination, and imprisoned political dissidents and journalists. Cross-cutting themes of the course include the universalism of human rights, problems of impunity and accountability, notions of “exceptionalism,” and the emerging issue of the “shamelessness” of authoritarian regimes. Students will research a human rights topic of their choosing, to be presented as either a final research paper or a group presentation.
Instructor(s): Susan Gzesh, Senior Lecturer, (The College) Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LACS 21001, CRES 21001, SOSC 21001, HMRT 21001, LLSO 21001, CHST 21001, HIST 29304

DEMS 21002. Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations. 100 Units.
In this class we explore the philosophical foundations of human rights, investigating theories of how our shared humanity in the context of an interdependent world gives rise to obligations of justice. We begin by asking what rights are, how they are distinguished from other part of morality, and what role they play in our social and political life. But rights come in many varieties, and we are interested in human rights in particular. In later weeks, we will ask what makes something a human right, and how are human rights different from other kinds of rights. We will consider a number of contemporary philosophers (and one historian) who attempt to answer this question, including James Griffin, Joseph Raz, John Rawls, John Tasioulas, Samuel Moyn, Jiewuh Song, and Martha Nussbaum. Throughout we will be asking questions such as, "What makes something a human right?" "What role does human dignity play in grounding our human rights?" "Are human rights historical?" "What role does the nation and the individual play in our account of human rights?" "When can one nation legitimately intervene in the affairs of another nation?" "How can we respect the demands of justice while also respecting cultural differences?" "How do human rights relate to global inequality and markets?" (A) (I)
Instructor(s): Ben Laurence, Pozen Center for Human Rights Instructional Professor Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21002, HMRT 31002, INRE 31602, HIST 29319, HIST 39319, MAPH 42002, PHIL 31002, HMRT 21002

DEMS 21005. Militant Democracy and the Preventative State. 100 Units.
Are states of exception still exceptional? The current debates and developments as well as the existential governmental crises has led to a securitization of rights. State security discourse narrates how states understand and mediate their legal obligations and has been used justify pre-emptive actions and measures which otherwise would not fit within an international law framework. When narrated in the public square, States often construct a discourse around a necessity defence-measures that may be extra-legal but argued to be necessary to protect democratic values and the democratic ‘way of life.’ This typifies what we refer to as ‘militant democratic’ language of the ‘preventive state’ and has been most visible in the raft of antiterrorism measures that were introduced after the events of September 11, 2001 and remain to date. This course will examine the impact of militant democracy and the preventative state on the current human rights landscape. It will look specifically how the narrative of prevention and protection has impacted normative changes to fundamental human rights and how the permanence of emergency is beginning to give the concept of ‘securitization of rights’ legal legs.
Instructor(s): Kathleen Cavanaugh, Senior Lecturer, Executive Director, Pozen Center for Human Rights Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 21005, HMRT 31005, HMRT 21005

DEMS 22100. Politics and Policy. 100 Units.
This course has two fundamental aims. The first is to introduce students to a set of analytical tools and concepts for understanding how political institutions generate public policy. The second is to apply these tools in examining the major institutions of democracy in the United States. Note(s): Public Policy 22100-22200-22300 may be taken in any order.
Instructor(s): C. Berry Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Public Policy 22100-22200-22300 may be taken in any order.
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 22100

DEMS 22124. The Cultural History and Politics of Postwar Germany. 100 Units.
The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again," announced the critic Theodor Adorno on German radio in 1966. By this he meant not only the education of children, but also the re-education of the German people. After World War II, with the Third Reich in ruins and confronted with the horrors of the Holocaust, Germans were forced to reckoning with their past as they attempted to build the country anew, entering into a period of dramatic political and cultural reorientation. This course traces the history of "rebuilding" Germany after 1945, from the immediate postwar period through the East/West division to reunification to today. Drawing on a broad range of source material, including film, literature, government documents, art, and architecture, this interdisciplinary seminar studies the limits and possibilities of conceiving of Germany as a post-war Wirtschaftswunder (economic miracle), and its implications for German cultural production. We will pay special attention to the way that debates from the postwar era still reverberate today, for instance in racial discrimination and the rise of the German far-right. This course is required for all Germanic Studies majors and minors. Readings and discussion in English.
Instructor(s): Sophie Salvo Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 22124

DEMS 24700. Organizing Coalitions for Change: Growing Power and Social Movements. 100 Units.
Coalitions are building blocks of social movements, often bringing people together across race, class, faith and ethnicity to build the power required to make social change. Coalitions address local, state, national and international policies, public and private sector matters. They are employed successfully, or not, from the far left to the far right. They vary widely, engaging people from very grassroots and local communities to civic, faith, labor, business, and political leadership. At times spontaneously precipitated, at times methodically built, effective coalitions can change the fundamental relationships in our society, change society and challenge what
we know or think we know. This course will examine the conceptual models of diverse coalitions formed to impact social, legal, and political structures. We will explore the strengths and limitations of coalitions, and their impact upon low-income and oppressed communities. We will study recent examples to stop public housing displacement, end police misconduct, halt deportations, and seek fair tax reform. We will explore the role of coalitions in changing political machines. Too, we will investigate the use and impact of coalitions in building relations between racial, religious and ethnic groups. As part of class exercises, students will "create" coalitions to address an identified need for social change.

Equivalent Course(s): CHST 24700, SSAD 64700

DEMS 25563. Does American Democracy Need Religion? 100 Units.
In the United States, we find ourselves living as part of a democracy. But that simple fact doesn’t necessarily make us fans of democracy by default. In fact, it leaves many questions unanswered: Is democracy a good thing? If so, why and on what grounds? Why should you or I value democracy and its ideals (e.g., equality, liberty, fraternity)? If we do, what (if anything) grounds our devotion to this shared political tradition? And does, can, or should religion have a role to play? In this course, we will explore American democracy as a normative tradition and its relationship to various religious traditions in American society. Through examining key interpreters of American democracy such as Danielle Allen, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cornel West, Joshua Abraham Heschel, and Amanda Gorman, we will approach the question of how religion and democracy relate to one another. We’ll investigate the relative independence of democracy and religion, focusing on philosophers and poets who emphasize American democracy as tradition in its own right. We will also consider "Civil Religion in America," through the work of sociologists and historians who suggest the dependence of the democratic on religion or something like it. Finally, we’ll question the relative interdependence of American democracy and religious traditions by turning to claims of influential religious and political leaders and activists. No prerequisite knowledge required.
Instructor(s): Derek Buyan
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 25563, AMER 25563, CRES 25563, RLST 25563

DEMS 26080. The Challenge of Government Oversight. 100 Units.
Can governments hold themselves accountable? How have they tried to do so, and with what results? Students will evaluate these questions by examining how different models of government oversight work in practice. The quarter will be split attention between federal and local government structures and oversight mechanisms. At the federal level, we will discuss special prosecutors, inspector general audits, models of judicial review and oversight, and the transformation of oversight institutions in the Trump era. At the local level, our focus will be on policing as a government function uniquely in need of effective oversight and uniquely difficult to oversee effectively. As a “windows” course, this course will ask students to engage in class discussions and written assignments with current, real-world challenges facing government oversight professionals.
Instructor(s): Robert Owens Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 26080

DEMS 27818. Philosophical Foundations of Public Policy. 100 Units.
Evidence-based policy making” sounds like a slogan everyone can get behind. But its central components, cost-benefit analysis and program evaluation, have each been subject to severe philosophical questioning. Does cost-benefit analysis ignore important ethical concerns? Does program evaluation ignore valuable kinds of knowledge? We will introduce each of these debates, and then take up the question of how evidence-based policy might be reconciled with democratic theory. Class discussion and assignments will consider these topics in the context of specific policy areas, including climate change, discrimination, and education.
Instructor(s): S. Ashworth Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): ECON 20000, PBPL 20000, ECON 20100, or PBPL 22200.
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 27818, PLSC 27818

DEMS 28050. The American Constitution. 100 Units.
This is a survey of the main themes of the American Constitution-popular sovereignty, separation of powers, federalism, and rights-and of the basic techniques of constitutional interpretation. The course introduces the history and doctrines of American constitutional law primarily through the analysis of cases.
Instructor(s): David Lebow Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 28050