UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Faculty of Humanities

Course Manual

Democracy in the European Union

Demonstrations in Greece against the conditions of the bail out packages
Kostas Koutsaftikis/shutterstock.com, from:
https://www.ifri.org/en/debates/cities-heart-european-democracy-and-citizenship

Niels ten Oever
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Introduction

Welcome to this class! Democracy is going through a global crises. Across the world, we can observe democratic backsliding and the deterioration of democracy - not just in countries traditionally described as autocratic, but also in the United States.

In this course we will research the concept of democracy. Half of this course is theoretical, we go back to roots of the concept of democracy in ancient Greece, following it through modern conceptions, feminist conceptions, and its implementation in the European Union. The other half of the course we will look at democratic practices, from climate action, to farmers protests, community organizing, and squatting.

By the end of the course you will be able to reason about the complexities of democracy, its theory and its praxis.

Please read and re-read this syllabus carefully, answers to most of your questions can be found here. You can use the Canvas messaging system for queries about the course or simply ask them in class.

I am looking forward to learning, engaging, and collaborating with you in this course!

Course Description

In the 1950s building democracy meant creating the right material conditions for the prosperity of the many. Democracy was not conceived in solely political terms, but as part of the wider social and economic framework of society. The European push for socio-economic peace corresponded with postwar anti-totalitarian conceptions of human rights and consensus democracy.

Paradoxically, in the 1960s and 1970s, when 'Europe' came to be seen as the home of democracy, opinion leaders started emphasising the democratic deficit within the European Communities. This raises questions about the changing concepts of democracy in Europe.

Questions surrounding the role of democracy and the democratic deficit gained force due to the financial crisis, Brexit, democratic backsliding in member states, the EU's response to Russia's war against Ukraine, and the European Union's plans for digital sovereignty.

In addition to the historical understanding of the changing nature of democracy in Europe, this course will examine different conceptual and policy frameworks that have been developed to understand the relationship between democracy and the EU with a view to discussing how democracy can be viewed in light of transformations at the local, national and European levels.

The course will be examined by an essay paper about a specific research topic related to the central theme of the course (60%), a presentation of one of the texts (25%), and engaging in the role of discussant of a presentation during class (15%).

Course Objectives

- Ability to critically discuss concepts of 'democracy' from a variety of theoretical perspectives;
- Ability to analyse the interplay between 'Europe' and the internal domestic politics of the European member states;
- Ability to select and interpret (archival and published) primary sources on Europeanisation and democracy;
- Ability to understand and explain the tensions in the relationship between the EU and its citizens.

Course Language

The principal course language is English. All course readings and other materials are in English.

Course Schedule, Lesson Objectives, and Readings

Session #	Date	Topic & Objective	Readings
1	April 9	The origins of the concept of democracy	Plato's Republic Book VIII and IX
2	April 11	Democracy in practice: Climate Action	The Solutions are Already Here, Chapter 4 'Versatile Strategies' Wargan, David Adler, Pawel. 2022. "Decarbonization without

			Democracy: Tennis-Ball Politics and the EU Green Deal." In Routledge Handbook on the Green New Deal. Routledge.
3	April 16	Early concepts of democracy	John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Chapter VI - X
4	April 18	Democracy in practice: Community Organizing	Polletta, Francesca. 2002. Freedom Is an Endless Meeting Democracy in American Social Movements. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1172333. Chapter 7. Democracy in Relationship: Community Organizing and Direct Action Today 8. Conclusion: Rules, Rituals, and Relationships
5	April 23	Modern conceptions of democracy - and its discontents	Rawls, John. 2009. A Theory of Justice. Harvard University Press. Chapter 1 + Chapter 3 - 24. The Veil of Ignorance Forrester, Katrina. 2019. "In the Shadow of Justice: Postwar Liberalism and the Remaking of Political Philosophy." In: In the Shadow of Justice. Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691189420. Preface
6	April 25	Democracy in practice: Citizen Initiatives	Binnema, Harmen, and Ank Michels. 2022. "Does Democratic Innovation Reduce Bias? The G1000 as a New Form of Local Citizen Participation." International Journal of Public Administration 45 (6): 475–85. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2020.1863425.

7	May 7	Feminist conceptions of democracy	Freeman, Jo. 1972. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness." Berkeley Journal of Sociology 17: 151–64. Levine, Cathy. 1974. "The Tyranny of Tyranny." Rising Free. https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/cathy-levine-the-tyranny-of-tyranny.
8	May 14	Democracy in practice: Farmer protests	De Weerd, Marga, and Bert Klandermans. 1999. "Group Identification and Political Protest: Farmers' Protest in the Netherlands." European Journal of Social Psychology 29 (8): 1073–95. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199912)29:8<1073::AID-EJSP986>3.0.CO;2-K. McCoy, Jennifer, Tahmina Rahman, and Murat Somer. 2018. "Polarization and the Global Crisis of Democracy: Common Patterns, Dynamics, and Pernicious Consequences for Democratic Polities." American Behavioral Scientist 62 (1): 16–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764218759576.
9	May 16	Democracy in the EU: Input, throughput, and output legitimacy	Schmidt, Vivien A. 2013. "Democracy and Legitimacy in the European Union Revisited: Input, Output and 'Throughput.'" Political Studies 61 (1): 2–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00962.x. Steffek, Jens. 2015. "The Output Legitimacy of International Organizations and the Global Public Interest." International

			Theory 7 (2): 263–93.
10	May 21	Democracy in practice: Squatting	Aureli, Andrea, and Pierpaolo Mudu. 2017. "Squatting: Reappropriating Democracy from the State." Interface 9 (1): 497–521. Gagyi, Ágnes. 2016. "The Constitution of the „political "in Squatting." Baltic Worlds 9 (1–2): 80–88.
11	May 23	Democracy in the EU: Responses to Democratic Backsliding	Oleart, Alvaro, and Tom Theuns. 2023. "'Democracy without Politics' in the European Commission's Response to Democratic Backsliding: From Technocratic Legalism to Democratic Pluralism." JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies 61 (4): 882–99. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13411. Silander, Daniel. 2023. "Democracy in Europe: Enlarged But Eroding—A Union in Existential Crisis." In The EU between Federal Union and Flexible Integration: Interdisciplinary European Studies, edited by Antonina Bakardjieva Engelbrekt, Per Ekman, Anna Michalski, and Lars Oxelheim, 25–50. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-22397-6_2.
	May 31		Deadline Paper

Passing Grade

An average of 5.5 is the minimum grade you need to pass the course. Lower grades on one deliverable may be compensated by higher grades on others. Individually written

assessments thatcount for the final mark may be retaken once (see the current version of the Teaching and Examination Regulations), on or before the end of the Block. Group work may not be resubmitted.

Resits
Resits are only available for individual submissions. In case of a resit, the last grade counts as the final grade. The research paper resit will be a rewritten version of the paper, deadline on or before the date of the exam resit. Research papers that are handed in late will be treated as resits.

Participation
This course takes place over six weeks. Meetings usually consist of two times two hours of contact time per week in which we will work actively together in a seminar style. All sessions will take place onsite. To finish the course one in-person class may be missed. If you miss a class, make sure someone else takes notes for you. Please make sure you have read the texts before class, if you have not done so, please let me know.

The classroom is a place of learning for everyone, therefore it should be a safe and enabling learning environment. This can only be the case if we together make it that space. This means there is ample room to make mistakes, experiment with different opinions, take each other opinions seriously, and take sensibilities into account to make it an inclusive space. If you have particular needs that should be taken into account for this course, please contact the study advisors about this.

Study Load
The standard of ECTS credit states that coursework amounts to 28 hours of work per ECTS point, the total amount of this course is 6 ECTS. This means that the total work hours for this course is 168 hours. This means a total of 28 hours per week. If one deducts two times two hours for the seminars, this means that there are **twenty-two hours for self-study per week.**

This consists of preparation for and participation in the meetings and completing the deliverables. The amount of effort may vary from session to session, but the workload is inevitably focused towards the period around delivery due dates. Therefore I encourage that we work together in class, in groups, and individually on the research and policy papers during the whole course period.

Course Evaluation
Course evaluations are an important tool for improving the quality of courses and study programmes. At the end of a teaching period, questionnaires are distributed among the course participants. The results of these questionnaires are discussed by the Board of Studies, and ideas for improvement are communicated to the course coordinator. More information on the Board of Studies is available at http://student.uva.nl/meus/az/item/board-of-studies.html.

Please do take time to fill the course evaluations at the end of the course.

However, you do not have to wait until the end of the course to voice any issues or suggestions that you may have. Feel free to let me know about them before or after a class, or via Canvas.

Session Locations

Please check https://rooster.uva.nl for the location of our meetings.

Deliverables

General guidelines for submitting written work

During the course, you are expected to submit several pieces of work. It is important to note the following requirements:

- Documents submitted digitally should conform to the following rules: PDF format, A4, fully justified paragraphs, with single line spacing and page numbers identified. The following information should be marked on the front page of the submission:
  - name
  - student number
  - course title and academic year
  - deliverable name
  - title of piece
  - date of submission
- Note that the front page of your submission is not included in the page limits described below.
- Students are expected to inform themselves of standard academic procedures for citing and referencing: coherence and consistency are most important. Please use Chicago (author-date) as the reference style.
- Language, spelling, and grammar are important, please double-check before submitting.
- Students are expected to be familiar with the University's code of conduct and rules on plagiarism. For more information on preventing plagiarism, see the UvA webpage on plagiarism and fraud, and the Academic Integrity Guide from the Faculty of Humanities.
- All deliverables are submitted via Canvas.

Individual Academic Research Paper (60%)

Students will write a short individual research paper (3000 words, margin either way of 10%, incl. references and bibliography) about a specific research topic related to a central theme in the course.

This research paper is based on literature and (archival or published) primary sources, or by deploying other research methods.

At the end of the course, you will submit a paper in which you apply the perspectives on the co-production of a particular technology in an extensive analysis of, for instance, the policies that enabled it, the sociotechnical imaginary that guided its development, the ideology that underpins it, the societal ordering that it provided, or the (economic or political) interests that it serves

During the seminar sessions, you will be required to give a short (eight-minute) presentation of your plans for your paper. You will receive feedback from the lecturer and your peers during the session. Please sign up for your presentations on Canvas during the first session.

Your research paper will be assessed using the following rubric:
1. formulation of a feasible research question
2. accurate synthesis and comprehensive review of existing secondary literature
3. critical engagement with both primary and secondary sources
4. the clarity of presentation (style, language, formatting, et cetera)

Your presentation will be assessed using the following criteria:
1. clarity of presentation
2. awareness of context (show you have read relevant literature, etc.)
3. feasibility of your research design

Your paper will have the following sections
1. Abstract (Summary of the paper in max 200 words)
2. Introduction (Introduce research questions, relevance, and context)
3. Method (How will you answer your research question)
4. Literature Review (What did other academics say about your topic)
5. Analysis (Your original research)
6. Conclusions (The answer to the research question, contribution to theory and potential practical recommendations, and suggestions for future research)
7. References

To help you develop your research we will take time in the course to develop your ideas.

Presentation of Text (25%)
Students will sign up for the presentation of one of the texts on Canvas. The presentation of the text will consist of introducing the author, the main concepts in the text, the main line of argumentation, and the relation of the text to other readings in the course. Slides and/or handouts may be part of the presentation.

Discussant (of Presentation) (15%)
Students will sign up to be the discussant of one of the presentations on Canvas. As a discussant, you will shortly summarize and reflect on the presentation (what was good,

what could be done better, what was missing), ask questions to the presenter, and subsequently engage the audience and the presenter in a discussion about the text. Your main responsibility is to help the audience understand the paper better and help establish a discussion in class on it.

Deliverables Checklist

	Item	Weight	Date Due	Length
1	Individual Academic Research Paper	60%	March 28, 2024	3000 words
2	Presentation of Text	25%	during seminars	10-15 minutes
3	Discussant (of Presentation)	15%	during seminars	5 - 10 minutes

Research Resources
You will need to consult academic periodicals for your research paper!

Online sources such as https://scholar.google.com, https://academia.edu, and https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv host great papers. There are also tools such as https://www.researchrabbit.ai/ and https://www.webofscience.com/ that help you find relevant (related) publications.

Use the University Library online service to scan through the following journals: New Media and Society, Science, Technology and Human Values, Social Studies of Science, Science and Technology Studies, Journal of Responsible Innovation, European Policy Analysis, Information Infrastructure and Policy, and European Journal of Transport and Infrastructure Research.

In addition to the UvA University Library, books can be consulted in the university libraries in Leiden or Utrecht (via Interlibrary loan or by visiting the libraries themselves), and the library of the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam) or the Royal Library (The Hague).

Writing Tips
Writing is one of the main tools of the academic and policy trades. However, writing is notoriously hard. The good news is: it gets easier if you practice, but it will always take effort. My supervisor once said to me that a text can be either easy on the reader or on the writer. Luckily you are not on your own. The University of Amsterdam has several online resources to help you focus and to deal with procrastination. I can also wholeheartedly recommend the UvA Writing Center, they provide courses, support,

tutorials, and crash courses on writing. Finally, try to make sure you write <u>every day</u> and make it a habit. Start with 250 words every day. This can be through journaling, making summaries of classes, or writing fiction. Once you get comfortable with writing it will be a lot more fun and interesting (just like with any other craft and ability).