



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

The Specter of Democracy: From Athens to Jerusalem - 56152

Last update 04-08-2021

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Political Science

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Yiftah Elazar

Coordinator Email: yiftah.elazar@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Yiftah Elazar

Course/Module description:

The expression "The Specter of Democracy," which appears in the title of this class, refers to the opening statement of the Communist Manifesto: "A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism." Marx and Engels meant that communism is terrifying the old European powers. Democracy is a sort of specter haunting political philosophy. During most of the history of political thought, philosophers criticized it and sought to bridle it. Even after it had turned into a widely accepted political ideal, in the twentieth century, it continues to evade, like a ghost, from those who try to define or to realize it.

The purpose of this class is to learn and think together what is the democratic idea, what arguments can be made in its favor and against it, and in what sense, if any, Israel should be a democracy. For this purpose, we will read classical and contemporary texts on democracy and discuss questions such as: can and should the people rule? How do we determine the boundaries of democracy and decide who should be included and excluded? Is populism an enemy to democracy or its hope? Is social protest a disruption of democracy or a manifestation of it? Is Israel a democracy?

Course/Module aims:

To learn and to think about the prevailing political concept today: democracy

To learn and to think about Israel as a democracy

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

identify conceptions of democracy

identify normative arguments for and against democracy

critically analyze Israel as a democracy

Attendance requirements(%):

85

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

Democracy in Athens
The Republican Critique
Democracy as a Struggle for Freedom
Minimal Democracy
Radical Democracy
All Affected and All Subjected
Ethnic Nationalism and Democracy
Democracy and the Politics of Difference
Populism
Reinventing Democracy

Required Reading:

See detailed syllabus.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 80 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 20 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

Details in the syllabus are subject to change.

Requirements

1. Attendance. Up to two classes overall may be missed without documentation or penalty. Any additional absence without authorization will incur a penalty of one course grade point.
2. Short response papers. You need to submit four short papers in response to materials in the syllabus. Two to four paragraphs each. The papers are not graded. Contribution to final grade: 20%.

Final paper. 7-10 pages double-spaced (about 2450-3500 in Hebrew). 80% of final grade. Deadline: Sunday, July 31, 2022, 23:59.