

2. Political Values & Democracy

Breakout Sessions

POLS 1101

12:40pm-1:30pm Park Hall 145

& 1:50pm-2:40pm Leconte Hall 135

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More Details about Group Discussion

- Each group discussion leader **should prepare slides** for their presentation (PowerPoint, Keynote, LaTeX... in any form you like)
- The presentation **should cover at least 1 supplemental reading material** assigned that week, based on what you've learned in class and the textbook
 - If we have more than 1 topic for your presenting week, you can choose **one of them** (or both of them, if you like) as the focus of your presentation
 - **No need to go over the textbook** (especially those parts we've learned in class), while you can refer to what you find useful to organize your presentation
- Questions you prepare for in-class discussion can be put on your slides (not required, while **raising questions per se is REQUIRED**)
- **A clear focus and logically organized materials** are highly encouraged, but you can also only summarize or review the materials one by one.
- **Members in the same large group may gather when taking seats**, so it'll be more convenient for in-class discussion. For any reasons connected to discussion, you can leave your seat (be mindful of others around you)!

Major Purposes of the Government

- Maintaining order
 - Providing public goods
 - (Promoting equality)
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- Government chooses the proper mix of freedom, order, and equality in its policymaking.
 - In all of the three purposes, **which do you think is the least controversial / most important? Why? What would your life be without the purpose you chose?**
 - For Hobbes, it is probably maintaining order.
 - For the author of the textbook, it is providing public goods.

Freedom, Order, and Equality

- Freedom & Order
 - Freedom of: Absence of constraints
 - Freedom from: Immunity from fear and want
 - (Freedom to do something)
 - For “freedom to do”, there’s assumed to be an inner tendency of “what should be done” (Certain rank of value, certain kind of “order”)
 - **Should freedom have any kind of prerequisites?**
- Freedom & Equality
 - Political equality & Social equality
 - Equality of opportunity & Equality of outcome
 - **What is the boundary when using state power to promote equality? Or, how much do you think equality is important?**
- **NOTE: the political, economic, social & cultural perspectives**

Ideologies

- **Always be careful when trying to put an ideological hat on one's head!** –
Ideologies can be confusing and misleading.
 - Seemingly contradictory stances of the liberal and the conservative
 - **Do you think the socio-economic differences can be a satisfying description of the liberal & conservative division?**
- **Always try to figure out what an individual thinks about a specific issue.** –
e.g. Those all insisted that they were “liberalists”
 - For the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - **-A:** We should not only stay alert of the state power but also threats from the private sector. As private enterprises were prohibited from not providing service in terms of race, sex, ..., the CRA was a great success!
 - B:** We have deprived a group of their freedom (choosing whether to provide service or not) and given it to another group, ridiculously using the state power! (Recall: it's much more likely to be “libertarianism”)
 - A:** It's reasonable since a lack of state capacity will also be a threat to freedom.
 - B:**

Democracy

- Procedural democracy: a form of government (how decisions are made)
 - Universal participation, **Political equality**, Majority rule, (Responsiveness)
- Substantive democracy: what the government does (substance of policies)
 - Guaranteeing civil liberties & civil rights
- Tension: “Tyranny of the majority” by Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
 - Unlike a king’s tyranny, this tyranny arises from public opinion and collective pressure.
- **Values and Challenges of the substantive democracy?**
 - A protection of the minorities
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Procedural Democracy

- Majoritarian Model: government by the majority of the people
 - Elections, Political Parties, Centralized government
- Pluralist Model: government by competing interest groups
 - Competition (in lobbying), Decentralized government, Allow minorities to rule
- **Can majoritarian democracy be effective in reality?**
 - Critics: Individuals are not knowledgeable enough for MD to work.
 - Defenders: The people, as a whole, are stable and intelligent enough.
 - **A potential challenge:** “Sore loser effect”
- **In pluralistic democracy, why can the minorities always win?**
 - ANS 1: They are always the most powerful and wealthy ones.
 - **ANS 2:?**
- **REMEMBER:** They are both ideal models. Real democracy is some kind of mix-up of them (See American government).

Next week...

- We'll have group discussion leaders!
 - I'll send the final assignment of group leaders via email before this Saturday noon.
- Read materials on **Constitutional Foundations** before class, and that will be helpful to participate in peer discussions.
- ENJOY YOUR WEEKEND!