

# DEMOCRACY STUDIES

Department Website: <https://democracy.uchicago.edu>

## 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 nineteenth and twentieth 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 Manager ([elizabethshen@uchicago.edu](mailto:elizabethshen@uchicago.edu)) to declare their intention to pursue the minor, no later than Spring Quarter of their third year. Students can also meet with Abigail in person or via Zoom for a longer meeting, should they wish. Abigail 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).

DEMS 15000 Democracy and Its Critics	100
Four electives chosen from list of approved courses	400
Total Units	500

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/democracymenor/>). As of December 2022, the list includes the following elective courses and any of their cross-listings.

#### Big Problems

BPRO 25900	Digitizing Human Rights
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#### Classical Studies

CLCV 21222	Democratic Failure in Greece and Rome.
CLCV 23921	Thucydides and Athenian Democracy at War <sup>++</sup>
GREK 23922	Plato on Tyranny and Injustice
CLCV 24521	Politics and Political Space in Ancient Rome <sup>++</sup>
CLCV 27709	Caesar and his Reception <sup>++</sup>

#### Comparative Human Development

#### 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 <sup>*</sup>
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#### Global Studies

GLST 20203	Caste and Race: The Politics of Radical Equality <sup>*</sup>
GLST 22600	What Is Socialism? Experiences from Eastern Europe <sup>*</sup>

#### 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 <sup>++</sup>
HIST 22610	Paris and the French Revolution <sup>*</sup>
HIST 25300	American Revolution, 1763 to 1789
HIST 26409	Revolution, Dictatorship, & Violence in Modern Latin America
HIST 27103	American Revolution in Global Context <sup>++</sup>
HIST 28301	Early American Political Culture, 1600-1820
HIST 29632	History Colloquium: The CIA and American Democracy

#### Human Rights

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

#### Law, Letters, and Society

LLSO 28050	The American Constitution
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#### Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse

PARR 18600	Public Engagement and Participation
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#### Philosophy

PHIL 21403	Locke and Rousseau
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#### Political Science

PLSC 10500	What Should Democracy Mean Today?
PLSC 20817	Race, Social Movements and American Politics
PLSC 21011	Democracy, Race and Equal Protection
PLSC 23100	Democracy and the Information Technology Revolution <sup>*</sup>
PLSC 23313	Democracy and Equality
PLSC 23615	Reconstructing Democracy: Tocqueville 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 <sup>*</sup>

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 <small>Note: This counts toward the minor in AY2022-23, as it focuses on democracy, but may not in future years</small>
PLSC 28765	The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes
PLSC 28901	Introduction to Comparative Politics *
Public Policy Studies	
PBPL 25563	Does American Democracy Need Religion?
PBPL 25910	The Health of American Democracy
PBPL 28765	The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes
Romance Languages and Literatures	
ITAL 21322	Literature and/of/Against Fascism *
Religious Studies	
RLST 28612	The Global Revolt Against Liberalism *
Race, Diaspora, and Indigeneity	
CRES 21748	Global Human Rights Literature *
CRES 22112	African American Political Thought: Democracy's Reconstruction
CRES 27002	The Age of Emancipation
Sociology	
SOCI 20106	Political Sociology
SOCI 20544	Democratic Backsliding *
SOSC 21001	Human Rights: Contemporary Issues
South Asian Languages and Civilizations	
SALC 26711	South Asia after Independence *

\* Approved as "global" elective course

† 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 26409. Revolution, Dictatorship, & Violence in Modern Latin America. 100 Units.**

This course will examine the role played by Marxist revolutions, revolutionary movements, and the right-wing dictatorships that have opposed them in shaping Latin American societies and political cultures since the end of World War II. Themes examined will include the relationship among Marxism, revolution, and nation building; the importance of charismatic leaders and icons; the popular authenticity and social content of Latin American revolutions; the role of foreign influences and interventions; the links between revolution and dictatorship; and the lasting legacies of political violence and military rule. Countries examined will include Guatemala, Cuba, Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Mexico. Assignments: Weekly reading, a midterm exam or paper, a final paper, participation in discussion, and weekly responses or quizzes.

Instructor(s): B. Fischer Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Some background in Latin American studies or Cold War history useful.

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 36409, HMRT 26409, LACS 36409, LACS 26409, ENST 26409, HIST 26409

