

Course Syllabus: Democracy in Everyday Life

[Course Information](#)

[Assessment](#)

[Policies](#)

[Course Expectations](#)

Please check the online course for the most up-to-date version of course materials and assignments.

Course Information

If the online materials differ from this print study guide, the online materials take precedence.

Course Description

Democracy may be described as a form of government in which the general public can participate in its decision making process. However, democracy is often used as a term to identify any system that is not patently a dictatorship. Democracy may be addressed not only as a political, but also as a social system with implications in every day life.

How does literature about social and private life define democracy? What criteria do democratic environments match? How should people behave to foster democratic environments? How do democratic leaders behave?

This course will foster a profound understanding of democracy and democratic behavior and identify criteria, which define democratic environments like equality, solidarity, positive human relationships, participation and commitment to each other. These and other criteria will be analyzed critically and applied to every day's contexts in private sphere and the workplace. The role of authority, power and leadership in a democratic environment will be discussed. The course offers a wide range of activities like research for literature, critical reading and discussion of topics, analysis of cases, simulation of democratic and non-

democratic environments and problem solving of real life issues. The ideas of others serve as a common course content, as presented in the material assigned to this course. Students are asked to participate actively and critically, to work individually and in study groups, using their own experience as a field of analysis and reflection. Active participation in group activities will make the course itself a model for a democratic teaching and learning environment.

Course Learning Goals

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify and discuss criteria of democratic environments and democratic forms of leadership.
- your own definition of Democracy.
- Define democracy by lexicon and expert definitions.
- Share a personal conclusion about what is democracy.
- Use words like democracy and democratic leadership with precision.
- Describe democratic and non-democratic life experiences.
- Distinguish democratic from non-democratic environments.
- the function of leadership in social environments.
- the importance of power in democracy.
- Judge the value of justice and equality in a democracy.
- Apply criteria of democratic behavior to real life events.
- Work towards democratic behavior and democratic leadership in social environments.
- educational systems that foster democracy.
- Write a final paper about democratic governance in a real life issue.

Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net> .

Hint: type “DePaul” for name of the school.

- Web site for Writing/Research/Citation information:
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPA.html> for documentation/
citation guidelines

- <http://www.depaul.edu/~writing> for additional resources for writing: organizational skills, grammar, mechanics, research, thinking, etc.

Suggested Textbook (Not assigned)

Shapiro, I. (2003). State of democratic theory. Princeton: Princeton University Press

And

Siegle, J., Weinstein, M., & Halperin, M. H. (2004). The democracy advantage: how democracies promote prosperity and peace. New York: Routledge.

- Suggested Readings (Not assigned)

Bollen, Kenneth A; Paxton, Pamela	(2000): Subjective Measures of Liberal Democracy. Comparative Political Studies 33(1, February), 58-87.
Breines, Ingeborg	(2000): Gender Justice and a Culture of Peace. Dialogue 19(January).
Manno, Bruno	(2001): The case against charter school. Administrator 58(5, May), 28-34.
Lebedoff, David	(2001): With Professors as the Ruling Class, Majority Rule Is in Tatters. The Chronicle of Higher Education Vol. 47(45, 20 Jul), B10-B11.
Cassel, Russel N.	(2001): A person-centered high school delinquency prevention program based on eight 'hall-marks' for success in democracy. Education 121(Spring), 431-435.

Cassel, Russel N.

(2001): The person-centered high school in America must be a microcosm of a fully democratic society. *Education* 121 (Summer 2001), 632-641.

- Other suggested Web sites (Not assigned)
 - <http://www.civiced.org/cbframe.html>
 - <http://www.reapinc.org/Defdem.html>
 - <http://darren.lib.utah.edu/democracy.htm>
 - <http://navigation.helper.realnames.com/framer/1/0/default.asp?realname=Journal+of+Democracy&url=http%3A%2F%2Fmuse%2Ejhu%2Eedu%2Fjournals%2Fjournal%5Fof%5Fdemocracy&frameid=1&providerid=0&uid=10267436>
 - <http://www.encyclopedia.com/articles/03565.html>
 - <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/Deadline/AsianLeaders/Lee%20Kuan%20Yew/articles/Bell.htm>
 - <http://darren.lib.utah.edu/democracy.htm>

Course Competences

In this course, you will develop the following competences:

Competence	Competence Statement
H-3-G	Can analyze the impact of social institutions on individual human development.
H-4	Power and Justice: Can analyze power relationships among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.
F-X	Written by the student.

Assessment Criteria for the Competence

The following are criteria for receiving a passing grade. The criteria for passing require that:

- You participate consistently and constructively by completing the literature research, the readings and assignments by the due dates.
- You submit your final paper by the due dates. *Note that a first submission and a revised submission are required. The first submission is considered a draft that has been re-written and revised by the student before it is handed in. It is not considered an initial draft.
- You consistently, actively, and in a timely fashion participate in the online discussions. You will receive a weekly note from the instructor, if your participation is estimated as outstanding, sufficient or insufficient. In any case you will have the opportunity to comment on the opinion of the instructor.

Course Structure

The course is broken into six modules with learning activities and assignments for each module. The modules correspond to the course goals. For example, in Module 1 students will get to know each other, share common definitions of democracy and discuss democratic and non-democratic life experiences. In the second module expert opinions and lexicon definitions of democracy are discussed and compared to the common definitions, to arrive finally to an agreement of the meaning of the term democracy. Module 3 addresses issues like authority and power, justice and equality. Module 4 addresses knowledge skills and attitudes a person should have as part of his or her personality to only participate in or to lead a democratic environment. Module 5 will be dedicated to the role of education in a democratic society. In module 6 the acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes will be applied to a real life issue.

The six modules consist of investigation of literature, readings and assignments to do and to write up. Most of the write-ups will be posted for online discussion; some discussions will take part in small groups. Active participation in the discussion forums is essential to reach the course goals.

You will develop the competence in this course through a variety of methods: readings, practice with classmates, informal and formal online

discussions.

The assignments throughout each module should be completed in the order in which they are assigned. Each module assumes the completion of the previous module. Therefore, participation on time in the online discussions is essential, assignments must be completed according to the due dates given. Otherwise, it will not be possible to carry out the discussion assignments.

To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.

[Top](#)

Assessment

Assessment Criteria for Weekly completion of reading and writing

Your participation and advance in terms of concepts and competencies will be assessed in the weekly discussion forums.

Assessment Criteria for your Final Paper

It is important that your final paper:

- Defines a real life situation, which can be analyzed and is related to terms like democracy, democratic treatment, democratic participation and behavior.
- Demonstrates that you can apply criteria of democratic environments to real life issues and at least plan the democratization of human environments.
- Organizes your supportive evidence into relevant paragraphs that address your subject.
- Takes into account a variety of points of view.
- Demonstrates your appreciation of other points of view (demonstrates empathy and the ability to account for the vantage points of others).

- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate the evidence derived from your chosen sources into your argument according in Standard English using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure.
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation.
- Has an introduction and concluding paragraph.
- Contains proper APA or MLA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography.

Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation

In the online discussions you clearly and consistently link what you are learning in the course to your real life experiences.

Specifically, in order to receive credit for your participation in the online discussion parts of the course it is important that:

- You are able to contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion. Especially you may begin your contributions with addressing your peer students, may maintain a kind and collegial tone and close with your signature.
- You regularly demonstrate good “listening” skills and active inquiry skills in the online discussions. This means that you pay attention with openness to the commentary of others and you offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements.
- You contribute your own original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitated learning for other people.

Course Grading Scale

The course grading scale is as follows

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

Percent distribution of assignments

Active and informed participation in 11 online discussions, 5 % each	55%
Final Paper	45%
	100%

Online Discussion Guidelines

are expected to actively participate in informal online discussions with your classmates and the instructor when they are required by the syllabus. "Active participation" means that you read and contribute to the online discussions. This discussion is "informal" in the sense that it is meant to encourage interested discussion. It is expected that you follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar and usage, although you will not be assessed for these particular characteristics when you are on the discussion board. These discussions are a place for you to exchange your reflections with the others in the class about what you are learning. The discussions will be organized into forums around the particular assignment you are studying each week. You may be asked by the instructor to take leadership in a certain group for a certain time of the course. Further instructions you will receive then from the instructor. Every student will receive a weekly note, if his or her participation in each forum is estimated as outstanding, sufficient or insufficient. In any case you will have the opportunity to comment on the opinion of the instructor. The majority of the forums will be open only for two weeks.

You should contribute your responses to the particular assignment for that particular discussion heading which will be posted. Directions are provided with each assignment. They must be followed according to the due dates given. Principles of good practice for participating in online discussions should be adhered to when it comes to responding to the contributions of other people in the class. These "principles" will be provided in the Online Participation Guidelines section in this study guide.

[Top](#)

Policies

Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious

matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade

on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is **EXCLUSIVELY** for the purpose of classroom discussion and will **NOT** be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will **EVER** use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person (s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
 - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

[Top](#)

Course Expectations

Time Management

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. In addition, online courses require skills and attitudes, which students have not necessarily developed in their earlier education. The development of these skills and attitudes will require an additional effort. Every day or at least every second day has to be dedicated to the study. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment. But your learning activities will be spread out through the week. The following might give you some idea of what kind of time commitment to expect each week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer:

- Reading assignment, searching for literature: 2 to 3 hours
- Reading and contributing to informal online discussions (spread out over the week): 2 to 4 hours
- Writing: 2 to 4 hours

So you should expect to spend from a total of from 6 to 11 hours per week on this course.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or

you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

Credits

This course was designed and produced by Mr. Hartwig Stein in conjunction with the following staff members of SNL Online at DePaul University: Norma Grassini, Instructional Designer, and Shirin Kadwani, Technical Assistant.

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[Top](#)