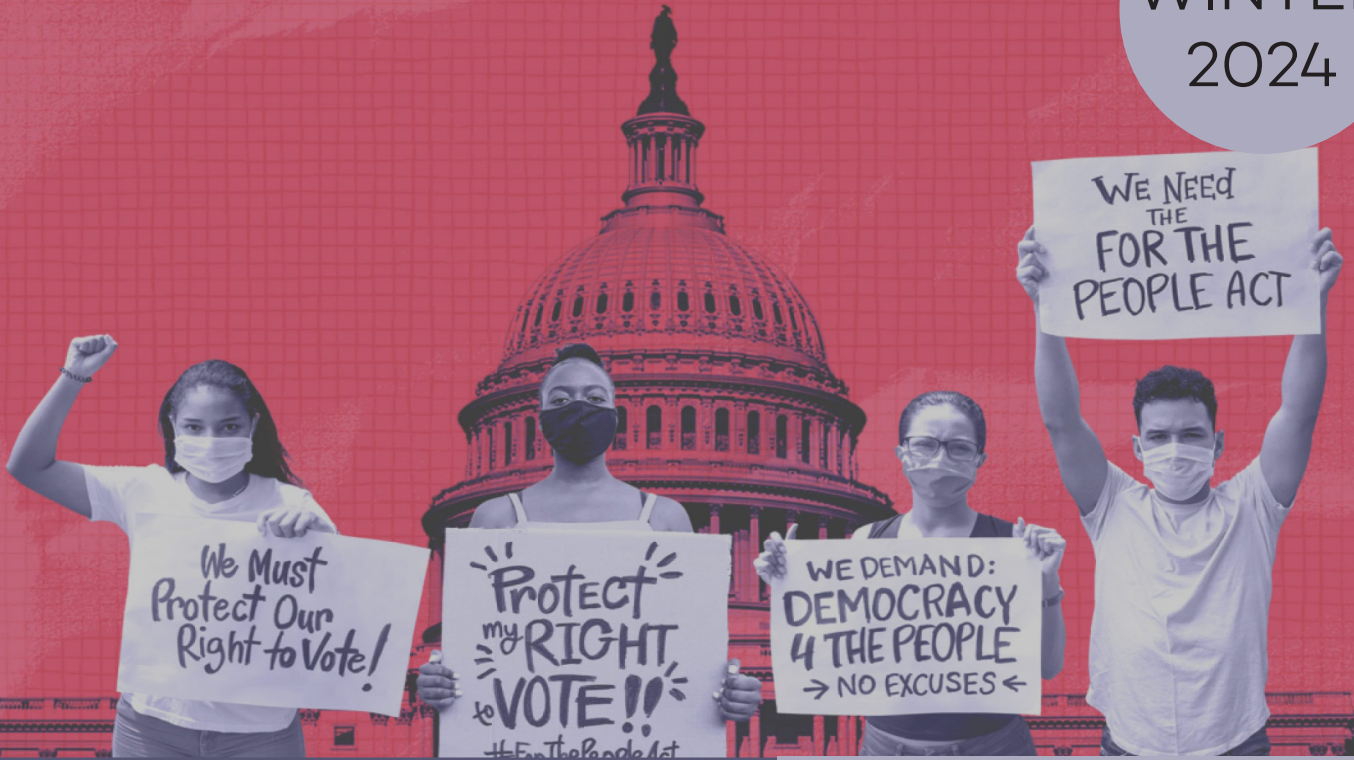


# PROBLEMS IN DEMOCRATIC THEORY

GNDR\_ST 490 & POLI\_SCI 468

WINTER  
2024



This course will re-visit debates in selected texts of political theory for purposes of elucidating insights relevant to theorizing competing meanings and objectives of democracy. We will focus on texts that speak in particular to democratic theorists' aspirations for equality and the rule of law in the context of particularist solidarities, especially those of family, nation, and race. Readings and class meetings will highlight for discussion tensions between attachments to a seemingly given, ontological community and intuitions about justice and the healthy politeia. Selected texts by Plato, Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, W.E.B. Du Bois, Rosa Luxemburg, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas will be read in conversation

with works by Seyla Benhabib, Lauren Berlant, Wendy Brown, Sam Chambers, Glen Coulthard, Nathan DuFord, Lois Harder, Bonnie Honig, Engin Isin, Audra Simpson, Lester Spence, and others. Themes highlighted will include competing conceptions of family, violence, inequality, and political membership, with special attention to (queer) engagements with questions of sovereignty, intergenerational attachments, and the politics of recognition, including reparations.

The objective is for students to identify tensions among democratic theories as they speak to solidarities of citizenship grounded in the rule of law, and to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of competing political values and priorities.

Students will be evaluated based on short weekly responses, a presentation, and a final paper.

Jackie Stevens

Th 9am-11:50pm  
Scott 212