

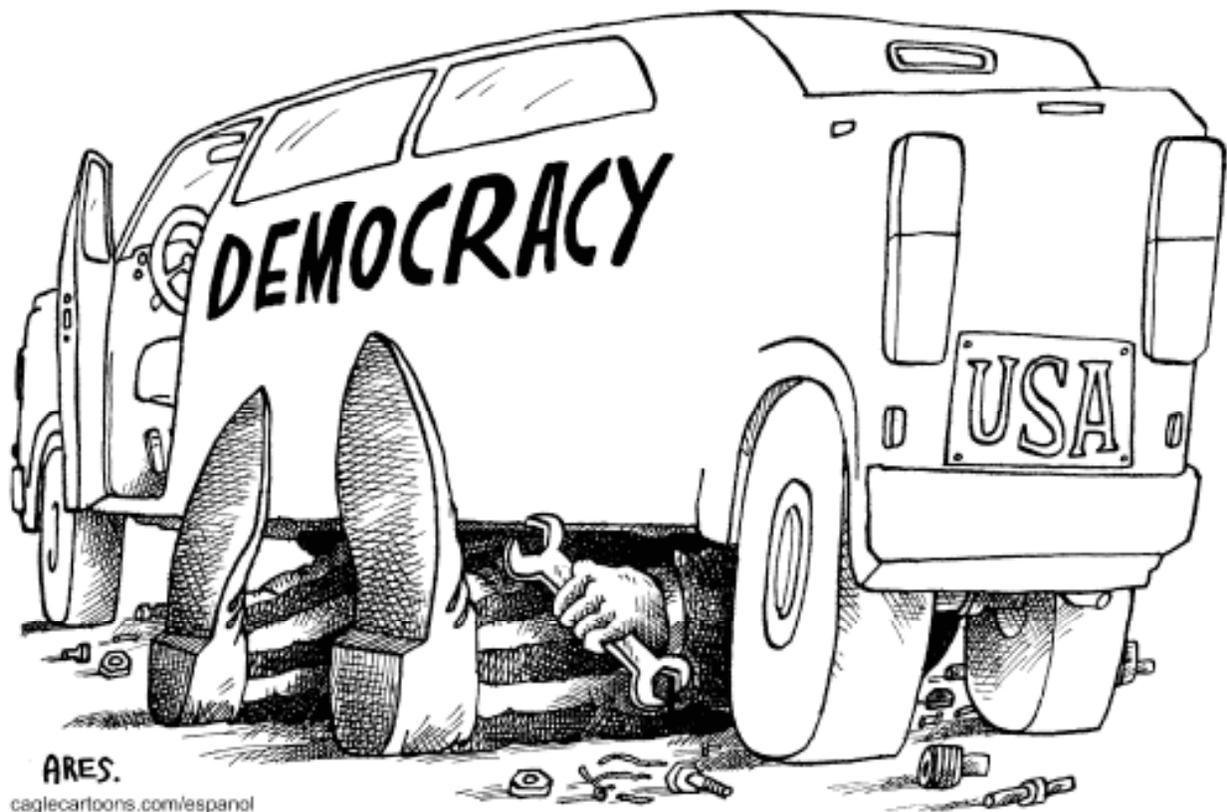
# PHILOSOPHY 20A:

## *Special 2012 Election Edition*

**What Does It Mean To Be a Citizen in 2012?**

*Legal Studies, Global Studies, Peace & Conflict Studies*

**FALL SEMESTER 2012 • Professor Andreas Teuber**



### **I. Introduction**

The course will focus on the role of the citizen in a democracy in 2012. It will be divided into five parts:

(1) An opening section in which the examples of Socrates, Antigone, Thoreau, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King will be discussed in light of their activities as citizens in their respective political communities and as part of a larger effort to develop a political philosophy of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy as well as address and answer the question "What It Means To Be a Citizen in a Democracy in 2012?"

(2) A second section devoted to a philosophical examination of the nature of political obligation, a democratic society and the variety of forms civic engagement in a democracy can take.

(3) A third section devoted to an exploration of the grounds for giving one's allegiance to any state at all and the kinds of citizens a democracy requires: citizenship as a legal status v. citizenship as an activity.

(4) A fourth section devoted to an examination of ways to strengthen the democracy as well as foster civic participation in politics in light of the Election in 2012. Everything You Want To Know About the Candidates, the Issues, the Stakes in 2012 and Should Not Be Afraid To Ask?

(5) A fifth and final section devoted to an examination of the future of democratic citizenship in this country and throughout the world.

Topics will include extending the vote to 17 year-olds in municipal elections, voter ID laws, money in politics, the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, civic education in the public schools, residency requirements, online voting, the role and limits of dissent in a democracy, Occupy Wall Street, democracy and inequality, campaign finance reform, gerrymandering, the nature of representation, the role and limits of dissent in a democracy, voting methods, voting paradoxes, cosmopolitan citizenship, and making the democracy more deliberative. Among the questions the course will address will be "Is the Internet Good for Democracy?" "How Much Inequality Can a Democracy Withstand?" and "Are Globalization and Multiculturalism Good or Bad for Democracy?"

## **II. Class Times**

The course will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 to 6:20 PM

**III. Reading:** *A Course Pak will be available to everyone enrolled in the class.*

## **IV. Reading Assignments**

The course will be divided into five sections of approximately three weeks each. Reading assignments will be blocked out week by week and will be handed out for each section. Also several readings will be available online and several will be made available as class handouts.

## **V. Papers**

Four short papers are required on topics growing out of the readings and class discussions. The papers should be about 5-6 pages in length. Paper topics will be available at least ten (7) days before a paper is due. You will have the opportunity to rewrite at least one of your papers as well as the opportunity at various points in the course to get "extra credit," thereby improving your grade.

## **VI. Examinations**

There will be a quiz in class. There will be no other written examinations, final or otherwise.

## **VII. Attendance**

Although class attendance will not be taken directly into account in considering an overall grade for the course, attendance is required. You are allowed three unexcused absences. Any further absences will have an impact on your final grade.

## **VIII. Grading**

Grading will be broken down as follows: 30% for your strongest essay, 25% for your next best effort, 20% for the next, and 15% for the essay which is least successful of the four. The quiz will count 5%; participation 5%.

## **IX. Small Group Discussions**

In a course this large discussion groups can be very helpful. Occasional discussion sections will be scheduled especially after paper topics are handed out and before a paper is due. Discussion groups will give you an opportunity to explore some of the complex issues of the course in greater depth.

## **X. Democracy & Disobedience Web Site**

The Course will have its own Web Site and Web Pages much of which can be accessed from anywhere in the world. The Web Site is currently under construction and should be "up" and running by the after the Labor Day weekend.

## **XI. Office Hours**

I will hold office hours from 3:00 to 4:30 on Wednesdays and by appointment. My office is located in Rabb, Room 330. If you wish to leave messages for me, you may do so at the Office or, better still, you may contact me via E-Mail (teuber@brandeis.edu)

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*Note:* If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and you would like to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in PHIL 20A, please see me as soon as possible.