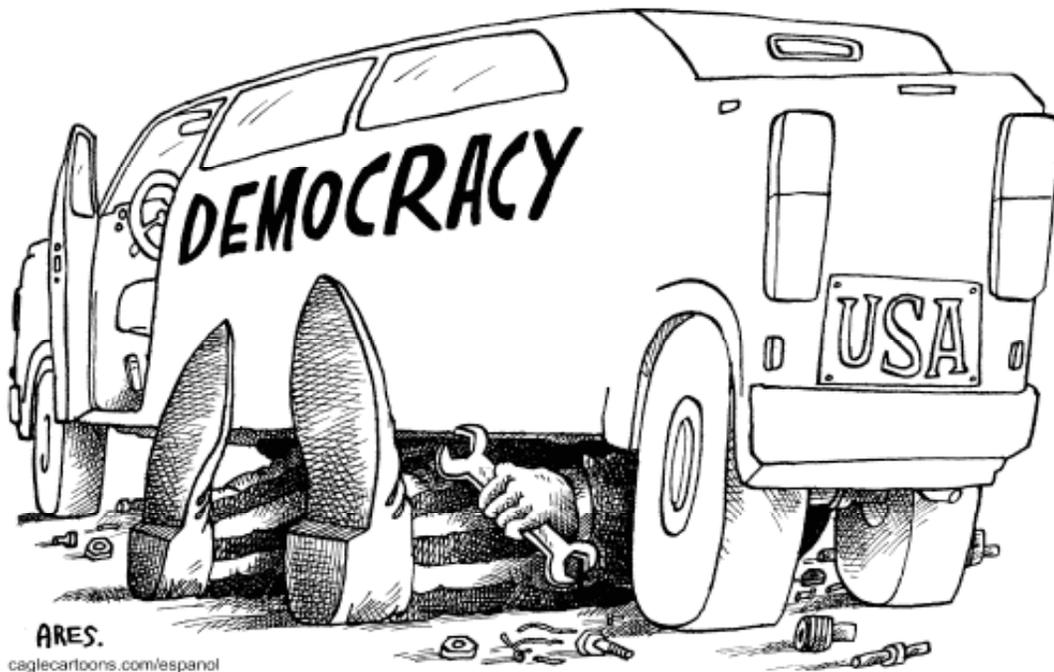


# PHILOSOPHY 20A:

## *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 Does It Mean To Be a Citizen in a Democracy in 2012?"

(2) A second section devoted to a philosophical examination of the nature of political obligation in 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 meaning and value of conceiving of citizenship as an activity rather than merely a legal status, as the cultivation of certain habits of heart and mind rather than merely the possession of particular rights and duties.

(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 Would Want To Know About the Candidates, the Issues, and 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 the U.S. 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, residency requirements, online voting, the role and limits of dissent, Occupy Wall Street, the philosophy, politics, history and economics of democracy, re-districting, the nature of representation, the Affordable Health Care Act, tax reform, social issues, the deficit, affirmative action, race, the role of government in a free society, big v. small government, entitlements, social security, welfare, voting methods, voting paradoxes, turnout, making the democracy more deliberative and global citizenship. 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?" **A portion of every class will be devoted to the November Election.**

## 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. Many of the readings will be available in PDF file online and several 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 pages in length. Paper topics will be available at least seven (7) days before a paper is due. You will have the opportunity to rewrite at least two of your papers as well as the opportunity at various points in the course to get "extra credit" and improve your final grade.

## VI. Examinations

There will be a quiz in class. There will be no other written exams.

## 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 two 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

Small group discussions can be very helpful. Occasional sessions will be scheduled especially after topics are handed out and before a paper is due. Discussion groups will give you an opportunity to brainstorm about the issues.

## X. Course Web Site

The Course will have its own Web Site and Web Pages on the Internet which can be accessed from anywhere in the world. The Web Site is currently under construction and should be fully “up” and running just before the Labor Day weekend.

### PHILOSOPHY 20A WEBSITE:

<http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/democracy.html>

## 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, the best method is via E-Mail ([teuber@brandeis.edu](mailto:teuber@brandeis.edu))



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*Note:* If you 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.