

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HA3039 Democracy, Populism, and Political Extremism

Pre-requisites : HA1002

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

This course will explore the relationship between democracy and populism. Is populism a form of political extremism and thus a threat to democracy, or is it democracy's purest expression? The course will begin by defining democracy, after which it will consider different varieties of populism and examine whether or not they harm democracy. As part of this investigation, the course will investigate the economic and cultural factors which might lead people to support populist politics, as well as the various strategies democrats have adopted to combat populism (assuming that it is indeed a threat to democracy). This course, which draws primarily on political theory but also comparative politics, is important because it will offer students conceptual tools to analyze one of the defining topics in contemporary politics worldwide. More generally, this class will enhance students' ability to grapple with difficult texts, to write, and to engage in charitable debate.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

Upon the successful completion of this course, you would be able to:

- 1) Read and analyze complex texts.
- 2) Engage with key methodological tools in philosophy, political science, and economics.
- 3) Apply the tools offered by philosophy, political science, and economics to analyze key social problems and questions.
- 4) Develop sustained written arguments
- 5) Listen well and engage in respectful debate.

Course Content

1. TBD (Short Reading)
2. Selections from Yasha Mounk, *The People vs. Democracy*
3. Selections from Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism*
4. Selections from Thomas Frank, *The People, No*
5. Selections from Yoram Hazony, *The Virtue of Nationalism*
6. Selections from Eric Kaufmann, *White Shift* and Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *Hate in the Homeland*
7. Selections from J.D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy*
8. Selections from Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*
9. Selections from Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos*
10. Selections from Chantal Mouffe, *For a Left Populism* and Kurt Weyland, "Latin America's Authoritarian Drift"
11. Selections from Yael Tamir's *Why Nationalism*
12. Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens's "Defending Democracy: The Concentric Containment of Political Extremism"
13. *All the King's Men* (1950) [Film]

Course Assessment

Class Participation	: 20%
Pop Quizzes	: 20%
Essay 1	: 30%
Essay 2	: 30%

Total	100%