

# PH382-15 Democracy: Authority and Resistance

**22/23**

**Department**

Philosophy

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

Sameer Bajaj

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

Governments rule over us. They command our obedience and enforce their commands with enormous coercive power. To take just one example: governments order us to pay taxes and lock us up if we don't. What, if anything, could make it legitimate for governments to wield this awesome power? And when, if ever, is it permissible for citizens to resist the state's commands?

It is widely assumed that political authority is legitimate when but only when it is democratic. In the first part of the module, we will put this assumption to the test by examining two influential challenges to the authority of democracy: the anarchist challenge and the epistocratic challenge. In the second part of the module, we will examine several important defences of the authority of democracy based on the values of equality, freedom, and truth. In the final part of the module, we will turn our attention to the issue of resistance to democratic authority. We will focus on three methods of resistance that have often been thought to be at the heart of the democratic ideal: protest, disobedience of the law, and voting.

### Module aims

The aim of this module is to introduce students to fundamental questions and theories about the

nature of political authority and the authority of democratic institutions, as well as questions and theories concerning duties to resist political injustice in democracies.

## **Outline syllabus**

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: The Anarchist Challenge

Week 3: The Epistocratic Challenge

Week 4: Democracy as Equality

Week 5: Democracy as Freedom

Week 7: Democracy as Truth

Week 8: Resistance through Protest

Week 9: Resistance through Disobedience

Week 10: Resistance through Voting

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- (i) demonstrate understanding of the central questions and theories concerning the nature of political authority
- (ii) demonstrate understanding of central questions and theories concerning duties to resist injustice in democracies
- (iii) demonstrate understanding of the central theories defending and opposing the authority of democratic institutions
- (iv) demonstrate the ability to relate key questions and concepts in the philosophy of political authority to broader philosophical questions and concepts concerning morality, epistemology, and metaphysics.

## **Indicative reading list**

Joseph Raz, selections from *The Morality of Freedom*

Stephen Darwall, "Authority and Reasons: Exclusionary and Second-Personal"

Plato, selections from *The Republic*

John Locke, selections from *Second Treatise of Government*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, selections from *The Social Contract*

David Estlund, selections from *Democratic Authority*

Thomas Christiano, selections from *The Constitution of Equality*

Hélène Landemore, selections from *Democratic Reason*

Fabienne Peter, selections from *Democratic Legitimacy*

Gerald Gaus, selections from *The Order of Public Reason*

Daniel Viehoff, "Democratic Equality and Political Authority"

Robert Paul Wolff, selections from *In Defense of Anarchism*

Alex Zakaras, "Complicity and Coercion: Towards an Ethics of Political Participation"

Hanna Pitkin, selections from *The Concept of Representation*

Tommie Shelby, "Justice, Deviance, and the Dark Ghetto"

Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

Kimberley Brownlee, selections from *Conscience and Conviction: The Case for Civil Disobedience*

Juliet Hooker, "Black Lives Matter and the Paradox of U.S. Black Politics: From Democratic Sacrifice to Democratic Repair"

Candace Delmas, selections from *The Duty to Resist: When Disobedience Should be Uncivil*

Javier Hidalgo, selections from *Unjust Borders: Individuals and the Ethics of Immigration*

Chong-Ming Lim, "Vandalising Tainted Commemorations"

Frantz Fanon, selections from *The Wretched of the Earth*

### **Subject specific skills**

-By the end of the module students should have an understanding of the central questions, concepts, and debates concerning the general nature of political authority, the authority of democratic institutions, and obligations to resist injustice.

### **Transferable skills**

-By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the main literature in these debates. -By the end of the module students should be able to critically analyse the arguments for and against the key positions defended in the literature. -By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the central questions, concepts, and debates discussed in the module in speech and writing. -By the end of the module students should be able to draw connections between the key ideas and arguments discussed in the module to other problems and debates in philosophy.

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## **Study**

### **Study time**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Required</b>
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (12%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	124 hours (83%)
Total	150 hours

### **Private study description**

No private study requirements defined for this module.

### **Costs**

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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### **Assessment**

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### **Assessment group A3**

	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Study time</b>
1,000 word essay	20%	
2,500 word essay	80%	

### **Feedback on assessment**

Essays will be returned with written feedback, in line with the Philosophy department's policies and guidance on giving feedback to students.

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### **Availability**

### **Courses**

This module is Optional for:

- UHIA-V1V8 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
  - Year 3 of V1V8 History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
  - Year 4 of V1V8 History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
- Year 3 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
- UPHA-V700 Undergraduate Philosophy

- Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 4 of UPHA-V701 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPHA-V702 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Work Placement)
- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
  - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)

This module is Core option list A for:

- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
- UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
  - Year 3 of GV19 Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
  - Year 3 of GV19 Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list B for:

- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list C for:

- Year 4 of UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list F for:

- UMAA-GV18 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year

This module is Option list A for:

- UPHA-VL78 BA in Philosophy with Psychology
  - Year 2 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology
  - Year 3 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology
- Year 4 of UPHA-VL79 BA in Philosophy with Psychology (with Intercalated year)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature
  - Year 2 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
  - Year 3 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ73 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature with Intercalated Year

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V6 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad)

This module is Option list D for:

- UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
  - Year 3 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V6 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list E for:

- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law