

PO134-15 Justice, Democracy and Citizenship

24/25

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Michael Saward

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Justice, Democracy and Citizenship is designed to get you thinking – about ideas in politics and how they matter, and what happens when we put political theory to work on pressing real-world issues and dilemmas. We will explore the three core concepts in the title of the module through the lens of specific, real-world debates, such as the possibility of 'global justice', the question of reparations for historical injustice, competing ideas of representative and direct democracy, and whether being a citizen means that we have an obligation to obey the law. We welcome all students, not only those considering a focus on political theory in later years of their programmes of study.

Programme content

This module interrogates political theory in the world, focusing sharply on crucial concepts and case studies that help to bring them alive. It will be divided into three parts – on justice, democracy, and citizenship respectively – each consisting of three weeks of lectures and seminars. The module has been created as a lively way to explore key ideas in political theory: what the main arguments around them are, and how they might apply to and illuminate practical and policy dilemmas. After taking this course you will greet invocations of justice, democracy and citizenship with a new curiosity and a sharpened critical eye.

Module aims

This module aims to:

- introduce students to selected key debates on the ideals of justice, democracy, and citizenship;
- demonstrate how key political concepts can be applied to specific political dilemmas, cases and issues
- enable students to make an informed choice about whether to select a political theory pathway through their degree programme.

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.

This module will be divided into three parts, corresponding to the three ideals mentioned in the title:

The first part, focusing on the ideal of justice, will address issues such as the following: What principles of justice, if any, can be used to assess relations between states and relations between members of different states? Are the vast inequalities of wealth and income that exist across the globe unjust, or do we merely have obligations of charity to assist those in other countries who cannot meet their basic needs? Does a state have a duty to admit refugees when others refuse, even if it has taken its fair share of them already? Does the idea of a just war still make sense and, if so, what are the criteria for determining whether or not a war is just? Does justice require reparations to be made for historical injustices?

The second part, focusing on the ideal of democracy, will address issues such as the following: What is democracy and why should we value it, given that it may, and sometimes does, deliver unjust outcomes? Do representative institutions require radical overhaul, in order to provide greater space for genuine deliberation? Should they be supplemented by various "democratic innovations", such as citizens' assemblies and referendums?

The third part, focusing on the ideal of citizenship, will address issues such as the following: What is it to be a citizen of a state and who should be regarded as a citizen? Do states have a right to exclude would-be immigrants and to determine who is permitted to live within their borders? Is there a case for lowering the age at which children can vote? Should prisoners be allowed to vote?

Learning outcomes

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

- The ability to demonstrate an appreciation of key debates around the concepts of justice, democracy and citizenship
- The ability to discuss intelligently the application and understanding of these concepts in

specific political cases

- The capacity to analyse critically, both orally and in writing, political arguments with respect to the relevant issues and dilemmas

Indicative reading list

A. Swift, Political Philosophy: a beginner's guide for students and politicians (Cambridge: Polity Press 2013)

D. Beetham, Democracy and Human Rights (Cambridge: Polity Press 1999)

R.A. Dahl, On Democracy (New Haven: Yale University Press 1998)

D. Held, Models of Democracy, third edition (Cambridge: Polity Press 2006)

M. Saward, Democratic Design (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2020)

R. Bellamy, Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008)

R. Beiner (ed.), Theorizing Citizenship (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995)

C. Armstrong, Global Distributive Justice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

M. Risse, Global Political Philosophy (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

International

The module covers topics which are international in their scope and implications, such as the nature of democracy, global justice, and citizenship and migration.

Subject specific skills

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

- demonstrate an appreciation of key debates around the concepts of justice, democracy and citizenship
- discuss intelligently the application and understanding of these concepts in specific political cases
- analyse critically, both orally and in writing, political arguments with respect to the relevant issues and dilemmas
- achieve a sense of more detailed options awaiting you in years 2 and 3

Transferable skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key skills:

- Written communication skills
- Oral communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Skills in the use of information technology
- Skills of interpretation and the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources
- Awareness and sensitivity to diversity (in terms of people, cultures) and the ability to

understand unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking

- The ability to digest, retain and apply complex information and ideas
 - Ability to conduct research and reference their work appropriately
 - Time management skills and the ability to meet deadlines
 - The ability to reflect critically on the extent and limitations of how and what they have learned, discovered and understood
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	10 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	131 hours (87%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

The module involves considerable reading. It is essential to keep up with the readings - especially those marked 'essential' - in order to achieve the module's learning outcomes.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Assessed Essay A 2,500-word essay.	100%	30 hours	Yes (extension)

Weighting

Study time

Eligible for self-certification

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Essay feedback will be returned within 20 working days of essay submission

Formative and summative feedback will be provided in accordance with standard PAIS practice.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at Brussels School of Governance, VUB)

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Core option list B for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V5L2 Undergraduate Philosophy and Politics

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
 - Year 1 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
 - Year 1 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
 - Year 1 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods

- Year 1 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy