***Contemporary Democratic Theory***

This class examines some contemporary thinking about democracy, focusing on liberal, republican, deliberative and agonistic theories. In the first class session we will select a topic for a deliberation day so that we can try our deliberative theory in practice. Requirements include class attendance; three 2-page response papers, research for and participation in deliberation day and a 5-page paper that may incorporate a consideration of theories of democracy in relation to internship experiences.

***Required Texts***

Robert Paul Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism*

Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political*

***Schedule***

January 9: Introduction and Organization

Deliberation day topic selection

January 16: Autonomy

Readings

Robert Paul Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism*, Chapters I and II.

A group response due

January 23: Liberalism

*Readings*:

John Rawls, “Justice as Fairness” available through UC/DC website

B group response due

January 30: Republicanism

*Readings*:

Michael Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy*, chapters 1 and 5, available through UC/DC website.

C group response due

February 6: Deliberative Democracy

*Readings*

JürgenHabermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy” available through UC/DC website

Joshua Cohen, “Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy” available through UC/DC website (Chapter 21 in *Debates*)

A group response due

February 13: Deliberation Day

Topics to be decided

*Reading*

Bruce Ackerman and James Fishkin, “Deliberation Day ” available through UC/DC website

B group response to topic due

February 20: Deliberative Democracy Questions

*Readings*

Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reiﬂer, “When Corrections Fail: The Persistence of Political Misperceptions” available through UC/DC website

Cass R. Sunstein, “Deliberative Trouble? Why Groups Go to Extremes” available through UC/DC website

C group response due

February 27: Agonistic Democracy

*Readings:*

Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political*, selections

George Crowder “Chantal Mouffe’s Agonistic Democracy” available through UC/DC website

A group response due

March 6: Voting Systems

The Alternative Vote Explained: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y3jE3B8HsE

Lani Guinier, “The Supreme Court, 1993 Term: [E]Racing Democracy: The Voting Rights

Cases”

Lani Guinier, “Beyond Electocracy: Rethinking the Political Representative as Powerful Stranger”

B group response due

March 13: Is the U.S. a Democracy?

America a democracy? Really?: h<ttp://www.nationofchange.org/america-democracy-really-1>344092915

*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html>

<http://www.npr.org/2012/09/13/161111316/are-superpacs-good-for-democracy>

C group response due