

Professor David Primo
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Fall2022, Mon. 12:30 – 3:15 PM
Classroom Harkness Hall 329
Office Hours Wed. 12– 2 PM, or by appt.
Office Hours In Person Harkness Hall 318
Office Hours over Zoom: <https://rochester.zoom.us/j/948872840>

PSCI 232/PSCI 232W: Disagreement in a Democratic Society

This Version: December 6, 2022

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Is consensus overrated? In this seminar course we will study the role of disagreement in a democratic society. Topics will include the causes and consequences of political polarization, academic freedom and viewpoint diversity on college campuses, and conflict as a tool for innovation.

READINGS

The required readings for this course are available on Blackboard. In addition to the required readings, students should regularly read the news (including Inside Higher Ed and The Chronicle of Higher Education) to identify current events related to the course. We will set aside time each week to discuss relevant articles. Inside Higher Ed is free with registration, and a subscription to The Chronicle is free for students if you register with your UR email address.

PROFESSOR PRIMO'S PERSPECTIVE ON SEMINAR COURSES

Seminar courses are spaces where ideas should be shared, debated, and challenged, as this is how we strengthen our understandings and beliefs about the world. To that end, Professor Primo often encourages students to question their beliefs and further refine their arguments. In other situations, Professor Primo may articulate arguments for or against an idea in ways that do not necessarily reflect his own views. When appropriate, he may choose to articulate his own opinions, and students are encouraged to challenge him, as well.

In order to foster an open exchange of ideas and allow for the frank discussion of controversial topics, class sessions will not be recorded. There may be times when class gets "uncomfortable." This is a positive, not a negative, so long as it is clear we are all working together toward a shared end of deeper understandings about the world. To use an analogy,

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Note: Topics are subject to change as the course evolves. Readings will go on Blackboard one week in advance of each meeting. Conversation starters are due by 8 AM on the day of class for weeks 10 and week 12

Date	Topic
1. September 12	Introduction and Course Preliminaries
2. September 19	Foundations
3. September 26	Political Polarization
4. October 3	Political Polarization
5. October 17	Higher Education I: The Campus Speech Climate
6. October 24	Higher Education II: DEI vs. (?) Speech
→October 25 at 7 PM	Project topics due on Blackboard
7. October 31	Higher Education III: Scientific Advancement
8. November 7	Disagreement in the Workplace
9. November 14	Disagreement, Diversity, and Innovation
10. November 21	Student-selected

- x Bennett, Jessica. 2020 "What If Instead of Calling People Out, We Called Them In?" New York Times November 19.
- x Amenabar, Teddy. 2022 "Tips to Debunk False Claims Made by Friends and Family" Washington Post October 5.
- x Podcast: Ted Radio Hour on NPR featuring Adam Grant.

Organizations Committed to Bridging Divides (Skim the Documents/Websites)

- x Heterodox Academy
- x Constructive Dialogue Institute
- x Listen First Project