**[EARLY DRAFT – PLEASE DO NOT CIRCULATE]**

**POL XXXX Political Discussion and Deliberation in the 2016 Election**

**ROOM**

**Monday and Wednesdays 1:00-2:15**

Professor Dan Myers

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What if the most important part of democracy isn’t voting, but talking before the vote is taken? That’s the claim of deliberative theories of democracy, which argue that political decisions are only legitimate if they are preceded by a fair deliberation among those affected. But what kind of talk is good for democracy? And are average citizens capable of productive conversation, especially in this age of political polarization? We’ll explore these questions through a range of academic research from political science, psychology and communications.

But we won’t just seek answers from academic sources – we’ll take a hands-on approach by hosting the 2016 Minnesota Election Forum, a deliberative public forum where average citizens will discuss the presidential election. Planning and hosting the forum will be the centerpiece of the course; alongside reading and discussing academic papers, we will plan how to host a productive conversation between among ordinary citizens. We’ll put everything we’ve learned into action the weekend before the election, when we’ll help a diverse group of voters have a different kind of conversation about the Presidential Election.

**Liberal Education Theme Statement**

This course satisfies the Council on Liberal Education’s Civic Life and Ethics theme. At its core, democracy’ claim to be a legitimate form of government rests on a series of ethical claims about how members of a society should make collective decisions. In the first several classes students will be challenged to think deeply about what these ethical claims mean for how a people might be said to govern themselves, and what this implies for the standards that a society must meet to be considered “democratic.” As we learn about deliberative theories of democracy, students will explore a specific set of claims about how these standards can be met, and in particular what ethical speech – and ethical listening – look like in a democratic society. Alongside these claims, we will consider critiques of deliberative theories of democracy that will help students clarify their own views on democracy and also serve as an example of the social processes that produce particular views of legitimate government. Finally, in planning and hosting the Minnesota Election Forum students will be asked to put these lessons into action by designing an event where people can converse across lines of division in a way that brings democracy to life.

**Course Structure:**

The course will be centered on planning and conducting the 2016 Minnesota Election Forum (henceforth, The Forum). To that end, the course will be divided into 4 sections.

1. The first two weeks of class we will read key readings on the theory of deliberative democracy and deliberative “mini-public” like the one we will be hosting.
2. During the next four weeks will read more applied work about three key elements of forum design: recruitment, structure, and facilitation. During these weeks we will alternate classes where we discuss academic readings with classes where we decide how to apply these lessons to the design of our Forum. This section of the course will culminate in two classes where students will be trained as deliberative facilitators by the staff of the Jefferson Center, a St. Paul non-profit dedicated to deliberative public engagement.
3. The next four weeks of class will be devoted to preparing for and hosting the forum. Each student will facilitate two test groups in which U of M students deliberate using the same structure and informational materials prepared for the Forum. During class periods, we will reflect on these facilitation experiences and use these lessons to change the design of the forum. This section will culminate in hosting the Forum.
4. After the forum, we will return to academic readings that help contextualize the Forum in the broader political science literature on political behavior.

Please note that taking part in the Forum is mandatory. If you are not available to participate on Saturday, October 28th please do not enroll in this course.

**Course Readings**

We will read most or all of the following books, which are available through the University of Minnesota book store:

* Mutz, Diana C. 2006. *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative vs. Participatory Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press
* Fishkin, James. 2009. *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

In addition, we will read journal articles, chapters of other books, and materials from the Jefferson Center on deliberative facilitation. You will be expected to find those that are easily available through the library on your own. Readings that are more difficult to locate will be posted to the course Moodle site.  
  
I may from time to time change the readings required in the syllabus if I determine that a better reading is available. I will give at least one week's notice of any change via email, and will post an updated version of the syllabus on Moodle.

**Class Format:**

The class will be held in seminar format. While I may begin class with some brief remarks on the day’s materials, most of our class sessions will be driven by student discussion. Please come prepared to discuss.

**Course Assignments:**

**Memos:**

Most of the class assignments will take the form of memos. Before most classes, students will complete either a memo, a response, or both.

*Brief reaction memos and responses:*

For classes where we read academic articles, students will complete brief (250-500 words) memos reacting to the readings. These memos must be posted to Moodle the evening before class.

In addition to writing the memo, each student will be assigned to read and react to another student’s memo. These reactions should be a brief paragraph on the order of 100-150 words.

*Memos on Forum Design:*

Three class periods will be dedicated to designing three key elements of the forum: recruitment, structure, and facilitation. Each student will be assigned to one of these elements, and prior to the class dedicated to this element will write a lengthier memo (2,000 words) outlining key elements of the decisions related to this element of the forum and proposing a detailed plan for how we should do this element. These memos should be posted to the course Moodle site TWO evenings before class; all students not assigned to write a memo for this class should write slightly longer reactions (250-500 words) reacting to all three memos.

*Facilitation Reflection Memos*

After each test group, as well as the forum itself, students should write a memo (250-500 words) reflecting on the experience of facilitating the group. As with the reading reaction memos, each student will be assigned to read and react to another student’s memo. These reactions should be a brief paragraph on the order of 100-150 words.

**Final Paper**

The class will culminate with a final paper you will complete a 10-page paper due by 11:59 PM on Saturday, December 19th. In this essay you will advance an original argument about deliberation drawing on the experience and data generated by the election forum. Details of the essay question will be forthcoming as the end of class approaches.

Good writing takes time. To encourage students to take time necessary to draft, revise, and polish an excellent paper you are REQUIRED to meet with the professor and discuss paper ideas. We will also spend some class time working in groups on revising drafts of your papers.

**Grades**

The four types of assignments will be added up to make your grade in the following way:

Class/forum participation: 20%

Daily brief memos and responses: 20%

Memos on forum design: 20%

Test group and forum reflection memos: 20%

Final essay: 20%

This course will use the following grading scale:

A: Achievement outstanding relative to the basic course requirements

A 93 points or higher

A- 90-93

B: Achievement significantly above the basic course requirements

B+ 87-90

B 83-87

B- 80-83

C: Achievement meeting the basic course requirements

C+ 77-80

C 73-77

C- 70-73

D: Achievement worthy of credit but below the basic course requirements

D+ 67-70

D 60-67

F: Below 60 points

**Late Work and Missed Classes**

You must attend class to get credit for any memo or response that is due that day. This requirement will only be waived for documented medical or family emergencies or for approved university activities. Documentation must not be hypothetical, and must actually be provided in either case. Personal or medical issues that do not rise to the level of documented emergency are not an acceptable reason to miss class.

Design memos are due 24 hours prior to the class during which they will be discussed. Because the design memos will be discussed extensively during class, late design memos will not be accepted. If you anticipate a conflict with your assigned design memo group please get in touch with me ASAP so that I can switch you into a different design memo group.

The final essay must be turned in via Moodle by 11:59 pm on Thursday, December 22nd. If I notice that you did not turn in the essay, I will send you an email. You will have 24 hours after that email is sent to turn in an essay, whose grade will be reduced by 3 points. After that, no late work will be accepted.

All students must participate in the November 5th forum. Failing to do so, barring unforeseeable medical or personal emergency, will lead to a grade of F.

**Class Policies**

**Students with Disabilities**

I will make every effort to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Please contact Disability Services (180 McNamara Alumni Center: 612-626-1333) to discuss your individual needs as early as possible in the semester. More information on disability services is available at:

<https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/home>

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility**

All of the work presented in this course is expected to be your own. I will follow the University’s policies and procedures for academic integrity. Using information from a book, article, web page, another person, etc. without crediting the author is plagiarism. Quotations, paraphrased information, and use of others’ ideas should be properly cited in your written assignments. If you have questions about citation, please contact the Professor. More information is available at:

<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.html>

**Technology in the Classroom**

While our society teaches us to divide our attention between competing demands, research shows that people are terrible at multi-tasking, particularly when one of the tasks requires a high level of concentration. Indeed, while research shows that multi-tasking degrades performance and leads multi-taskers to get *less* done, not more, multi-tasking provides emotional gratification. This makes it difficult to resist, even if you really, truly intend to only take notes on your laptop and not check Facebook or your fantasy football league. Finally, extensive research shows that taking notes by hand leads to significantly greater learning.

For all of these reasons the use of electronics will not be allowed in class. Please put away all laptops, cellphones, etc. for the duration of the class.

For more details on the perils of multi-tasking and the benefits of taking notes the old-fashioned way see:

<https://medium.com/@cshirky/why-i-just-asked-my-students-to-put-their-laptops-away-7f5f7c50f368>

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>

<http://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking_0.pdf>

**Contact Policy**

In an effort to hold in-class announcements to a minimum, I will be using e-mail to relay most of the nuts and bolts of the course. You must check your campus e-mail every day. You are responsible for any information that I pass along via email.

I will respond to all email within 24 hours, except on weekends. Though I will respond as quickly as possible, I cannot guarantee that I will respond to any email faster than 24 hours of it being sent.

**Office Hours**

Office Hours will be held Monday and Wednesday from 2:30-3:30 PM. I’m more than happy to make an appointment with you if those times do not work. Just ask or e-mail me.

**University Resources**

This class will use use writing assignments. The Student Writing Center has TA’s and ESL specialists to help with your writing skills. The Writing Center is at 306 B Lind Hall, East Bank (612-625-1893) or on the web at (http://swc.umn.edu.html).

**AT THIS POINT IN READING THE SYLLABUS PLEASE EMAIL** [smit7193@umn.edu](http://cla.umn.edu/about/directory/profile/smit7193@umn.edu)**TO INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE READ THIS FAR. INCLUDE YOUR STUDENT ID NUMBER.**

**Course Schedule**

**Section 1: What is Deliberative Democracy?**

**September 5: Intro to class**

Reading:

* Fishkin, James. 2009. *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*. OUP Oxford. Chapter 1

**September 7: What is Deliberative Democracy?**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Cohen, Joshua. 1989. “Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy.” In The Good Polity, ed. Alan Hamlin, and Phillip Petit. Boston: Blackwell pp. 17–34.
* Guttman, Amy and Dennis Thompson. 2004. “What Deliberative Democracy Means.” Ch. 1 in *Why Deliberative Democracy?* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1-63.

**September 12: Critics of Deliberation**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Sanders, Lynn. 1997. “Against Deliberation.” Political Theory 25(3): 347–376.
* Young, Iris Marion. 2001. “Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy.” *Political Theory* 29(5): 670–90.

**September 14: Deliberative Mini-Publics**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Grönlund, Kimmo, André Bächtiger, and Maija Setälä. 2014. *Deliberative Mini-Publics : Involving Citizens in the Democratic Process*. Colchester: ECPR Press. CHAPTERS 1 and 2
* Warren, Mark E., and John Gastil. 2015. “Can Deliberative Minipublics Address the Cognitive Challenges of Democratic Citizenship?” *The Journal of Politics* 77(2): 562–74.

**Section 2: Planning the Forum: Recruitment, Structure, Facilitation**

**September 19: Readings on who should participate**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Fishkin, James. 2009. *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*. OUP Oxford. Chapter 2
* Davies, Ben B., Kirsty Blackstock, and Felix Rauschmayer. 2005. “‘Recruitment’, ‘composition’, and ‘mandate’ Issues in Deliberative Processes: Should We Focus on Arguments rather than Individuals?” *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 23(4): 599–615.

**September 21: Plotting out recruitment and who should participate**

Assignment:

* Design memos on recruitment OR response to recruitment memos

Readings:

* Read and comment on recruitment memos

**September 26: Readings on structure of forum**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Fishkin, James. 2009. *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*. OUP Oxford. Chapter 5
* Gastil, John and Peter Levine, eds. 2007. *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. CHAPTER 7
* Smith, Graham. 2009. *Democratic Innovations: Designing Institutions for Citizen Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTER 3

**September 28: Plotting out structure of forum**

Assignment:

* Design memos on structure OR response to structure memos

Readings:

* Read and comment on structure memos

**October 3: Deliberative facilitation readings**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Mansbridge, Jane, Janette Hartz-Karp, Matthew Amengual, and John Gastil. 2006. “Norms of Deliberation:  An Inductive Study.” *Journal of Public Deliberation* 2(1).
* Moore, Alfred. 2012. “Following from the Front: Theorizing Deliberative Facilitation.” *Critical Policy Studies* 6(2): 146–62.

**October 5: Facilitator Training Part 1**

Readings:

* Deliberative Facilitation Training Packet

**October 10: Facilitator Training Part 2**

Readings:

* Deliberative Facilitation Training Packet

**October 12: Facilitation Plan Design**

Assignment:

* Design memos on facilitation OR response to facilitation memos

Readings:

* Read and comment on facilitation memos

**Section 3: Test Groups and the 2016 Minnesota Election Forum**

**October 17: NO CLASS TEST GROUPS**

**October 19: Meet to discuss test groups**

Assignment:

* Reflection memo on first test group

Readings:

* Read first test group memos

**October 24: NO CLASS TEST GROUPS**

**October 26: Meet to Discuss test groups**

Assignment:

* Reflection memo on second test group

Readings:

* Read second test group memos

**Obtober 28th (SATURDAY): FORUM DAY**

**November 7: NO CLASS! TAKE A BREAK!**

**November 9: Debriefing post-forum**

Assignment:

* Reflection memo on forum

Readings:

* Read forum reflection memos

**Section 4: Deliberation and Political Behavior**

**November 14: The Effects of Deliberation**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings

* Gastil, J., Deess, E. P., Weiser, P., & Meade, J. (2008). Jury service and electoral participation: A test of the participation hypothesis. *Journal of Politics, 70*, 1-16.
* Neblo, M. A., Esterling, K. M., Kennedy, R. P., Lazer, D. M. J., & Sokhey, A. E. (2010). Who wants to deliberate—and why? American Political Science Review, 104(3): 566-583.

**November 16: NO CLASS – Meetings with instructor to discuss final paper ideas**

**November 21: Critiques of Deliberative Mini-publics**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings

* Lafont, C. (Forthcoming). Deliberation, Participation, and Democratic Legitimacy: Should Deliberative Mini-publics Shape Public Policy? *Journal of Political Philosophy*.
* Mitofsky, Warren J. 1996. It’s not deliberative and it’s not a poll. *Public Perspective*, 17, 4–6.

**November 23: Deliberative Systems Theory**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Parkinson, John and Jane Mansbridge, eds. 2012. *Deliberative Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press. **Chs. 1, 3.**

**November 28: Everyday Political Discussion**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Jacobs, Lawrence R, Fay Lomax Cook and Michael X. Delli Carpini. 2009. Talking Together: Public Deliberation and Political Participation in America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. **Chapters 2, 3**

**November 30: Social Networks and Politics**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings

* Klofstad, Casey A. 2007. “Talk Leads to Recruitment How Discussions about Politics and Current Events Increase Civic Participation.” *Political Research Quarterly* 60(2): 180–91.
* R. Huckfeldt. 2007. "Information, Persuasion, and Political Communication Networks," in R Dalton and H.-D. Klingemann (eds.), Oxford, UK: Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior.

**December 5: Final Paper Workshop**

**December 7: Deliberation vs. Participation? Class 1**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Mutz, Diana C. 2006. *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative vs. Participatory Democracy*. CHAPTERS 1-2

**December 12: Deliberation vs. Participation? Class 2**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Mutz, Diana C. 2006. *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative vs. Participatory Democracy*. CHAPTERS 3-4

**December 14: Deliberation vs. Participation? Class 3**

Assignment: Reaction Memo and Response

Readings:

* Landemore, Hélène. 2013. “On Minimal Deliberation, Partisan Activism, and Teaching People How to Disagree.” *Critical Review* 25(2): 210–25.
* Berger, Ben. 2013. “The Accidental Theorist: Diana Mutz’s Normative and Empirical Insights.” *Critical Review* 25(2): 181–98.
* Mutz, Diana C. 2013. “Reflections on Hearing the Other Side in Theory and Practice.” *Critical Review: A Journal of Politics and Society*, 25(2): 260-276