Hauptseminar/V-Seminar WiSe 2019/20

Democratic Decisions:
Economic and Philosophic Perspectives on Collective Choice

LECTURERS
Dr. Dominik Klein
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OBJECTIVE
How can rational individuals get to a rational collective choice if their preferences or information differ? To what extent does the adopted decision procedure matter? Can the procedure matter more than the preferences or information that feed into it? Are there philosophical grounds to prefer some choice rules over others? Practical and theoretical questions like these will be covered in this interdisciplinary block seminar. A mix of philosophical discussion, mathematical analysis and empirical case studies aims to improve participants’ understanding of positive and normative problems of democratic decisions.

TARGET GROUP
Advanced Bachelor’s students from:
- Philosophy & Economics
- Economics
- Internationale Wirtschaft & Entwicklung

SEMINAR PLACES
- 15

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION/ASSESSMENT
- Seminar: English
- Written work: English

DATES AND DEADLINES
- Introduction and Organization Session: **July 24th, 2019, 11:00c.t., H27 (GW II)**
- Registration: **October 1st, 2019, at the latest.** Early registrations are possible after July’s Introduction and Organization Session. Places and topics will be allocated on a **first-come-first-served** basis.
- Seminar: **November 15th to 17th, 2019.**
- Submission of seminar papers: **March 31st, 2020.**

Deadlines are final and will be strictly enforced.
ASSESSMENT

*Philosophy & Economics*

- BA V3 or V4 seminar 6 cp: presentation, comment, participation + 4000-5000 word seminar paper.
- BA P3* seminar 2 cp: presentation, comment, participation
- BA V or P3 seminar 2 cp (alte Studienordnung): presentation, comment, participation
- BA V seminar 8 cp: same as 2 cp + 5000-6000 word seminar paper
- BA P3 seminar 6 cp: same as 2 cp + 4000-5000 word seminar paper.

*Economics, IWE*

- BSc Hauptseminar 5 cp: presentation, comment, participation, 3500–4500 word seminar paper. Credits in Individueller Schwerpunkt or as GVWL II 5/6 (old PO); credits as Theoretisches Seminar / Seminar zu Institutionen und Governance in Spezialisierung (new PO).

ENROLMENT/REGISTRATION:

Enrollment on the e-learning platform will open after the preparatory meeting on July 24th. The course can be found in the Philosophy 1 section. First check there which topics are marked as assigned already. Then send an *e-mail to both of us* in which you name one or more of the topics that have not yet been assigned to any other participant. Please double-check with us in case you don’t hear back within 7 days of sending your mail.

SEMINAR INSTRUCTIONS

1. Time allowed: presentation of 45 min., comment of 5 min, discussion of 30 mins.
2. Presentations should be a concise and systematic overview of the topic in the form of a “teaching lecture”.
3. Each presentation will be assigned to one other participant, who is to comment on / initiate the discussion of the contents of the presentation. Presenters are required to send their presentations to both instructors and the respective commenters *at least seven days* before the seminar session.
4. The literature given below is a starting point for your lecture. You are typically expected to find additional material yourself.
5. The order of presentations need not correspond to the numbering of topics found below. All participants shall be ready to give their presentation on the first seminar day.

SEMINAR PAPERS

Your *seminar paper* should be on a well-defined issue related to your presentation topic. *Start in time* so that you can meet the deadline despite exams, internships or further seminar commitments!

Please make sure when writing your paper that you maintain scholarly standards of presentation and citation. For guidance, please consult any of the research papers that can be found on either of our web sites. We recommend that you use the author-date (Harvard) referencing system.
THEMES


Why Democracy


The Political and Economic Significance of Voting Procedures


The Goal of Democracy: Correctness vs. Representation


T2. Aggregation of Preferences.

Simple Majority Rule I: May's Theorem


Simple Majority Rule II: Rae-Taylor Theorem


Supermajority Rules


Scoring Rules


Arrow’s Impossibility Theorem


Possibility Results


Gibbard-Satterthwaite Theorem

**T3. Aggregation of Beliefs.**
Condorcet Jury Theorem and Optimal Voting Rules for Two Alternatives

Optimal Voting Rules for Three or More Alternatives

Impossibility of Judgment Aggregation

Consensus and Communication

Strategic Challenges to the Condorcet Jury Theorem

**T4. Comparing Properties of Voting Procedures.**
Paradoxes I: Incompatibility and Monotonicity Paradoxes

Paradoxes II: Choice Set Variance and Representation Paradoxes

Is There a Best Voting Procedure?

**T5. Collective Choice in Practice.**
Does the Voting Procedure Matter?

Agenda-setting: Bonn vs. Berlin
Voting and the US Civil War


Cyclical Preferences in the Romanian 2009 Presidential Election


Manipulation and Sophisticated Voting in the US Congress