Special Research Course: Direct Democracy
POLG G9010

Spring 2011
Time: TBA
Location: IAB 733

Professor Justin Phillips
(212) 854-0741
jhp2121@columbia.edu
733 International Affairs Building
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2 – 4 pm
& by appointment

This course is designed as an overview of the major debates in the study of direct democracy institutions. The readings are organized around nine topics, and are drawn largely from the U.S. and Swiss cases. The primary goals of the course are to familiarize students with the principal questions being asked by scholars in this subfield, the methodological approaches employed, and the avenues available for future research. Students will be asked to critically evaluate the existing literature and to complete an original research paper.

TOPICS

The Origins of Direct Democracy in the United States


The Question of Voter Competence


Does Direct Democracy Increase Government Responsiveness?


Interest Groups


Initiative Campaigns


Does Direct Democracy Undermine Minority Rights?


How Does Direct Democracy Shape Fiscal Policy?


Other Direct Democracy Effects


The Implementation Problem


Wrapping up
