ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPRESENTATION
Spring 2017

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This seminar is on different aspects of political representation. Because representation is, in different forms, a core feature of contemporary democracies, understanding its properties is essential to understanding and evaluating our democratic practice. We will examine arguments, some historical, others contemporary about representation and seek to assess their power and purchase, with and without institutionalized relationship of political accountability.

Assignments
Because the reading material is cumulative, it is critical that students in the seminar do their readings by the assigned dates. The grades will be determined by class discussion (30%), a midterm exam (25%), weekly 1-2 page thought papers (20%), and the final paper project (25%).

The weekly thought papers, identifying and critically probing an issue of particular interest in a given week’s readings will be due by 4pm of the day before the class meeting. The final research paper will be based on a group project and will be due at the end of term.

Schedule of Topics and Readings
Class 1: Introduction. Preview

Class 2: The setting and some background

Class 3: A Case for Representation

Madison, James. 1787. “Vices of the Political System of the United States.”

Class 3: Conceptual nuances


Class 4: Agency Problems in Representation


Class 5: Accountability and Institutional Trust


Class 6: The pros and cons of transparency


Class 7: Exam
Class 8: Political responsibility vs. criminal responsibility


Ingimundarson, Valur "Transitional narratives and the politics of justice," 2012 [Mimeo].


Class 9: Direct Democracy and Representation


Class 10: Minority Representation


Session 11: Representation without elections I: citizen juries


Class 12: Representation without election II: Bono, NGOs, and their friends


Rubenstein, Jennifer, “The misuse of power, not bad representation: Why it is beside the point that no one elected Oxfam”, The Journal of Political Philosophy, 22 (2), June 2014

Class 13: Presentation of Final Projects