



University  
of Victoria

# POLI 309 Democracy and Disobedience

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**Instructor Spring 2023:** Dr. Avigail Eisenberg

**Course delivery:** POLI 309 will be delivered on campus and face-to-face.

**Prerequisite:** Minimum 3rd year standing; or permission of the Department

## **Course description:**

This course examines political theories and strategies of disobedience and dissent. Do citizens have an obligation to obey unjust laws? Which strategies of dissent and law breaking are successful? Does disruptive protest damage democratic community or can it be democratizing? Is violent resistance ever justified? The course begins by asking how we should understand the scope of political disobedience. It examines the ways in which dissent and disobedience rely on particular political subjects and how they view themselves in relation to others. We consider the leading texts in political theory about disobedience alongside some of the manifestos of social movements or reflections about groups such as Black Lives Matter, Earth First!, Idle No More, and Occupy to name some examples.

## **Course outcomes/objectives:**

- Develop knowledge of key concepts and questions in theories and cases about political dissent and disobedience
- Develop core undergraduate skills, especially effective writing, textual analysis and critical thinking
- Enhance critical reading skills
- Sharpen research skills and develop capacity to draw connections between theoretical debates and political practices

## **Topics may include:**

Political theories of disobedience  
Conscience and resistance  
Violent and nonviolent protest  
Imperialism and dissent

*This summary provides an overall sense of the course and is not an official course outline. Detailed course outlines will be available for all registered students on the first day of class.*