Instructor: Zeynep Pamuk  
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Office hours: Thu, 2-4 pm

Course description
This course focuses on the use and misuse of knowledge and expertise in politics. We will examine the role of expertise in legitimating state power, evidence-based policy and its critiques, the dangers of technocracy and populism for democracy as well as worries about misinformation and "post-truth" politics. We will reflect on whether a democratic use of expertise is possible and what it would take to realize it. We will also study two specific issue areas involving expertise in politics: central banking and artificial intelligence.

Assessment
Grades will be determined based on participation (30%) and a 20-page final paper (70%).

Participation and presentations
Active participation and engagement with the materials is expected from all students and forms part of the grade for the course. Each student will be expected to do two 15-minute presentations. The first will be a presentation on the week’s readings, to get the discussion started, the second will be a presentation of your proposed final paper topic on our last session. Presentations will not be graded directly, but will be evaluated as part of your participation grade.

Course schedule
Week 1. Introduction: The Problem of Expertise

Week 2. Experts and the Modern State
James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State, Chs. 1 and 2
Week 3. Evidence-Based Policy


Week 4. Technocracy and Populism

Jürgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society, Ch. 5

Pierre Rosanvallon, Democratic Legitimacy, Ch. 2


Week 5. Democratizing Expertise


Philip Kitcher, Science in a Democratic Society, Ch. 5

**Week 6. Public Communication of Expertise**

Stephen John, “Epistemic Trust and the Ethics of Science Communication” *Social Epistemology* 32.2 (2018): 75-87


**Week 7. Participation, Protest and Science Activism**

Steven Epstein, *Impure Science* Ch. 7


Anna Kirkland, *Vaccine Court*, Chs. 3 and 5

**Week 8. Case 1: Central Banking**

Paul Tucker, *Unelected Power* Chs. 8 and 9


**Week 9. Case 2: Artificial Intelligence and Algorithms**

Ruha Benjamin, *Race After Technology*, Chs. 1 and 4


**Week 10. Final Paper Presentations**