

Call for Applications: Lucerne Master Class in PPE 2027

When:	February 15 th (9 am) – February 18 th (ca. 3 pm), 2027
Where:	University of Lucerne Hotel des Alpes
Language:	English
ECTS:	4 ECTS for participation with presentation of PhD project, 2 ECTS without
Closing Date Application:	September 1 st , 2026 (decision will be communicated around 2 weeks later)

Prof. Dr. Lea Ypi

Capitalism, Freedom, and Inequality

The Scholar:

Lea Ypi is Ralph Miliband Professor of Politics and Philosophy at the London School of Economics, a permanent fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, and an Honorary Professor at the Australian National University. Born in Albania, she studied Philosophy and Literature at the University of Rome La Sapienza and holds a PhD from the European University Institute; she was also a postdoctoral fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford. She is the author of several books, including *Free: Coming of Age at the End of History* and *Indignity*, as well as academic works published by Oxford University Press. Her writing has been translated into over thirty-five languages and has received numerous awards. Ypi co-edits *Political Philosophy* and contributes to outlets such as the *Financial Times* and *The Guardian*.

The Topic:

The Master Class explores the relationship between inequality and agency under capitalist conditions, drawing on Ypi's concept of "moral socialism." It starts from the diagnosis of an "age of unreason," in which global capitalism not only deepens socio-economic inequalities but also erodes the epistemic and institutional conditions required for autonomous moral judgment. At its core lies the distinction between freedom as choice and freedom as agency. While capitalist societies expand formal options, they generate structural inequalities that systematically constrain individuals' capacity to act free from domination, need, and manipulation.

The Master Class situates this diagnosis within a broader critical framework that brings together Kantian moral philosophy, Marxist social analysis, and contemporary critiques of capitalism. It focuses on a shared analysis of contemporary crises, approached through both political and philosophical lenses. Together with Ypi, doctoral students will engage in discussions of possible institutional alternatives, including democratic transformations of the economy, the role of markets and planning, as well as the function of law and the state, and the conditions of political progress under contemporary globalization.

By presenting and discussing their PhD research on the topic of the Master Class with international peers working on similar topics, participants will explore the links between inequality and agency and reflect on possible alternatives that promote substantive freedom.

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Participants:

The Lucerne Master Class in PPE invites Swiss and international doctoral students from the fields of philosophy, political science, sociology, history and cultural studies, as well as other humanities and social science disciplines, to apply (for further information, see box below). Early-career postdoctoral researchers may be selected if they demonstrate a strong link to the Lucerne Master Class's topic, but preference will be given to doctoral students. Advanced master's students can apply to attend the Lucerne Master Class as auditors (please also use the application form for this application).

Up to 16 doctoral students will be invited, of whom approximately 12 will be selected to present their research projects to the group and receive feedback from Ypi and the other participants.

Organizers:

The Lucerne Master Class in PPE 2027 is jointly organized by the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (GSL) and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Lucerne. We gratefully acknowledge funding by the "Professor Dominic Schmidig Foundation."

Costs:

Tuition fee: CHF 350 (incl. accommodation at Hotel des Alpes). If you are unable to apply for funding through your university or institution and consider the payment of this fee to be an obstacle to your attendance, please send a request for exemption from the payment to gsl@unilu.ch, providing a brief explanation of why you are unable to pay the fee. Decisions on all submitted requests will be made after all applications have been reviewed and participants have been selected.

Applications

Please download the application form from the [Lucerne Master Class in PPE website](#). In addition to the information to be entered into the form, please provide a short statement of motivation (no more than 1 page), a short CV and short description (no more than 1 page) of your current doctoral research project. Please send your application to gsl@unilu.ch until September 1st, 2026.

Further Information: www.unilu.ch/masterclass or contact gsl@unilu.ch