

POLS 4040
MWF: 12:40-1:30 p.m.
Baldwin 301
Spring 2022

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American Political Thought

Two features distinguish early American political thought from European political thought: an exceptional commitment to liberal, democratic, and republican political institutions on the one hand, and a peculiar attachment to racist and nativist practices on the other. This course traces the interaction of these two contradictory tendencies through the writings of prominent American political thinkers from the founding of the American republic through Reconstruction. It considers how history affects each writer and how their writings informed political philosophy and the design of American political institutions. Along the way, we will see the ideas that arose during the American Revolution, the drafting of the U.S. Constitution, and ultimately the Civil War. Hopefully, students will gain a thorough understanding of American political thought and become much better writers.

COVID

Students showing COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. If you test positive for COVID-19, you are required to report it through [DawgCheck](#). DawgCheck will tell you how long you need to isolate and when you can return to class. If you have been exposed to COVID-19 but do not show any symptoms, 1) you don't need to quarantine if you have been fully vaccinated, but 2) you need to quarantine for 14 days if you have not been vaccinated. If you need additional help, reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for a student seeking [mental health services](#) or [crisis support](#). If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit [BeWellUGA](#) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Grading

Unlike many of your other courses, this course is student-centered and discussion oriented. Professor and student are on equal footing, debating and reflecting on the readings assigned. I will motivate some of the discussions with a background lecture or a random student brief, but I expect students to have read the work before class and to fully engage in classroom discussions. Your grade will consist of two reading briefs, an in-class simulation of the Constitutional Convention, a federalist debate, a sectional debate, a set of pop quizzes, and attendance. The class challenges your writing skills, but I think you will have a lot of fun learning the material.

I generally think of 90-100 as an A, 80-90 as a B, etc., but the university moved to a plus minus system, so your overall grade for the course will be based upon the following scale:

		A	92 or above	A-	90-91.99
B+	88-89.99	B	82-87.99	B-	80-81.99
C+	78-79.99	C	72-77.99	C-	70-71.99
D+	68-69.99	D	62-67.99	D-	60-61.99
F	59.99 or below				

Reading Briefs

Reading briefs are two page, double spaced essays on a topic related to the readings. Unlike most essays, I will usually assign a reading brief on a topic that we have not yet discussed in class. Each brief is worth 10% of your overall grade. I *may* ask you to read your brief in front of the class to generate discussion, so be prepared. **Students will lose one letter grade for every working day a brief is late. Briefs will not be accepted one week after the due date.**

Simulation

One of the more exciting part of the course will be our simulation of the U.S. Constitutional Convention. To start the simulation, I will randomly assign each of you to be a different delegate from the Constitutional Convention. Your task will be to research the biography of your delegate, including their position on the apportionment of the legislature and the best method for electing the President. You will then persuade your fellow delegates to vote in favor of your favorite position on the issue, or something close to it, and use bloc voting to decide the outcome of each issue for the class. You will be graded on a two page summary of your delegate's position on these two issues (due the first day of the simulation), your ability to persuade others, motions and discussion of motions, as well as the closeness of the adopted policy to the position favored by your delegate – worth 20% of your grade. **Students who are absent during one of the simulation days will turn in a 2 page paper summarizing the entire Convention's position on the issue they missed, due the next class. This paper is in addition to the brief due the first day. The make up paper will be applied to the part of the "in-class" grade the student missed. Late penalties apply (see "make-ups" below).**

Federalist Debates

Early in the course, you will be divided into groups and assigned to a specific debate as either a Federalist or an Anti-Federalist. These debates will force you to delve into the philosophical theory behind the United States Constitution and some important issues in democratic theory. You will be graded on a two page summary of your party's position on the issue (due for the first day of the debates, regardless of the day you are assigned), a presentation before the class, and your response to questions from the audience. These debates are enjoyable, but represent 20% of your grade. **Students who miss their debate will turn in a 2 page paper on the philosophical tradition of the entire debates due in the class immediately following the student's assigned debate. Late penalties apply.**

Quizzes

15% of your grade is reserved for 4-7 pop quizzes administered within the first ten minutes of a class. Quizzes are designed to determine whether you have read the material for class. My goal is to write a quiz that is easy for someone who has read but is hard for someone who has not read. Quizzes should motivate you to do the readings and to attend class. **Any student who misses a quiz will receive a zero. There will be no make-up for missed quizzes, including students who arrive to class late.** Nevertheless, I will drop your two lowest quiz grades to help address factors that can affect attendance, such as COVID. Your cumulative quiz grade will be the average of the remaining quizzes.

In-Class Writings

The remaining 5% of your grade will come from in-class, group writing assignments. The assignments make sure you actively engage the questions and reflect on the issues. You will complete in-class writing assignments in groups of roughly four students and email them to me during class. All members of your group will receive a grade of 2 for writing something reasonable, a 1 for writing something unreasonable, and 0 for not participating. **There will be no make ups for in-class, group writing assignments.** Nevertheless, I will drop your lowest grade and average the remaining ones.

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Reading Brief (European influences)	Feb 2	12%
Simulation: Constitutional Convention	Feb 25 - Mar 4	22%
Federalist Debates	Mar 25 - Apr 1	22%
Reading Brief (slavery in the republic)	Apr 13	12%
Reading Brief (The Good Lord Bird)	Apr 27	12%
Quizzes	--	15%
In-Class Writings	--	5%

Make-ups

Late assignments will be lowered one letter grade for every *working* day they are late and will not be accepted more than a week late. In the case of the simulation and the debates, late penalties also pertain to additional assignments. **There will be no make up for quizzes or in-class writing assignments.** If an assignment is late, upload it to ELC then send me an email telling me it is posted. Grades are lowered for every *working day* they are late, not every class day they are late.

Student Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing academic work. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. Note that the course syllabus is a general plan for the course and that deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Required Texts

Readings are drawn mainly from primary source materials, which means we can get most of them online for free. If you like hard copies, there are two books for the course which can be purchased from the book store. **They are also available on-line.**

1. William Zinsser. 2006. [*On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Non-Fiction.*](#) Harper Publishing.
2. Max Farrand. 1962. [*The Framing of the Constitution of the United States.*](#) Yale University Press: Library of American Freedom edition.

Additional readings can be attained on-line. I recommend that everyone bring a lap top and read assignments on your computer. If you want to highlight, you can download a copy, convert it to adobe pdf or word, and use an electronic highlighter. We can then refer to passages in class by searching for specific words and phrases. If you don't have a lap top, print them out the old fashioned way. That works just fine.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Writing Well

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| Jan 10 | Introduction |
| Jan 12 | *William Zinsser, <i>On Writing Well</i> , Introduction through Ch 7, “Nonfiction as Literature” (book). Lecture notes . |

- Jan 14 *William Zinnser, [*On Writing Well*](#), Ch 8-11.
- Jan 17 **No Class. MLK Day!**
- Jan 19 *William Zinnser, [*On Writing Well*](#), continued.

European Influences

- Jan 21-24 *John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chapters 1-6.
<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/locke1689a.pdf>
- Jan 26-28 *John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chapters 7-8, 11-12, 16, 18-19.
<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/locke1689a.pdf>
- Jan 31 *David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Part II, Essay XII, “[Of The Original Contract.](#)”
- Feb 2 *Charles-Louis de Secondat Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Book XIII, chapter III; Book XI, chapters I, IV, and VI. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/837>
(brief 1 due)

Debate on the Stamp Act and the American Revolution

- Feb 4 *James Otis, “[The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved](#)” (excerpts)
- Feb 7 *Patrick Henry, “Virginia Resolves on the Stamp Act”
<https://alphahistory.com/americanrevolution/virginia-resolves-1765/>
- *Daniel Dulaney, “[Considerations on the Propriety of imposing Taxes on the British Colonies for the Purpose of Raising a Revenue](#)”
- *William Pitt, “Speech Against the Stamp Act”
https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Speech_against_the_Stamp_Act
- Feb 9 *Daniel Leonard, [Letter of January 9, 1775.](#)
- Feb 11 *The Declaration of Independence (read the transcript)
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html
- *Thomas Paine, “The American Crisis I”
<http://www.ushistory.org/paine/crisis/c-01.htm>

Feb 14 *The Articles of Confederation (skim)
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/artconf.asp

Religious Freedom & Vices of the Confederation

Feb 16 *James Madison, Memorial & Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-08-02-0163>

Feb 18 *James Madison, Vices of the Political System of the United States
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-09-02-0187>

Creating the Constitution

Feb 21-23 *Max Farrand, *The Framing of the Constitution of the United States*, chapters I-VII & XI (book).

Feb 25-
Mar 4 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION SIMULATION
([convention assignment](#) due Feb 25)

Mar 7-11 **No Class. Spring Break.**

Mar 14 *The Constitution (read the transcript, including the Bill of Rights)
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html
Recommended: [Simplified United States Constitution](#).

Mar 16 *Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Sep. 6, 1789, “the earth belongs ... to the living.” <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-12-02-0248>

Mar 18 **No Class. Tulane Presentation.**

Mar 21 *Leonard Levy, *Original Intent and the Framers’ Constitution*, [chapter 1](#).

Mar 23 *Leonard Levy, *Original Intent and the Framers’ Constitution*, [chapter 14](#).

Mar 25-
Apr 1 THE FEDERALIST DEBATES (click for readings)
([federalist assignment](#) due Mar 25)

Slavery and Equality

Apr 4 *[The correspondence of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Banneker](#).
*To Thomas Jefferson from Benjamin Banneker, 19 August 1791
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-22-02-0049>

- Apr 6-8 *Frederick Douglass, [*My Bondage, My Freedom*](#)
 1- Chapter VI. Treatment Of Slaves On Lloyd's Plantation.
 2- Chapter XXII. Liberty Attained.
 3- Chapter XXIII. Introduction To The Abolitionists.
 4- Chapter XXIV. Twenty-One Months In Great Britain.
- Apr 11 *Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/washington/toc.html>
 1- Chapter I. A Slave Among Slaves
 2- Chapter V. The Reconstruction period.
 3- Chapter VII. Early days at Tuskegee.
- Apr 13 *Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/washington/toc.html>
 4- Chapter XI. Making their beds before they could lie on them.
 5- Chapter XVII. Last words.
([brief 2 due](#))
- Apr 15 *Elizabeth Stanton, “[Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions](#)” (1848)
 *Susan B. Anthony, “[On Women’s Right to Vote](#)” (1872)

Preserving the Union

- Apr 18 *Lecture: the Sectional Crisis in the United States
- Apr 20-27 *The Good Lord Bird (episodes 1, 2, and 7)
[Biography of John Brown](#)
([brief 3 due April 27](#))
- Apr 29-
 May 2 *Bruce Ackerman, *We the People: Transformations* (vol. 2). *Harvard U. Press*,
[chapter 4](#) and [chapter 5](#) (legality of the 13th and 14th amendment),
 password: dougherty.

Links

- *Elizabeth White's [library page](#).
- *[Course Reserves](#) (search under dougherty).
- *[Avoiding Plagiarism](#).
- *UGA [Writing Center](#).
- *Teaching American History (Constitutional Convention and Federalist debates)
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/>
- *[Jane Doe](#) writing sample.
- *An example of a [high quality reading briefl](#).
- *Lecture notes: [Early American Politics](#).
- *Excerpts of [good and bad writing](#) turned in by students for the Federalist Debates.