POLS 4040 Gordon Ballingrud

Tues. & Thurs. 9:30-10:45Office: Main Library Café

Fine Arts 53 Office Hours: 1-3pm Fri. (& by appt.)

Fall 2017 gord5000@uga.edu

**American Political Thought**

Tap the nearest person on the shoulder, and she may give you some passionate opinions on American politics. But these are typically not what we would call American political *thought*. By thought, we mean the sophisticated theoretical and practical arguments that politicians, philosophers, and theorists give to the central questions of American politics: how should our institutions be arranged? How are opportunities and goods to be distributed? What makes a government legitimate? What are our obligations to the state, to one another, and to the least among us? What do lofty concepts like freedom, rights, and equality really *mean* once we leave the ivory tower, and what should we take them to mean?

This course is designed to give you a broad but sophisticated understanding of the major themes and concepts of American political thought, to the questions posed above. I will not provide answers; I will give you the tools to answer those questions, and others like them, on your own. Together we will explore theory and real political language, the works of both philosophers and politicians, and some who were both. There is a mountain of work we cannot study in only one semester, so to ensure that we all get the most out of this course that we can, I have focused on works with which I am most familiar. By playing to my strengths, I hope to maximize your detailed understanding of the ideas central to how Americans understand our unique institutional structure.

We will study *The Federalist*, the writings of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, major Supreme Court cases, and the works of philosophers like Rawls, Nozick, Montesquieu, Pettit, Hobbes, and Locke. Not all of these are American writers, but their ideas are important for how we understand our institutions and our places with respect to them.

**Grading**

The grading of this course will be composed of two papers, a final exam and student participation. The papers will be two ten-page analyses of the course materials (and outside materials as appropriate) on a topic of the student’s choosing. I recommend, however, that you discuss your paper topic with me before you do too much work on it, so that I can steer you toward good questions and useful materials.

I expect students to show up for every class having already read the materials and ready to participate in discussion and productive analysis. This course is partially a survey of American political theory but mostly an opportunity for students to practice their analytic skills with the spoken and written word.

The workload for this course is fairly heavy, but I will take pains to make sure everyone can keep up. Nonetheless, this is an expansive topic, one that could fill many semesters of challenging coursework. The course is organized to give you an acquaintance with the main concepts at work in American politics, and to mix abstract theory and philosophy to uncover deeper meanings in practical legal and political documents. Exploring the intersection of the two will be a major theme of discussions.

I will prepare discussion questions that I expect students to ponder before each session. The course will be challenging, but I hope to transfer my enthusiasm for this material to you all!

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

Papers

Students will complete two papers of at least ten double-spaced pages (not including bibliography) on a topic of their choice. Each paper must pertain to the materials and topics discussed in class, but how you assess and analyze those materials is entirely up to each of you. Papers will be graded on their analytical strength, the students’ understanding of the materials. I expect that students will also make at least some reference to outside sources for aid in their analysis. I am always available for help in understanding material and tracking down sources.

All sources used and cited must come from appropriate sources. Do not use Wikipedia as a cited source. Any questions about the reputability of the source should be directed to me. Err on the side of caution.

I am available always to review rough drafts or to discuss and advise on any topic regarding a student’s paper, or any other issue relating to the course. Please do not hesitate to contact me for help.

Each paper will be worth 25 percent of the student’s final grade.

Exam

Students will complete a final exam in this class. The final exam will consist of a few short-answer questions and at least one long essay. The exam will consist of 40 percent of a student’s final grade.

Class Participation

Before each class session, I will email to each student a set of questions about that class’ readings for your consideration. I will ask students questions from that list during class; it will behoove you to be familiar with the questions. Even if you do not have a conclusive answer, I will expect at least some kind of a productive response.

A class based in political theory and philosophy lends itself naturally to discussion and participatory analysis. I will lecture briefly on each topic, but you can expect me to prompt discussion more than you can expect me to provide answer for you to learn. Students will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of their contributions to discussions in class.

Participation will be worth 10 percent of a student’s final grade.

Grade Breakdown

Paper 1: 25 %

Paper 2: 25 %

Final Exam: 40 %

Participation: 10 %

**Required Texts**

I have tried to minimize the number of books that you will have to buy, but some cannot be avoided. These, however, are major works that you will find it productive to refer back to as you continue to study politics.

Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (2013, reprint edition)

John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (2005, expanded edition)

**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.

**Topics and Reading Assignments**

Below you will find all readings assigned for the semester. Please note that I will reserve the right to change the readings and scheduling, but I will make sure to give you ample notice before I do so. All readings will either be available online through links provided below, on eLC, or in the course textbooks listed above. Please let me know if you have any trouble accessing these.

**WEEK 1: The Great Debate Pt. 1**

Aug 15: Introduction

The U.S. Constitution, Articles I-VII, Amendments 1-27

Aug 17: Nationalism and Separation of Powers

*The Federalist Papers*, Nos. 9, 10, 47, 51.

LINK: <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1786-1800/the-federalist-papers/>

**WEEK 2: The Great Debate Pt. 2**

Aug 22: Protection of Individual Rights

1) *The Federalist Papers*, Nos. 78, 79, 84

Aug 24: Plausible Objections to the New Constitution

1) *The Anti-Federalist Papers*: Brutus 7-8; Agrippa 10; Candidus 2

2) *The Federalist*, No. 11

**WEEK 3: Liberty in America Pt. 1**

Sept 5: What is Liberty?

1) Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty”

2) Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch.2 (http://studymore.org.uk/xhob21.htm)

3) Gerald Cohen, “Freedom and Money”

Sept 7: Are We Free?

1) G. Cohen, “The Structure of Proletarian Unfreedom”

2) P. Petit, *On the People’s Terms*, p. 14-87

**WEEK 4: Liberty in America Pt. 2**

Aug 29: Liberty in Antebellum America

1) Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (selections)

https://www.gutenberg.org/files/815/815-h/815-h.htm

2) Frederick Douglas, My Bondage, My Freedom

Chapter VI. Treatment Of Slaves On Lloyd's Plantation.

Chapter XXII. Liberty Attained.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20110116033130/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DouMybo.html>

Aug 31: Liberty in Antebellum America

1) Frederick Douglas, My Bondage, My Freedom

Chapter XXIII. Introduction To The Abolitionists.

Chapter XXIV. Twenty-One Months In Great Britain.

2) Lincoln-Douglas Debates (4th Debate, Pt. 1-2) <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-lincoln-douglas-debates-4th-debate-part-i/>

**WEEK 5: Rights in America, Pt. 1**

Sept 12: Freedom of Speech

1) *Texas v. Johnson*

3) *NYT v. U.S*. (The Pentagon Papers Case)

4) *Brandenburg v. Ohio*

Sept 14: Voting Rights

1) *Gomillion v. Lightfoot*

2) *Shelby County v. Holder* (570 U.S. 2)

3) *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections*

**WEEK 6: Rights in America, Pt. 2**

Sept 19: Due Process and Protection from Government

1) *Gideon v. Wainwright*

2) *Mapp v. Ohio*

3) *Riley v. California*

4) *Miranda v. Arizona*

**NOTE: 1st Essay Due Sept. 19**

Sept 21: Privacy and Substantive Due Process

1) *Griswold v. Connecticut*

2) *Roe v. Wade*

3) Incorporation cases

**WEEK 7: Equality in America, Pt. 1**

Sept 26: Equal Protection under the Law

1) *Romer v. Evans* (cf. Justice O’Connor’s concurrence)

2) *Lawrence v. Texas* (cf. Justice Scalia’s dissent)

3) *Mathews v. Diaz*

4) *Bernal v. Fainter*

Sept 28: Racial Equality

1) Kennedy, John F. "Inaugural Address." 1961.

([Inaugural Address President John F. Kennedy](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm))  
2) King, Martin Luther Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." 1963.  
3) X, Malcolm. "The Ballot or the Bullet." 1965.  
4) Goldwater, Barry. "Acceptance Speech." 1964.

([Goldwater's 1964 Acceptance Speech](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwaterspeech.htm))

5) *Grutter v. Bollinger*

6) *Brown v. Board of Education*

**WEEK 8: Equality in America Pt. 2**

Oct 3: Gender/Sex Equality

1) *Frontiero v. Richardson*

2) *Mississippi University for Women v. Hogan*

3) Grimke, Angelina E. *Letters to Catherine E. Beecher.* 1838.

pp. 103-121. ([View text](http://books.google.com/books/about/Letters_to_Catherine_E_Beecher.html?id=KSWzlG7UHnsC) on Sunshine for Women.)

Beecher, Catherine B. *True Remedy for the Wrongs of Women.* 1851.

pp. 24-60 and 224-32.

Oct 5: Equality of What?

1) *San Antonio Independent School Dist. v. Rodriguez*

2) *United States v. Carolene Products* (footnote 4)

**WEEK 9: Democracy and Constitutionalism Pt. 1**

Oct 10:

1) *The Federalist*, No. 10 (re-read)

2) *Marbury v. Madison*

3) *Cooper v. Aaron*

Oct 12:

1) R. Dworkin, “Constitutional Cases” *Taking Rights Seriously* p. 131-50

2) W. Rehnquist, “The Notion of a Living Constitution”

**WEEK 10: Democracy and Constitutionalism Pt. 2**

Oct 17:

1) L. Levy, *Original Intent and the Framers’ Constitution*, Ch. 1 & 14.

Oct 19:

1) J. Rakove, *Original Meanings* Ch. 5 & 6

**WEEK 11: The Social Contract Pt. 1**

Oct 24:

1) T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* Ch. 13 & 14

2) J. Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (selections)

Oct 26:

1) J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, p. 62-109

2) R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* p. 19-47

**WEEK 12: The Social Contract Pt. 2**

Oct 31:

1) J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* p. 193-235

2) R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* Ch. 7

Nov 2:

1) R. Dworkin, “Justice and Rights” in *Taking Rights Seriously* p. 151-183

2) J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* p. 236-74

**WEEK 13: The Separation of Powers**

Nov 7:

1) Charles-Louis de Secondat Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*.

Book XIII, chapter III; Book XI, chapters I, IV, and VI.

<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/montesquieu-complete-works-vol-1-the-spirit-of-laws>

2) *The Federalist* Nos. 47-48

Nov 9:

1) *The Federalist*, Nos. 60, 62-66

2) *U.S. v. Nixon, President of the United States*

**WEEK 14: Federalism Pt. 1**

Nov 14:

1) 1) *The Federalist*, Nos. 27, 39, 43, 45.

2) R. Hancock, “Tocqueville on the Good of American Federalism”

Nov 16:

1) *Printz v. United States*

2) H. Gerken, “Uncooperative Federalism”.

**WEEK 15: Federalism Pt. 2**

Nov 21:

1) *South Carolina v. Katzenbach*

2) *South Dakota v. Dole*

Nov 23 THANKSGIVING!

**WEEK 16: Deliberative Democracy**

Nov 28:

1) J. Rawls, “The Idea of Public Reason Revisited”

2) *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*: “I: The Idea of Deliberative Democracy: Major Statements”

Nov 30:

1) *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*: G. Gaus, “Reason, Justification, and Consensus: Why Democracy Can’t Have it All”

**NOTE: 2nd Essay Due Nov. 30**

**WEEK 17: Patriotism**

Dec 5:

1) R. Rorty, *Achieving Our Country* (selections)

**EXAM:**

**TUES, DEC 12**

**8-11 AM**