

AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT
POLITICAL SCIENCE 3054
SECTION 001
SPRING 2009

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the dominant perspectives in American political thought. The initial lectures and readings will introduce students to the major values and institutions associated with American political thought. Next, the lectures will trace the manner in which the predominant American ideology, Neo-classical Liberalism, has developed over the history of the country. The third series of lectures will focus on the spectrum of ideas that have developed in the United States since the collapse of the New Deal consensus and which frame current political discourse. Finally, time permitting, the course will place American thought within the broader spectrum of ideologies within the world.

Students are cautioned that very little in American political thought is original. As a result, you may encounter numerous concepts to which you have been exposed in other political theory courses. Also, the range of ideas in America has been relatively narrow. Do not expect the breadth of thought or richness of debate you might see in examining other political systems. American political thought has been of extreme importance, though, as a psychological force in determining and limiting internal political action. It also has been accepted by numerous political systems, has been imposed on others, and has been utilized by certain individuals as a model for measuring the developmental level of emerging countries. As a result, an understanding of American political thought can provide valuable insights on the functioning of our political system as well as many others throughout the world.

You should note that, although they are not spaced evenly, there are about 70 pages of assigned reading per week in this course, or about 10 pages per day. If you hope to do well in the class, you should allocate your study time accordingly and not fall behind. Also, if you are not prepared to devote 6 to 9 hours per week to study outside of the class meetings, you should drop this course.

Finally, you should note that class participation is not a component in the grade for this course. The class does proceed from the assumption, however, that education is an interactive process. Hence, participation will be solicited and expected by the instructor and chronic non-attendance may result in failing the course.

INSTRUCTOR: Thad Tecza
OFFICE: Ketchum 134A
OFFICE HOURS: T-TH: 9:30-10:45 p.m. & by appt.
CLASSROOM: HUMN 135

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OFFICE PHONE: 492-2985
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LECTURE: T-Th. 11:00-12:15

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Abbott, Philip, Political Thought in America: Conversations & Debates, Third Edition (Prospect, Heights, Illinois: The Waveland Press, Inc. 2005)

Dolbeare, Kenneth M. and Michael S. Cummings. Ed., American Political Thought, Fifth Edition (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2004)

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger, Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal, Seventh Edition (New York: Pearson-Longman, 2009)

ATTENDANCE: Class participation is not a component of the grade in this course. However, the class proceeds from the assumption that learning is an interactive process that requires class attendance. As a result, missing a significant number of the lectures will constitute grounds for a lower grade or failing the course. Also, many students today are employed while they attend school. Some students work full-time. While this may be necessary for you to stay in school, it is important to maintain a proper relationship between work and school. Work requirements are not an acceptable reason for missing class or turning in assignments late.

DISABILITIES: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact 303-492-8671, Willard 322 and www.Colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If, after reviewing this syllabus, you find that you will have a conflict with an examination, assignment or attendance owing to religious observance, you must inform the Instructor of this fact within the first two weeks of the class so that we can arrange an accommodation that will be fair to you and the rest of the class. See full details at www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. Upon request, I will honor your request to address you by an alternative name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this request within the first two weeks of the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

DISCRIMINATION, HARRASSMENT AND AMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS: The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at www.colorado.edu/odh

HONOR CODE: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic dishonesty shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

GRADING:

Each student will submit four papers in this course. The papers are to draw upon both the lectures and reading materials to answer the question. They should incorporate and refer to as many specific authors in the texts as possible. The more sections of the readings and material from particular lectures you can incorporate, the stronger your paper will be. You should present all points of view on the issue. If the question calls for it, you must reach a conclusion. If you reach a conclusion, you must state the evidence that led you to that conclusion and the reason why you believe that this evidence supports the conclusion. Over all, the papers should demonstrate that you have attended the lectures, have done the reading, understand the material, can integrate this material and can express it in a coherent fashion. The papers will not be graded on the basis of which position you take on the question. Rather, they will be graded on the degree to which they reflect knowledge of the material presented in the course, your ability to present a coherent and logical argument, and your ability to present your ideas clearly in writing.

Each paper should be ten pages in length. The papers should utilize Times New Roman font, 12-point type, be on one side of each page, double-spaced, with normal college margins, headings and footers. Each page must be numbered. Papers that are less than nine and one-half pages or more than ten and one-half page will receive a lower grade. Papers that are on two sides of each page will receive a grade one-half grade level below what they would otherwise receive. All references to the readings for the course should be cited using a style from a generally accepted college reference manual. In addition, even if the style that you choose does not require it, you must provide a page reference with each citation. Material from the lectures may be referenced simply as, "lecture". These references do not need to provide a date.

Do not put your full name on your papers. Simply identify yourself with your initials and student identification number. Papers may not be submitted electronically. Papers cannot be left in the classroom at the beginning of class. Unless arrangements are made in advance, you must attend the class and submit your paper in person at the end of class. Each paper will contribute 25% to the final grade.

First Paper:

Tentative Due Date, February 10. Lectures and Readings on Political Philosophy, The Colonial Period, Revolution, Conservative and Radical Whigs, The Articles of Confederation and The Constitution.

Tentative Question. In American Political Thought, Kenneth M. Dolbeare and Michael S. Cummings state, "Assumptions about *the nature of human beings* and about *the purposes of social life* are fundamental building blocks of political thinking. ... Some of these assumptions and goals also find expression as *political values*, next among the fundamental building blocks of political thinking." (pp. xxv, xxvi) Presumably, these assumptions and values form the basis for the type of political structures and institutions that are established in a society. Drawing upon the assigned readings and the lectures to this point in the course, write a coherent essay in which you discuss, (1) the assumptions about human nature, (2) the assumptions about the purposes of social life, and (3) the political values present during (A) the American colonial period and (B) the American Revolution, as well as the assumptions and values expressed in (C) the Articles of Confederation and (D) the Constitution. What were the ideologies that were present during the period between 1607 and 1789? What did these ideologies assert in relation to human nature, the purposes of social life and political values? How did these assertions find expression in (1) the colonial governments, (2) the state governments established after

independence, (3) the Articles of Confederation and (4) our current Constitution? Also, citing the evidence that you have presented, reach a conclusion as to which ideology was most influential in determining the nature of our current political system. Explain why your evidence supports this conclusion. Cite evidence to support all of your statements. The more specific ideas that you can present to bolster your argument through statements made by particular political thinkers discussed in the readings the stronger your paper will be.

Second Paper:

Tentative Due Date, March 12. Lectures and Readings on Hamilton and the Federalists, Jefferson and the Republicans, The Expanding Republic, Abolition and the Reactionary Southern Enlightenment, Lincoln and the Civil War, Radical Reconstruction, Industrial Expansion, Social Darwinism and Populism, The Progressive Era, American Empire and American Socialism.

Tentative Question: In The State Woodrow Wilson argued that, "The Civil War completes the Union", by which he meant, according to one author, "that the conflict had swept away the last vestiges of the old order, which had stood in the way of progress." (Ronald J. Pestritto) Part of this old order certainly was slavery, but equally clearly it was more than just slavery. What was this old order to which Wilson referred and who were some of the representatives of it? What were the different conceptions of the Constitution and the American political system that emerged after 1789? Which political parties sought to advance these conceptions? How did they seek to do so? What were the concrete issues over which they struggled? How did their positions on these issues reflect their conception of the proper political, economic and social system? Which political thinkers and politicians would Wilson have considered progressive and which would he have seen as reactionary? Why would he assign these titles to these people? Finally, how did the Civil War go beyond just preserving the Union to complete it? Concretely, how were the country, its economic social and political system, and the values that emerged from the Civil War different from the one that entered it? Cite evidence to support all of your statements. The more specific ideas that you can present to bolster your argument through statements made by particular political thinkers discussed in the readings the stronger your paper will be.

Third Paper:

Tentative Due Date April 9. Lectures and Readings on The New Deal and Reform Liberalism, The Old Right, Libertarianism, and Post WW II America, The Civil Rights Movement, The Anti-Vietnam War Movement, Environmentalism and Feminism.

Tentative Question: It is sometimes argued that the political parties in America are simply "Tweedledum" and "Tweedledee" and that it really doesn't make much difference which is in power. Drawing upon the assigned readings and lectures for this section of the course, write a coherent essay in which you argue whether or not the United States would have been the same country if the Republicans rather than the Democrats would have been the dominant political party between 1932 and the ascendance of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980. What were the major factions within each political party during this period, what were the dominant ideas advanced by each faction, what were the major issues and what were the positions taken on these issues by these factions. Which factions within the parties controlled outcomes and how, if at all, did this domination affect the policies that were actually

implemented? Were there important forces outside of the major parties that were present in America during this time? If so, who were they, what were their primary ideas and did they have any significant impact on political outcomes? Overall, in 1980 how, if at all, was the American political, economic and social landscape different from 1932 and what were the major forces and ideas that account for these similarities and/or differences? Provide evidence to support each statement that you make and explain why this evidence supports your statements. The more specific ideas that you can present to bolster your argument through statements made by particular political thinkers discussed in the readings the stronger your paper will be.

Fourth Paper:

Due between 1:30 and 4:00 p.m. in HUMN 135 on Monday, May 4. Lectures and Readings on, Progressive Populism, Neo-Conservatism, Organic Conservatism, the Christian Right, Neo-Liberalism, The Militia Movement, the Reform Party, The Greens, The New Right and The New Democrats.

Tentative Question: Drawing on the lectures and readings in this course, including readings that you did earlier in the course, discuss the political landscape in America today. What is/are the dominant ideology(ies) held by Americans? What does it mean to be a "liberal" in America? What does it mean to be a "conservative"? What are the other major sets of beliefs within each major political Party in America? What, if any, are the beliefs that unify Democrats? What, if any, are the beliefs that unify Republicans? How broad are the divisions within each party? What are the major beliefs that are accepted by most members of both parties in America? Is it true that the political parties in America today are just, "Tweedledum" and "Tweedledee"? Finally, given all of this, discuss whether the differences between American liberals and American conservatives are in any sense "meaningful". That is, how much difference do they make in terms of determining particular political outcomes? Support each statement you make and each conclusion you reach with evidence, and explain why this evidence supports your statements and conclusions.

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE:

January 13-15: Introduction, Political Philosophy and The Spectrum of Ideologies

Reading: Abbott, Political Thought in America, Introduction
Dolbeare and Cummings, American Political Thought, Introduction
Ball and Dagger, Political Ideologies, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, pp. 19-30 and Chapter 3, pp. 45-71

January 20-22: The Colonial Period

Reading: Abbott, Chapter One
Ball and Dagger, Chapter 2, pp. 31-32
Dolbeare and Cummings: John Winthrop and John Wise

January 27: Revolution

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Two

Dolbeare and Cummings: Samuel Adams, Thomas Paine, The Declaration
Of Independence

January 29: Conservative and Radical Whigs

Reading: Ball and Dagger, Chapter 4, pp. 93-102

February 3-5: The Articles of Confederation and The Constitution

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Three

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 2, pp.32-34

Dolbeare and Cummings: Benjamin Franklin, The Articles of Confederation,
John Adams, The Constitution, In Favor of Adoption of the Constitution,
Against Adoption of the Constitution

February 10: Hamilton and the Federalists

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Four, pp. 99-111

Dolbeare and Cummings: Alexander Hamilton's Program, John Marshall

February 12: Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Four, pp. 111-119

Dolbeare and Cummings: Thomas Jefferson: Principles and Programs

February 17: The Expanding Republic

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Four, pp. 119-138

Dolbeare and Cummings: Orestes Brownson, Henry David Thoreau,
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Ball and Dagger: Chapter 2, pp. 34-40, Chapter 4, pp. 102-108

February 19: Abolition and the Reactionary Southern Enlightenment

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Five, pp. 139-151

Dolbeare and Cummings: Frederick Douglass, John C. Calhoun, George
Fitzhugh

February 24: Lincoln and the Civil War

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Five, pp. 152-160

Dolbeare and Cummings: Abraham Lincoln

February 26-March 3: Radical Reconstruction, Industrial Expansion, Social
Darwinism and Populism

Reading: Abbott: Chapter Five, pp. 161-172 and Chapter Six, pp. 173-193

Dolbeare and Cummings: Part III

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 3, pp. 71-77

March 5-10: The Progressive Era, American Empire and American Socialism

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Six, pp. 194-214

Dolbeare and Cummings: W.E.B. DuBois, Emma Goldman, Eugene V. Debs,
Herbert Croly, Progressivism, Frederick W. Taylor, Woodrow Wilson, John
Dewey

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, pp. 174-181

March 12-17: The New Deal and Reform (Welfare) Liberalism

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Seven, pp. 215-236

Dolbeare and Cummings: Franklin D. Roosevelt

March 19: The Old Right (Paleo-Conservatives) and Libertarianism

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Seven, pp. 237-247

Dolbeare and Cummings: Patrick J. Buchanan

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 3, pp. 77-89, Chapter 4, pp. 108-112

March 31-April 2: Post WWII America

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Eight

April 7: The Civil Rights Movement, The Anti-Vietnam War Movement,
Environmentalism and Feminism

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Nine, pp. 249-279

Dolbeare and Cummings: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Students
for a Democratic Society, Betty Friedan, Aldo Leopold, Christopher Lasch,
Cathleen McGuire and Colleen McGuire, Black Elk, June Jordan

Ball and Dagger, Chapters 8 and 9

April 9: Progressive Populism

Reading: Ball and Dagger, Chapter 6, pp. 181-187

April 14: Neo-Conservatism

Reading: Abbott, Chapter Nine, pp. 280-292

Dolbeare and Cummings: Ronald Reagan, Summary of an Era

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 4, pp. 112-116

April 16: Organic Conservatives

Reading: Dolbeare and Cummings: National Conference of Catholic Bishops

April 21: The Christian Right

Reading: Ball and Dagger, Chapter 4, pp. 116-122

April 23: Neo-Liberalism

Reading: None

April 28: The Militia Movement, The Reform Party and The Greens

Reading: Dolbeare and Cummings: Winona LaDuke, The Green Party

April 30: The New Democrats, The New Right

Reading: Dolbeare and Cummings, William Clinton, George W. Bush, Glen C. Loury

Abbott, Chapter 10

Ball and Dagger, Chapter 11