**American Political Thought**

**PSCI 3054-002**

**Class Meets Remotely via Zoom Monday & Wednesday from 11:30am-12:20pm**

**https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/98477523754**

**Meeting ID: 984 7752 3754**

**Passcode: 014236**

**Additional material provided asynchronously online**

Instructor: Dr. Janet Donavan

Office hours (via Zoom): Monday 12:30-1:30 & 3-4 or by appointment

https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/97784199603

Meeting ID: 977 8419 9603

Passcode: 603652

Email: [janet.donavan@colorado.edu](mailto:janet.donavan@colorado.edu)

TA: Matthew Harvey

Office hours (Via Zoom): Thursday 1:30-3:30

[https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/98840275747](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/98840275747&sa=D&source=calendar&ust=1598295089957000&usg=AOvVaw2U1jII50wMo0lknIFS4HJs)  
Meeting ID: 988 4027 5747

Email: matthew.t.harvey@colorado.edu

**This syllabus is subject to amendment. Students will be notified if amendments are made.**

**Course modality:** This class is a HR: Hybrid online/remote class. This class DOES NOT have an in-person component. This class will meet synchronously during the scheduled class time on Mondays and Wednesdays. Recorded lectures covering the material for the following week will be posted by Friday of each week. During a typical week, students are expected to:

1. Attend Zoom discussions synchronously on Mondays. Most weeks, the discussion questions on Mondays will be guided by Dr. Donavan and provided in the recorded lectures posted by Friday of the previous week.
2. Contribute to online discussion, if desired, by Tuesdays at noon. Dr. Donavan will select student questions and comments from the weekly discussion for Wednesday’s Zoom session.
3. Attend Zoom discussions synchronously on Wednesdays. Most weeks, these Zoom discussions will build on student ideas raised in the online discussion.
4. Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday if there is a quiz that week.
5. For the rest of each week, students should read the readings to prepare for the following week and view the recorded lectures. These may be done on your own time, but should be completed before the Zoom meeting on Monday of the following week. It is best to do the readings first and then view the recorded lectures.

Some weeks are slightly different, so please see the course schedule for more detail.

**Course description:** This course traces major themes in American Political Thought from the Settler-Colonial Period through the present, by reading and evaluating the works of key American political thinkers, and putting their ideas into historical and political perspective. In the course, we will use various means of understanding and evaluating these works, including lecture, discussions, a semester paper, reading quizzes and midterm and final exams.

Using the readings, we will trace the development and changes in core principles of American democracy over time, including liberty, equality of opportunity, property and religious ideals. We will also trace the importance of liberalism and conservatism as political philosophies for articulating these principles (please keep in mind that “liberalism” and “conservatism” are used in this course in their philosophical meanings, not their common meanings in politics today).

The readings and concepts explored in this course are difficult, and students will need to carefully complete the reading assignments before class, come to class on a regular basis and take good notes, and participate fully in discussions and online activities in order to be successful in the course. Students should expect to spend an average of 6 hours per week outside the classroom working on the course. There is an average of 100 pages of reading per week, though this varies. It is recommended that students have taken the prerequisite PSCI 2004: Survey of Western Political Thought prior to this course. Students having trouble should make an effort early on to come to office hours and ask questions, and address ways of improving course performance. All students are welcome and encouraged to come to office hours.

The course text was chosen for its comprehensive selection of writings, speeches and documents that have influenced the development of American political thought, and indeed, the way Americans think. The text offers some context to these writings, but additional context will be provided in lecture as well.

This is a political theory course. This course is approved for the old arts and sciences core curriculum: United States context or ideals and values. This course may also be applicable to the new distributed core; please see your academic advisor for questions regarding whether this class fulfills your degree requirements.

**Course objectives:**

1. Learn about key ideas and concepts in American Political Thought by reading primary texts from influential thinkers
2. Trace core principles of American democracy over time—liberty, equality of opportunity, property, religious ideals
3. Examine the importance of the dominant political philosophy of liberalism, and the interplay of liberalism and conservatism, in defining and articulating these core principles
4. Critically examine the ways in which these core principles and political philosophies have shaped the development of our political system, and how Americans think.

**Grading and scale:**

Midterm exam 1 20

Midterm exam 2 20

Reading quizzes 20

Paper 20

Attendance & Participation 20

Total 100

93-100 A

90-92 A-

88-89 B+

83-87 B

80-82 B-

78-79 C+

73-77 C

70-72 C-

* 1. D

< 59 F

**Required Text:**

Isaac Kramnick and Theodore Lowi, eds. *American Political Thought: A Norton Anthology, 2nd edition.* Norton: New York. ISBN: 9780393655902

Course Requirements:

**Midterm exams:** The midterm exams will each consist of short and long essay questions. The midterms will be distributed electronically and due online as scheduled in the course schedule. Students are required to demonstrate knowledge of course readings and ideas and to cite the course text in the midterms. The exams are each worth 20 points of the final grade and are required to receive a passing grade in the course. Make-up exams will be given only in cases of medical or family emergency, religious observances or university absences related to participation in university-sanctioned activities. If it is possible, the instructor should be notified in advance of such an emergency. All make-ups are at the instructor’s discretion and would be in a different format than the original.

**Quizzes:** There will be 10 quizzes over the course of the semester, valued at 2 points each. Quizzes will consist of 4 multiple choice questions. Students have 5 minutes to complete each quiz, and may use books, notes or slides to assist in completing the quizzes. There will be make-up opportunities later in the semester for students who wish to improve their overall quiz grades. The purpose of the quizzes is to make sure students are understanding the material along the way.

**Paper:** Each student will choose from a list of topics and complete a 5-6 page paper, double-spaced, in a standard font with 1” margins. The paper must include a bibliography, which does not count toward the page requirement. More information on the paper will be given later in the semester. The paper is worth 20 points of the final grade, and is required to receive a passing grade in the class. Students are responsible for the electronic document being readable. Late papers will receive a 1 point deduction per day.

**Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend Zoom lectures/discussions synchronously on Mondays and Wednesdays and to contribute to online discussion boards regularly. In order to do well in the class, students will need to actively engage with the material. Attendance and participation are valued at 20 points of the total grade. Students will receive ½ point for each Zoom discussion attended and up to 1 point for each participation in the weekly online discussions. Participation in live Zoom discussions will be considered qualitatively and will positively affect student grades.

Course policies:

**Course communications:** Email is the official mode of communication for the University of Colorado at Boulder. Students are required to regularly check their university-registered email for updates regarding the course. Students are responsible for receiving any messages sent by the instructor or TA to the class email list, or individually to the student. Students are responsible for ensuring that any email sent by the student to the instructor or TA is received. In addition, students are responsible for checking the Canvas site for the course regularly.

**Contacting the Instructor:** Please feel free to contact me with questions about the course. The best ways to reach me are via Zoom office hours, or email. You may also call my office phone, but that is a less efficient means of reaching me. I always answer email within 48 hours, so if you do not receive a reply, that means I did not get your email and you should try to contact me again. When addressing me, please address me in person or in email as Janet, Dr. Donavan or Professor Donavan.

**Course Etiquette:** Students are expected to log into scheduled Zoom sessions at the scheduled time and stay until the sessions are complete. Both on Zoom and in communications on Canvas, students are expected to be respectful of each other and of the instructor; lively debate is encouraged, but personal attacks are prohibited. These guidelines should be obvious, and they will help to make the course a more enjoyable experience for all. For more information on University requirements regarding classroom behavior please see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>  and at  
<http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code>.

**University-required syllabus statements:**

## Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. 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 race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) and the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/sites/default/files/attached-files/2019-2020_student_code_of_conduct_0.pdf).

## Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

* maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
* wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
* clean local work area,
* practice hand hygiene,
* follow public health orders, and
* if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](https://www.colorado.edu/healthcenter/coronavirus-updates/symptoms-and-what-do-if-you-feel-sick).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](https://www.colorado.edu/policies/covid-19-health-and-safety-policy) and [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) and the [Student Code of Conduct](http://www.colorado.edu/osccr/). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

Before returning to campus, all students must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/how#anchor1). Before coming on to campus each day, all students are required to complete a [Daily Health Form](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/daily-health-form).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and complete the [Health Questionnaire and Illness Reporting Form](https://www.colorado.edu/protect-our-herd/daily-health-form) remotely. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined**,** please email Dr. Donavan a notification that you will be absent. You are not required to state the nature of your illness/quarantine requirement.

## Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed.  Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment.  Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](https://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance.  If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students/temporary-medical-conditions) on the Disability Services website.

## Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

## Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](https://www.colorado.edu/osccr/honor-code).

## Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PnqVK4kkIJIZnf), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

## Religious Holidays

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. In this class, please let Dr. Donavan know via email at least 2 weeks in advance if you require a religious accommodation. See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absences-classes-andor-exams) for full details.

Course Schedule:

Readings are to be completed BEFORE the week they are covered if at all possible.

**Part I: Colonial Roots of American Political Thought, 1620-1760**

Week 1: August 24-28

Monday: Zoom meeting, introduction to the course

Wednesday: Zoom meeting: settler-colonial origins of American political thought

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in meet and greet as soon as possible

Readings: Please read prefaces and introduction, p. 1-65 in text for next week

**Part II: The Founding, 1760-1791**

Week 2: August 31-September 4

Monday: Zoom meeting- discussion of roots of American political thought

Wednesday: Zoom meeting- discussion of colonial governing documents

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 1: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 67-170 before next week (through Federalist #10)

Week 3: September 7-11

Monday: Labor Day, no class Zoom meeting

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- The Constitution and its critics

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Readings: Please read p. 170 (from Federalist #23)-242 before next week

Week 4: September 14-18

Monday: Zoom discussion- Federalist and anti-federalist political thought

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Thinking about alternative Founding outcomes

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 2: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 243-340 for next week

**Part III: Democracy and Union, 1791-1865**

Week 5: September 21-25

Monday: Zoom discussion- The Federalist and Jeffersonian visions

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- The implications of the early years of governance and political thought

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 3: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 341-430 for next week

Week 6: September 28-October 2

Monday: Zoom discussion- Jacksonian democracy/American individualism/transcendentalism

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Selected student questions/concerns from this era

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 4: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 431-561 for next week

Week 7: October 5-9

Monday: Zoom discussion- Women in the early republic/connections to abolitionist thought

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Pursuit of equality in the mid-1800s

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 5: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 561-596 for next week

Week 8: October 12-16

Monday: Zoom discussion- abolitionism and defenses of slavery. Midterm exam distributed

Wednesday: No class meeting. Students should work on midterm exam

Friday: Midterm exam due by noon on Canvas. Recorded lectures posted for next week

Readings: Please read p. 597-714 for next week

**Part IV: Capitalism, Individualism and Reform, 1865-1932**

Week 9: October 19-23

Monday: Zoom discussion- Social Darwinism, the intellectuals and populism

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Selected student questions/concerns from this era

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Readings: Please read p. 715-814 (through Sumner)

Week 10: October 26-30

Monday: Zoom discussion- Voices of dissent and the rise of imperialism

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Selected student questions/concerns from this era

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 6: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 814-889 for next week

Week 11: November 2-6

Monday: Zoom discussion- Imperialism and race in American political thought

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- Thinking about American political thought and institutional racism

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 7: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 890-995 for next week

Week 12: November 9-13

Monday: Zoom discussion- Pragmatism and the progressive era

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- thinking critically about the progressive era

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 8: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 998-1073 for next week

**Part V: Leviathan and Liberalism, 1932-present**

Week 13: November 16-20

Monday: Zoom discussion- The New Deal and its critics

Wednesday: Zoom discussion- student questions and ideas about The New Deal and its critics

Friday: Recorded lectures posted for next week

Online discussion: Please participate in online discussion by Tuesday at noon if you would like your ideas/questions to be considered for Wednesday’s Zoom meeting

Quiz 9: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Please read p. 1074-1176 for next week

Week 14: November 23-25

Monday: Zoom discussion- The Cold War and the 1960s. Midterm 2 distributed.

Wednesday: No class meeting. Students should work on Midterm 2

*November 26-27 Fall Break, no course responsibilities*

Quiz 10: Complete quiz by 11:59pm on Wednesday

Readings: Selected readings to be announced, please complete readings read by Wednesday, December 2

Week 15: November 30-December 4

Monday: Zoom discussion- Major themes in contemporary American political thought

Weds: Zoom discussion- Contemporary American political. Midterm 2 due on Canvas.

Fri: Recorded lecture posted for next week

Week 16: December 7

Monday: Last day of class. Zoom discussion- Drawing conclusions about American political thought

**Final Papers due on Canvas by Sunday, December 13 at 4pm**